Psychology
Undergraduate study
Courses

Single Honours
BSc Psychology
three years C801
MSci Psychology
with Innovation
four years C804

Why study psychology at Bristol?

The basic curriculum of our BSc Psychology degree emphasises experimental methods. We have a long tradition of organising a unified course comprising lectures, small-group tutorials, seminars, laboratory classes and computer sessions. All of our teaching is research-led, so you will learn from lecturers who are undertaking internationally renowned and cutting-edge research in all major areas of psychology. Our particular strengths are in cognitive (developmental, language, memory and social) and biological (human brain and behaviour, vision, behavioural genetics) psychology. We also have strengths in computational neuroscience and neuropsychology.

You will be able to get involved in current research to enrich your experience and your research portfolio for the future. Through excellence in research, and concern for relevant and contemporary issues, we ensure that our teaching and research fit seamlessly together.

Students at Bristol benefit from state-of-the-art laboratories, with facilities including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), electroencephalography (EEG) recording, eye-tracking, sleep labs and a dedicated virtual reality environment.

91% of students agreed staff are good at explaining things.
National Student Survey 2016, BSc Psychology
All our first-year students take three mandatory units, which introduce key concepts and approaches and experimental methods and analysis, plus an additional 20 units chosen from the University’s open unit catalogue. First-year lectures provide you with a strong foundation in developmental, cognitive, biological and social psychology. In our developmental unit, for example, you will explore major theoretical perspectives covering the development of children from birth through to middle childhood, focusing on the development of perceptual, cognitive, linguistic and social skills.

Our psychological experiments and research methods units run in conjunction with our lecture units, and provide you with experience and training in the investigation, analysis and reporting of a range of psychological phenomena.

Your lecture units are supported by small group tutorials with your personal tutor. Your personal tutor is a member of academic staff who will meet with your fortnightly and develop your study skills and presentation skills to complement the taught content.

Our optional Research Apprenticeship scheme during year one provides pure, lab-based and applied research experience, in addition to ongoing participation in research throughout your degree.

Year two
The second year builds upon these foundations by covering core topics in greater depth in four taught units:
- Cognitive Psychology
- Developmental Psychology and Language
- Social and Individual Differences
- Biological Psychology.

These are assessed through written exams, essays and oral presentations. Your understanding of research methods and conducting psychological investigations will progress to a more advanced level. Your laboratory work will be supported by instruction in more advanced techniques of statistical analysis and in the use of statistical software in preparation for your individual project work in year three.

Year three
The third year is largely option based. The taught component includes a range of lecture units, assessed by examination and coursework, and seminar-based units, typically in groups of 15 to 18 students, assessed by oral presentation and written coursework. In these units you will encounter topics that emphasise detailed knowledge of contemporary psychological issues.

The third year also involves one other major piece of work: your empirical project. Here you will carry out an original piece of independent research, supervised by a member of staff. These investigations may be laboratory-based, or involve carrying out your research in a local school, hospital or business organisation.

In all years of study your lecture units are supported by small group tutorials and seminars, and the University’s online learning environment (Blackboard), as well as independent reading to supplement and consolidate lecture topics. Your personal tutor remains with you for the duration of the degree and is available on request for any issue you wish to discuss.

Assessment
The school uses a variety of methods of assessment, including seen and unseen exams, coursework, laboratory reports, multiple choice questionnaire examination and oral presentations.

MSci Psychology with Innovation
This course combines in-depth subject specialism in psychology with interdisciplinary breadth, creative teamwork and entrepreneurial skills. You will study psychology to gain a solid discipline strength and alongside this apply your subject knowledge to innovate and translate your ideas into plans for social and commercial enterprises.

The course will equip you to use the critical, theoretical and practical skills central to psychology, allowing you to develop your knowledge and skills across a range of areas as you proceed through the course. You will come together with students from other innovation disciplines, such as computer science and history, to learn and apply design and systems thinking to digital and creative ideas and put this into practice, ultimately creating new ventures together.

The MSci Psychology with Innovation follows the same core material as the BSc Psychology alongside units in innovation and gives BPS accreditation. Find out more at bristol.ac.uk/innovation.

92% of students found the course intellectually stimulating.
National Student Survey 2016, BSc Psychology
Our graduates go on to successful careers within psychology-related fields and in a diverse range of other occupations in the UK and internationally. The multidisciplinary and scientific nature of psychology means that you will develop an impressive range of transferable skills: quantitative analysis and research skills; critical evaluation and numeracy; insight into the behaviour of individuals and groups; strong oral and written communication, including report writing and presentation skills; IT skills; and handling and interpreting data. Our degree is a pathway to professional training in psychology (such as clinical and educational psychology) and postgraduate training (MSc, MPhil or PhD) in behavioural and biological sciences, such as psychology, neuroscience, public health and epidemiology. Whatever your career choice, psychology’s blend of specialist knowledge and transferable skills provides you with many of the characteristics most sought after by potential employers.

Careers and graduate destinations

We prefer applicants with one or more science subjects at A-level (or equivalent), reflecting the experimental and evidence-based approach to understanding psychological topics throughout our degree. We accept the following subjects as science subjects at A-level: physical and biological sciences (physics, chemistry, biology, geology), psychology, geography and mathematics. We welcome applications from mature students or candidates with non-standard qualifications. If you are planning to take an Access course we recommend those with a science rather than a humanities/social science basis as providing a more appropriate preparation for our degree.

Further information

Find out more about the School of Experimental Psychology: bristol.ac.uk/expsych.

In August 2018 the School of Experimental Psychology will become part of the new Faculty of Life Sciences.

Making your application

Typical offer for BSc Psychology*

Visit bristol.ac.uk/ug18-psychology for other qualifications.

A-levels A*AA (contextual AAB†) including A in a science subject‡.

IB Diploma 38 points overall (contextual 34†) with 18 points (contextual 17†) at Higher Level including 6 at Higher Level in a science subject‡.

English Language Profile C††

GCSEs Grade B in Mathematics and English.

†For information on contextual offers, visit bristol.ac.uk/ug-apply/#typical-contextual-offers.

‡Psychology and Geography can be included as science subjects.

Selection UCAS or Common Application.

Deferred entry Welcomed.

*The typical offer is indicative only and the University accepts a wide range of qualifications. The information is correct at the time of printing (June 2017); however, we recommend you check the University’s website for the most up-to-date information: bristol.ac.uk/ug-study.

We welcome applications from mature students or candidates with non-standard qualifications. If you are planning to take an Access course we recommend those with a science rather than a humanities/social science basis as providing a more appropriate preparation for our degree.

While interviews are not a standard part of the selection procedure, we tend to interview many of our mature applicants and those applicants with non-standard qualifications.

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The University of Bristol has one of the best employment records in the UK. We are rated sixth in the UK in the QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2016/17 and are the third most targeted university by top UK employers (High Fliers Research, 2017).
Contact us

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If you have any questions about courses, applications or any aspect of being a UK or international student at Bristol please contact the Enquiries Team.

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University guide to the city of Bristol
bristol.ac.uk/citybristol

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Photography
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