

# MRes Research Methods in Psychology

## Programme Specification

<b>Awarding Institution:</b> University of London (Interim Exit Awards made by Goldsmiths' College)
<b>Teaching Institution:</b> Goldsmiths, University of London
<b>Final Award:</b> MRes
<b>Programme Name:</b> Research Methods in Psychology
<b>Total credit value for programme:</b> 180
<b>Name of Interim Exit Award(s):</b> N/A
<b>Duration of Programme:</b>
<b>UCAS Code(s):</b> N/A
<b>HECoS Code(s):</b> (100497) Psychology
<b>QAA Benchmark Group:</b> N/A
<b>FHEQ Level of Award:</b> Level 7
<b>Programme accredited by:</b> Not applicable
<b>Date Programme Specification last updated/approved:</b> May 2024
<b>Home Department:</b> Psychology
<b>Department(s) which will also be involved in teaching part of the programme:</b> N/A

## Programme overview

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 the research methods and skills necessary to conduct high-level research in psychology, 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 (research design, data collection and data analysis) 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.

It 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).

For more than twenty 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.

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

Since 2016, the programme has provided research methods training for the Psychology pathway within the South-east Network for Social Sciences (*SeNSS*) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP),

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, or another Level 7 recognised training programme 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.

## Programme learning outcomes

### Knowledge and understanding

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
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; ; Dissertation
A2	Understand the principles of quantitative and qualitative research	Research Design and Analysis; Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Big Data Analysis; 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; Big Data Analysis; Data Programming
A4	Understand the principles and potential application of at least one contemporary approach to investigating psychological function	Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Big Data Analysis
A5	Understand the criteria for science and the relationship of these criteria to other forms of intellectual activity	Research Design and Analysis

## 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); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Foundations in Neuroscience (CCN); Dissertation
B2	Synthesise complex information	Research Placement (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); Matlab; Big Data Analysis; Data Programming; Dissertation
B3	Understand the principle of statistical interpretation	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Big Data Analysis; 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); Foundations in Neuroscience; 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; Big Data Analysis; Data Programming; Dissertation
C2	Demonstrate an awareness of the qualitative research methodologies relevant to psychological research	Research Design and Analysis; Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School)

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
	including computer-assisted qualitative data analysis	
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 empirical psychological research to a high standard	Dissertation

### Transferable skills

<b>Code</b>	<b>Learning outcome</b>	<b>Taught by the following module(s)</b>
D1	Integrate, analyse and evaluate extant research in a critical, rational and objective manner	Research Placement (RMIP); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Dissertation
D2	Design research studies that are fit-for-purpose and address cutting-edge questions	Research Placement (RMIP); 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; Big Data Analysis; Dissertation
D5	Use, in an efficient and fluent manner, data management and statistical analysis software	Multivariate Statistical Methods; Advanced Quantitative Methods; Statistical Data Analysis Project; Matlab; Big Data Analysis; Data Programming; Dissertation
D6	Produce high quality scientific reports showing evidence of intellectual rigour	Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School); Critical Analysis (RMIP); Research Placement (RMIP); Dissertation
D7	Produce oral presentations on scientific material using appropriate visual aids	Research Design and Analysis; Research Placement (RMIP); Dissertation

Code	Learning outcome	Taught by the following module(s)
D8	Summarise and evaluate the impact of research in ways that may be understood by non-specialists	Critical Analysis (RMIP); Dissertation
D9	Demonstrate an awareness of legal issues in research (the Data Protection Act; intellectual property rights)	Research Placement (RMIP); Research Design and Analysis; Dissertation

## Grading 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"> <li>• addresses the topic in an explicit manner</li> <li>• announces its structure at the start and stick closely to this announced structure</li> <li>• has relationships between statements that are very easy to recognise</li> <li>• gives wide-ranging and appropriate evidential support for claims that are made</li> </ul> <p>The mark awarded will depend on how successfully the work is judged to meet the above-mentioned criteria.</p>
60-69%	Merit	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

		<p>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"> <li>• attempts to address the topic or answer the question</li> <li>• has a detectable structure which is adhered to for the most part</li> <li>• has relationships between statements that are generally easy to follow</li> <li>• has a good quality line of argument</li> <li>• supports claims by reference to relevant literature</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• presents relevant material but fails to use it to answer the question or address the issue</li> <li>• has a structure, but one that is rather loose and unannounced</li> <li>• has relationships between statements that are sometimes hard to follow</li> <li>• has a fair quality line of argument (information drives argument, rather than other way round)</li> <li>• tends to make claims without sufficient supporting evidence</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• lacks a clear structure or framework</li> <li>• has relationships between statements that are often difficult to recognise</li> <li>• has a poor quality line of argument</li> <li>• makes poor use of evidence to support most of the claims that are made</li> </ul> <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 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.</p>
1-9%	Very bad fail	<p>A submission that does not even attempt to address the specified learning outcomes.</p>



0%	Non submission or plagiarised	A categorical mark representing either the failure to submit an assessment or a mark assigned for a plagiarised assessment.
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## Mode of study

On Campus

## Programme structure

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. 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 Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Research Design and Analysis	PS71054D	15	7	Compulsory	1
Multivariate Statistical Methods	PS71020E	15	7	Compulsory	1
Data Analysis & Visualisation Project	PS71083B	15	7	Compulsory	2
Advanced Quantitative Methods	PS71082B	15	7	Compulsory	2
Dissertation	PS71024C	60	7	Compulsory	1-3
Research Placement	PS71085A	15	7	Compulsory	1-2
EITHER					
Introduction to Coding in R and MATLAB	PS71089B	15	7	Compulsory (one or the other)	1
OR	OR				

Module Name	Module Code	Credits	Level	Module Type	Term
Data Programming (prerequisite for Big Data Analysis)	IS71068B				
<b>Options to the value of 30 credits from the following list:</b>					
Core Qualitative Research Methods (Grad School)	PS71053B	15	7	Optional	1
Critical Analysis (RMIP)	PS71052B	15	7	Optional	1-2
Foundations of Neuroscience	PS74005D	15	7	Optional	1
Big Data Analysis	IS71059B	15	7	Optional (IS71068A is prerequisite for this optional module)	2

## Academic support

Support for learning and wellbeing is provided in a number of ways by departments and College support services that 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 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.

## **Placement opportunities**

The Research Placement optional module aims to provide experiential learning opportunities that are research-relevant (in the broadest sense). It has the aim of enhancing

and consolidating theoretical learning, as well as providing the opportunity to promote personal development, through the offer of a 10-day (or 70-hour) research placement in a research lab in the Psychology Department supervised by an academic member of staff.

## **Employability and potential career opportunities**

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.

## **Programme-specific requirements**

Not applicable

## **Tuition fee costs**

Information on tuition fee costs is available at: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/students/fee-support/>

## **Specific programme costs**

Not applicable