

Handbook for the Master of Clinical
Psychology (MCP) Course (742AA) &
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Clinical
Psychology (958AA)
2025

Disclaimer

Potential applicants should check all entry requirements (academic and employment related) prior to applying for any course of study. The University of Canberra accepts no responsibility for decisions made or actions arising from the information provided in this resource.

The information in this booklet is accurate at the time of publication, but may change subsequently.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Welcome.....	5
Introduction.....	5
Admission Requirements.....	5
Master of Clinical Psychology Applications	5
Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology Applications	6
Course Requirement and Prerequisites.....	6
Clinical PhD & Masters Course Description	6
Philosophy	6
Assessment.....	7
Participation Standards and Attendance Requirements	7
Feedback and Complaints Procedures	8
Course Learning Outcomes for Master of Clinical Psychology	9
Course Structure for Master of Clinical Psychology	9
Year 1.....	10
Year 2.....	10
Course Learning Outcomes for the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology	10
Course Structure for Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology	10
Year 1.....	11
Year 2.....	11
Year 3.....	11
Year 4.....	11
Year 5 (4.5)	11
Academic Units.....	11
10071: Introduction to Assessment and Intervention PG	11
6306: Professional Psychological Practice PG	11
11820: Adult Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG.....	12
11821: Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG	12
11822: Psychological Assessment Across the Lifespan PG.....	13
6308: Health Psychology for Clinicians PG	13
11823: Advanced Assessment and Intervention A PG	13
11824: Advanced Assessment and Intervention B PG.....	13
Placement Units.....	14
Clinical Placements.....	14
6313: Practicum Placement 1 PG	14
6314: Practicum Placement 2 PG	15
6315: Practicum Placement 3 PG	15
6316: Practicum Placement 4 PG	15
Research Units.....	15

Research Supervisors.....	16
11825: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 1 PG	17
11826: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 2 PG	18
11827: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 3 PG	18
10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT.....	18
10260: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT	18
10261: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT	19
Appendix: APAC Competencies	20
Year 1 (APAC Level 3) Competencies.....	20
Year 2 (APAC Level 4) Competencies.....	20
Appendix: APAC Standards Glossary	22

Welcome

Welcome to postgraduate clinical psychology training at the University of Canberra, incorporating the degree of Master of Clinical Psychology (742AA) and the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology (958AA).

Introduction

The Master of Clinical Psychology course is a 2-year Level 9 Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) coursework master's (AQF, 2013) externally accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC). The degree comprises coursework units (50%), placement units (25%), and research units (25%). Upon completion, graduates are eligible to apply for full registration as a general psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and are also eligible to apply for the registrar program for the Area of Practice Endorsement (AoPE) of clinical psychology. Admission into the degree is highly competitive, and is based on a combination of GPA, interpersonal skills, and relevant experience.

The Clinical PhD is a 4.5-year full-time commitment during which students conduct independent and specialised research, disseminating the results of this research in either a written dissertation or a portfolio of published works, under the supervision of a PhD panel. Each year admission to this degree is highly competitive, based on GPA, research history, a written research proposal, endorsement from a primary supervisor, as well as successfully meeting all admissions requirements for the Master of Clinical Psychology course.

The degree comprises 108 credit points, with 72 credit points from research units and completion of a PhD thesis, 24 credit points from eight coursework units from the MCP, and 12 credit points from four practicum placement units from the MCP.

Admission Requirements

These courses have an early closing date to submit applications by mid September of every year. For students wishing to apply for the Clinical PhD, PhD scholarship applications typically close at the end of September. Applicants are advised to check the relevant dates on the applications' websites.

Shortlisted applicants (domestic and international) will be required to attend an interview in which their suitability for clinical practice will be assessed. In person interviews are preferred, but in the event that this is not possible, video link can be used. Applicants are expected to attend the interview, whether in person or video link, at the date and time offered to them, no alternative arrangements or exceptions will be made.

Applicants with international qualifications must obtain a determination of equivalence of their qualifications from the Australian Psychological Society (APS). This service can take some time and a fee will be charged by the APS. See the follow webpage for more information, <https://psychology.org.au/about-us/what-we-do/assessing-overseas-qualifications>.

Master of Clinical Psychology Applications

Applicants should check the course webpage for the latest application procedures.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Completion of a four-year APAC accredited sequence in psychology, typically an honours degree, within the last 10 years with a minimum GPA of 75%; and
2. be eligible for, or hold, provisional registration as a psychologist with AHPRA

Applicants must provide:

- current Curriculum Vitae (CV);
- proof of their eligibility for registration as a provisional psychologist with AHPRA (in most cases this is the completion of a four-year APAC accredited sequence in psychology); and
- two referee reports submitted

Queries about applications to the Master of Clinical Psychology course can be directed to the Course Convenor, Dr Clare Watsford (clare.watsford@canberra.edu.au).

Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology Applications

Applicants must apply for both the Master of Clinical Psychology course and the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology Course (<https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/958AA/2/2021>).

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Completion of a four-year APAC accredited sequence in psychology, typically an honours degree, within the last 10 years with a minimum of 1st Class Honours in Psychology (note this is higher than the GPA for the Master of Clinical Psychology); and
2. be eligible for, or hold, provisional registration as a psychologist with AHPRA

In addition to the requirements for Master of Clinical Psychology application applicants must provide:

- referee forms for their PhD application – note these forms are different from the forms required for the master’s application

Queries about applications to the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology can be directed to the Course Convenor, Dr Clare Watsford (clare.watsford@canberra.edu.au).

Course Requirement and Prerequisites

Once a place in the MCP or PhD (Clin Psych) has been offered and accepted, students must obtain registration to practice as a provisionally registered psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). You can find the application form at the following link: <https://www.psychologyboard.gov.au/Registration/Forms.aspx>.

Students **must always maintain their registration as psychologist** in the Master of Clinical Psychology and PhD (Clin Psych) courses. This applies regardless of whether a student is completing coursework, placements, or research. Maintaining registration is the responsibility of the student. If a student’s registration lapses during the course, they risk discontinuation.

The coursework components for the Master of Clinical Psychology course typically start late January with a two-week summer intensive. Orientation to the courses is generally the week preceding the start of the intensives. Attendance at the orientation is mandatory for all commencing students. Attendance at the intensives is mandatory for commencing full-time masters’ students, and those PhD (Clin Psych) students commencing coursework and practicum placements.

The Clinical PhD commences at the beginning of first semester each academic year. Clinical PhD Students will start with their research components and will be required to meet several milestones, indicating they have made sufficient progress on their PhD, before they are allowed to start the master’s coursework and placement units.

The MCP and the PhD (Clin Psych) degrees are not available by external study. International students completing either of these courses must enrol as full-time students.

Clinical PhD & Masters Course Description

Philosophy

The courses are based on the “scientist-practitioner” model, which emphasises that psychological research and the professional practice of psychology are inter-related.

The scientist-practitioner orientation includes:

- a respect for evidence;
- a constant endeavour to achieve rigorous appraisal of and improvement in one’s own practice;
- a constant effort to increase the component of psychological practice that is based firmly on scientific principles and evidence, and to decrease the component that is based on

unsubstantiated speculation, unanalysed experience, intuition, or art. It is recognised however that science progresses by a fusion of these types of cognitive processes (i.e., hypothesis generation often involves intuition and creative speculation followed by experimental justification of these hypotheses).

Within a scientist-practitioner model, clinical psychologists maintain a scholarly and critical approach to the scientific foundations of their profession, and to the evaluation of their own practice. They also retain a desire to contribute to the further development of scientific clinical psychology, and to keep abreast of, and critically appraise, developments by others.

Assessment

A variety of assessment methods is employed throughout the course to determine progress. Given the focus on competency-based learning, students are evaluated with reference to expected standards for their stage of training. Grades are not awarded at the completion of units, except for the master's research project. Each unit will be graded on a complete/incomplete basis; however, individual assessment items will be marked according to specific criteria developed in reference to APAC requirements and competencies (refer to the Appendix for the [APAC competencies](#)). A variety of competencies and skills are assessed throughout the course, through both oral and written methods. Opportunities to resubmit or sit practical assessments again may be offered to students to demonstrate competency against specific criteria, but this option is not guaranteed. All assessment is moderated as per university policy, and the Faculty of Health has a uniform penalty policy for the late submission of assignments. Students should read unit outlines carefully to ensure they understand and meet study requirements, including submission of extension requests where appropriate.

It is the goal of the course that students achieve competence to practice as a professional psychologist in the field of clinical psychology. The areas of competency cover a variety of skills and knowledge required in clinical psychology.

Students entering professional master's level study after the competitive environment of Honours courses may need to keep in mind that developing competence in clinical knowledge and skills is of primary importance. As such, students should make full use of the challenges and opportunities during the course to develop professionally and personally.

Participation Standards and Attendance Requirements

High standards of professionalism and scholarship are expected throughout all components of the course, similar to expectations in an employment setting (e.g., punctuality and standards of dress are important, particularly on practicum placements). At all times, students should be especially mindful of the nature of the work they are doing and the people with whom they will be working. The different components of the course mean that competing demands can challenge organisational abilities. While staff regard academic and professional support to be important to effectively functioning as a clinical psychologist, it is also expected that students demonstrate high levels of self-motivation, self-directed learning, initiative, and independence. Students are encouraged to provide feedback relating to their experience in the course and are expected to do so in a professional and productive manner at all times.

Students are expected to manage their commitments to ensure that program requirements are met and should consider completing the program in a part-time capacity if necessary. The Course Convenor for the Master of Clinical Psychology can be contacted to develop a pathway plan to ensure completion of the course within the maximum six years. The Course Convenor for the Doctor of Philosophy can also be contacted to develop pathway plans to ensure on-time completion in consultation with a student's supervisory panel.

Students are expected to attend all workshops associated with their training. Absences of up to two half-day workshops (or one full-day) may be approved by a unit convenor should the absence represent exceptional circumstances outside the control of the student and be supported by appropriate documentation. Some topics require mandatory attendance as they reflect core competencies, and no absences will be approved for these workshops. Students with approved absences are required to complete a supplementary task to demonstrate competency in the topics missed. Absences exceeding those allowed will result in a fail grade.

The use of GenAI

The University's position is that a student must not use artificial intelligence tools/services for assessment or assessment preparation unless its use is explicitly permitted in the published assessment instructions. As the MCP is a competency-based course, the use of GenAI is not permitted, and any breach will be referred for academic misconduct and will result in a . The University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023 determine whether a behaviour is academic misconduct. Under the Rules, if a student does not follow assessment instructions, then a behaviour may be found to be academic misconduct. Under the Rules if a student does not appropriately reference a source, then a behaviour may be found to be plagiarism.

Feedback and Complaints Procedures

The clinical courses at the University of Canberra encourage students to provide feedback about their experiences in the courses throughout their training. We welcome your suggestions relating to what is working well and areas for improvement across all components, including coursework, placements, research, communication, and documentation. There are numerous methods through which feedback can be provided. This includes through formal written (anonymous) feedback during unit ISEQs, and students are strongly encouraged to provide constructive and considered feedback through this mechanism. The Course Convenors welcome student feedback and will set up meetings promptly with students to discuss personal or course matters in all areas. Students on placement, in addition to speaking with supervisors or site personnel, can also speak with their Placement Coordinator.

When clarification or assistance is required the unit convener or supervisor is the first person to consult. If this does not provide a satisfactory or appropriate result, then the Course Convenor can be approached, followed by the Discipline Lead. Students should ensure they are familiar with grievance processes outlined in university policy and course documents as appropriate.

Students are invited to nominate for two positions as representatives for the first-year and later-year cohorts each year. Student representatives participate in clinical team meetings to ensure that student feedback is provided to staff, and enable a dialogue about issues or changes within the course. Student representatives are appointed for a period of one year, and selected through fair process where multiple nominations are received.

Student representatives are also responsible for canvassing student feedback, and students are also encouraged to provide feedback through this pathway. We understand that students may feel comfortable speaking with their peers about course issues; however, this rarely results in feedback being directed towards staff in the course and may impede the positive change that could follow provision of such feedback. Students are expected to always operate as professionals, and provision of constructive feedback forms part of this development. To support your professional growth, we encourage you to communicate with staff in the course about your concerns.

Professional Memberships

Students are encouraged to take up professional memberships associated with the practice of clinical psychology. Although students are eligible for discounted membership fees, it is recognised that the fees are substantial, which can be a significant financial burden. Students will not be disadvantaged if they choose not to become members of a relevant professional body during their enrolment in the MCP or PhD (Clin Psych). Two professional organisations of interest may include:

- the Australian Psychological Society (APS) [<https://www.psychology.org.au/join/student>]
- the Australian Clinical Psychology Association (ACPA) [<https://acpa.org.au/student-membership/>].

APAC Standards for Accreditation Guidelines

The primary objective of the MCP and PhD (Clin Psych) courses is to provide education in the professional practice of psychology such that the graduate has the skills and knowledge to gain registration and practice as a psychologist. As such, education is at an advanced level, and extends knowledge developed by students in their four-year undergraduate sequence.

The standards for the program are set by APAC, who outline the criteria graduates must achieve through psychology programs. There are five core domains outlined within the standards, including:

- Public safety
- Academic governance and quality assurance
- Program of study
- The student experience
- Assessment

Further information about the standards can be found here:

<https://psychologycouncil.org.au/education-providers/standards/>

Course Learning Outcomes for Master of Clinical Psychology

1. Advanced psychological knowledge about psychopathology across the lifespan, aetiological models (including cultural considerations), epidemiology, and relevant international taxonomies of classification of psychological disorders.
2. Competence in applying advanced psychological knowledge and skills in psychological assessment using multiple modalities.
3. Competence in applying advanced skills to the interpretation and integration of information from multi-modal psychological assessments and multi-disciplinary teams to inform case formulations, diagnosis, and intervention.
4. Competence in applying the scientist-practitioner model and model of evidence-based practice to the field clinical psychology.
5. Development of advanced knowledge of psychopharmacology and models of health as they relate to psychological disorders
6. Application of ethical practice of clinical psychology with both clients and other professions in culturally responsive and culturally safe ways, including working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
7. Advanced skills in critical evaluation of psychological research as it relates to aetiological models and treatment of psychological disorders.
8. Advanced skills in the design, implementation, and production of psychological research as it relates to the field of clinical psychology.
9. Advanced specialist knowledge and skills in areas complementary to the practice of clinical psychology.

Course Structure for Master of Clinical Psychology

The course comprises 48 credit points of study.

- The coursework consists of 24 credit points
- The research component is 12 credit points
- The professional placement component in 12 credit points

The course has been structured for completion over 2 years for full-time students and up to a maximum of 6 years for part-time students, although a 3 year sequence is recommended for those wanting a part-time load. If a student wants to take the course part-time they will need to develop an individual study plan with the course convenor in the first instance.

Year 1

Summer Semester

- 6306: Professional Practice; 3 credit points
- 10071: Introduction to Assessment and Intervention; 3 credit points

Semester 1

- 11820: Adult Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG; 3 credit points
- 11821: Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG; 3 credit points
- 6313: Practicum Placement 1 PG; 3 credit points

Winter Term

- 11822: Psychological Assessment Across the Lifespan PG; 3 credit points

Semester 2

- 11825: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 1 PG; 3 credit points
- 6314: Practicum Placement 2 PG; 3 credit points

Year 2

Semester 1

- 6315: Practicum Placement 3 PG; 3 credit points
- 11823: Advanced Assessment and Intervention A PG; 3 credit points
- 11827: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 2 PG; 3 credit points

Winter Term

- 11824: Advanced Assessment and Intervention B PG; 3 credit points

Semester 2

- 6308: Health Psychology for Clinicians PG; 3 credit points
- 6316: Practicum Placement 4 PG; 3 credit points; 3 credit points
- 11827: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 3 PG; 6 credit points

Course Learning Outcomes for the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology

1. Advanced psychological knowledge about psychopathology across the lifespan, aetiological models (including cultural considerations), epidemiology, and relevant international taxonomies of classification of psychological disorders.
2. Competence in applying advanced psychological knowledge and skills in psychological assessment using multiple modalities.
3. Competence in applying advanced skills to the interpretation and integration of information from multi-modal psychological assessments and multi-disciplinary teams to inform case formulations, diagnosis, and intervention.
4. Competence in applying the scientist-practitioner model and model of evidence-based practice to the field clinical psychology.
5. Development of advanced knowledge of psychopharmacology and models of health as they relate to psychological disorders.
6. Application of ethical practice of clinical psychology with both clients and other professions in culturally responsive and culturally safe ways, including working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
7. Intellectual independence and expert skills in critical evaluation of psychological research as it relates to aetiological models and treatment of psychological disorders.
8. Expert skills in the design, implementation, and production of a substantial body of psychological research as it relates to the field of clinical psychology that constitutes an original contribution.
9. Advanced specialist knowledge and skills in areas complementary to the practice of clinical psychology.

Course Structure for Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology

The Clinical PhD course comprises 108 credit points of study.

- The coursework consists of 24 credit points

- The research component is 72 credit points
- The professional placement component is 12 credit points

The course has been structured for completion over 4.5 years for full-time students. If a student wants to take the course part-time they will need to develop an individual study plan with the course convenor and their supervisory panel in the first instance.

Year 1

Semester 1

- 10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT; 12 credit points

Semester 2

- 10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT; 12 credit points

Year 2

Summer Semester

- 10071: Introduction to Assessment and Intervention; 3 credit points
- 6306: Professional Practice; 3 credit points

Semester 1

- 11820: Adult Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG; 3 credit points
- 11821: Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG; 3 credit points
- 6313: Practicum Placement 1 PG; 3 credit points

Winter Term

- 11822: Psychological Assessment Across the Lifespan PG; 3 credit points

Semester 2

- 10261: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT; 3 credit points
- 6314: Practicum Placement 2 PG; 3 credit points

Year 3

Semester 1

- 6315: Practicum Placement 3 PG; 3 credit points
- 11823: Advanced Assessment and Intervention A PG; 3 credit points
- 10261: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT; 3 credit points

Winter Term

- 11824: Advanced Assessment and Intervention B PG; 3 credit points

Semester 2

- 6308: Health Psychology for Clinicians PG; 3 credit points
- 6315: Practicum Placement 4 PG; 3 credit points; 3 credit points
- 10260: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT; 6 credit points

Year 4

Semester 1

- 10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT; 12 credit points

Semester 2

- 10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT; 12 credit points

Year 5 (4.5)

Semester 1

- 10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT; 12 credit points

Academic Units

6306: Professional Psychological Practice PG

Unit Summary

This unit introduces students to the foundations of professional and ethical practice, roles and demands of working as a professional psychologist. It includes teaching on the scientist-practitioner perspective, evidence-based practice, ethics and codes of conduct, relevant legislation, record keeping and report

writing, practice management, the organisational contexts for the practice of psychology, personal safety, negotiation skills and conflict resolution, and respect for diversity, including Indigenous and multicultural issues.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of potential ethical issues involved in practising psychology and competence using the APS Code of Ethics, its accompanying Guidelines, and other relevant sources;
2. Apply the various legal and regulatory frameworks to professional psychological practice; and
3. Demonstrate knowledge and awareness of human diversity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, and working with other professionals.

10071: Introduction to Assessment and Intervention PG

Unit Summary

This unit is an introduction to evidence based ethical psychological assessment and intervention techniques in preparation for practicum placement and engagement with clients. The aim of the unit is to provide students with core skills in counselling and assessing clients' presenting problems, developing formulations, and treatment planning, using a CBT framework.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate competence in foundational clinical psychology assessment skills and in delivering psychoeducation;
2. Apply self-reflective practice; and
3. Apply knowledge and skills required for ethical practice in preparation for client engagement.

11820: Adult Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG

Unit Summary

This unit covers the aetiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of several common psychological disorders in adults in preparation for students starting practica. Students will learn about contemporary and culturally appropriate aetiological models, assessment, and taxonomies of psychopathology.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of various aetiologies of adult psychopathology, including current diagnostic/taxonomic systems and their scope;
2. Use advanced psychological knowledge and related skills to formulate assessment and treatment of several common adult psychopathologies; and
3. Apply advanced psychological knowledge to culturally responsive assessment and treatment planning of common adult psychopathologies.

11821: Child and Adolescent Psychopathology, Assessment, and Treatment PG

Unit Summary

This unit covers the aetiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of several common psychological disorders in children, adolescents, and their families in preparation for students starting practica. Students will learn about contemporary and culturally appropriate aetiological models, assessment, and taxonomies of psychopathology. Ethical and cultural considerations for working with younger populations will also be covered.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the various aetiologies of child and adolescent psychopathology, including current diagnostic/taxonomic systems and their scope;
2. Use advanced psychological knowledge and related skills to formulate assessment and treatment of several common child and adolescent psychopathologies; and
3. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of legal, ethical, and cultural considerations related to working with young people and their families.

11822: Psychological Assessment Across the Lifespan PG

Unit Summary

In this unit students will learn advanced principles, methods, procedures, and critical evaluation of behavioural, psychometric, and clinical assessment of a range of psychological problems with specific focus on practical application, in a culturally responsive way. Students will be provided training in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of standardised tests including, but not limited to cognitive functioning, executive functioning, learning, and personality across the lifespan.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Apply an advanced understanding in the principles of psychometrics used in the practice of clinical psychology;
2. Demonstrate advanced skills in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of standardised psychological tests across the lifespan; and
3. Select, apply, and interpret psychometrics across the lifespan, in an appropriate and culturally responsive way.

11823: Advanced Assessment and Intervention A PG

Unit Summary

This unit provides a professional basis for clinical psychologists who assess, diagnose, and provide interventions for complex presentations and clients with chronic mental health difficulties. The unit also addresses the skills required to work with clients from a range of complex clients.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of theory and practice of evidence-based treatment options;
2. Apply skills in advance assessment and diagnosis of complex mental health disorders; and
3. Engage in culturally responsive assessment of complex mental health problems.

11824: Advanced Assessment and Intervention B PG

Unit Summary

This unit provides a professional basis for clinical psychologists who assess, diagnose, and provide interventions for clients in specialist contexts as part of their clinical practice (e.g., forensic, medical, community). The unit also addresses the skills required to work with clients from a range of specialist client groups.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate theory and practice of evidence-based treatment options in specialist settings;
2. Demonstrate skills in advance assessment and diagnosis of complex mental health disorders in specialist settings; and
3. Engage in appropriate cultural assessment of complex mental health problems in specialist settings.

6308: Health Psychology for Clinicians PG

Unit Summary

This unit introduces students to key skills, theories, and practice issues in health psychology. Specific health problems are conceptualised from a biopsychosocial perspective. Emphasis is given to working with those who are currently ill and those who are not engaging in health protective behaviours. Pharmacological interventions currently used in Australia are introduced and cultural factors and interprofessional practice in this setting are also considered.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of the areas of health in which psychological practitioners work, including behavioural medicine, rehabilitation, and health promotion;
2. Critically evaluate the interaction of biopsychosocial and cultural factors in aetiology, progression, and recovery of health problems including among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities;
3. Apply knowledge of and practice in the use of relevant psychological assessment and intervention approaches in both acute and chronic conditions; and
4. Apply knowledge of psychopharmacology, clinical, and interdisciplinary implications regarding the use of psychotropic medications.

Placement Units

Clinical Placements

Practical experience is obtained via four clinical placements conducted during the course, the first two of which are conducted in the Psychology Clinic, hosted in the Health Hub (Building 28 on the UC Campus). The Health Hub is an interprofessional space and hosts 11 different allied health disciplines. The second two placements are conducted in the community in association with various government and non-government organisations and private practices. Practical placements are a minimum of two days per week in the psychology clinic and two to three days per week in the community.

According to the APAC's (2019b) Evidence Guide for their accreditation standards, students are required to have "at least 1,000 hours of placement across a minimum of three placements" (p. 4); our course achieves this over four placements. The 1,000 placement hours comprise direct client and client-related activities¹, with a minimum of 400 hours being direct client activities.

While on placement, as per APAC's Standards (2019a) and Evidence Guide (2019b) students will be supervised by an appropriately trained and qualified supervisor. Students will receive a minimum of 1 hour of supervision per 7.5 placement hours for their first 180 hours on placement, after which subsequent placements will be supervised at a ratio of 1 hour per 15 placement hours.

For more specific information about placements, their requirements, and supervision, please refer to the relevant Unit Outlines and policies and procedures posted on respective units' Canvas Sites.

6313: Practicum Placement 1 PG

Unit Summary

This unit involves students beginning their practicum placements in the Psychology Clinic within the University of Canberra Faculty of Health Clinic.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate skills in assessment, formulation, evaluation, and treatment of clients with a range of psychological problems; and

¹ Refer to the [APAC Glossary of terms](#) in the appendix of this document for definitions of these terms

2. Demonstrate skills required to work collaboratively as a psychologist within a team and independently.

6314: Practicum Placement 2 PG

Unit Summary

This unit involves students continuing their practicum placements in the Psychology Clinic within the University of Canberra Faculty of Health Clinic.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced skills in assessment, formulation, evaluation, and treatment of clients with a range of psychological problems;
2. Demonstrate advanced skills required to work collaboratively as a psychologist within a team and independently; and
3. Engage ethically, professionally, and in culturally informed ways with clients and other professionals, and demonstrate a critical approach to contextual and cultural factors.

6315: Practicum Placement 3 PG

Unit Summary

In this unit, students will practice and apply clinical psychology skills and therapeutic techniques with clients in an external setting.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Apply advanced skills and competence in assessment, formulation, evaluation, and treatment of clients with a range of psychological problems;
2. Demonstrate appropriate ethical and professional practice;
3. Apply advanced psychological knowledge to culturally responsive assessment and interventions, including consulting and collaborating with other professionals as required; and
4. Demonstrate competence in self-reflective practice in a clinical psychology setting.

6316: Practicum Placement 4 PG

Unit Summary

In this unit, students will consolidate their advanced practica knowledge and skills and apply clinical psychology skills and therapeutic techniques with clients in an external setting.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Apply high level advanced skills and competence in assessment, formulation, evaluation, and treatment of clients with a range of psychological problems;
2. Engage ethically, professionally, and in culturally informed ways with clients and other professionals, both independently and interprofessional; and
3. Demonstrate high level advanced competence in self-reflective practice in a clinical psychology setting.

Research Units

The research units for the master's research projects are unit numbers 11825, 11826, and 11827. The research units for the doctoral thesis are unit numbers 10255, 10260, and 10261. The doctoral thesis units all have the same unit summary and unit learning outcomes, their only difference is their credit point weighting.

Research Supervisors

Academic staff who are likely to be available for master's research project supervision are listed below; however, please note that supervisor availability can change each year and a list of available supervisors will be provided at the start of year in preparation for 11825: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 1 PG.

For students completing the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology, they will have already organised as supervisory panel as part of their application process and acceptance into this course. Applicants for the PhD are encouraged to have conversations and make contact with potential supervisors well before applications are due.

Staff member	Research Interests
Ananthan Ambikairajah	Genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors that influence brain health. Large epidemiological datasets and advanced statistical and neuroimaging techniques are used to address these research questions. View Profile
Rowena Beecham	Psychological therapy with people with neurocognitive impairment; the interaction between culture and cognition/ experience of psychological distress; models for teaching cognitive assessment; evaluation of construct validity and clinical applicability of cognitive tests; evaluation of the impact and usefulness of neuropsychological assessment and intervention.
Doug Boer	Assessment and treatment in: intellectual disability and offending, mental health and offending, sex offenders, violent offenders, spousal abuse, and all areas of family violence. View Profile
Tricia Brown	Social Psychology; risk-taking behaviours in young adults (particularly involving risky driving); stereotyping and prejudice; mental illness stigma; social identity. View Profile
Dean Buckmaster	Youth suicidal behaviour and non-suicidal self-injury; depression; substance use; bipolar disorder and personality disorders; program implementation and evaluation for client populations in need of access to effective evidence based psychological interventions; Dialectical Behaviour Therapy.
Petra Buergelt	Community, environmental, positive, and Indigenous psychology; adaptive capacities and resilience; disaster risk reduction and climate change; transformative learning and education; Indigenous knowledges; spirituality and alternative healing approaches including art and nature therapy; teamwork, collaboration, and leadership; migration only qualitative research. View Profile
Janie Busby Grant	Cognitive psychology – future-oriented thinking, episodic memory, decision making. Human-robot interaction. View Profile
Dimity Crisp	Mental health and wellbeing (in students, health professionals, and older adults); help-seeking and mental health literacy. View Profile
Andrew Flood	Neuropsychology (particularly the neurophysiology of pain); Sports psychology (particularly the psychological aspects of endurance exercise performance). View Profile
Amanda George	Risk-taking behaviours among young adults (alcohol and other drug use, risky driving); social anxiety; personality psychology View Profile
Phil Kavanagh	Evolutionary psychology; social psychology; personality psychology; life history theory; evolutionary mismatch; sociometer theory; self-esteem; the Dark Triad;

Staff member	Research Interests
	narcissism, Machiavellianism; psychopathy; evolutionary models of psychopathology. View Profile
Richard Keegan	Interoception and Emotional Awareness; Resilience (sport, military); Qualitative methods; Effectiveness of Applied/Clinical Practice. View Profile
Sally Kelty	I mix social and health psychology with forensic psychology and criminology. I have various projects around stress management in emergency services personnel, youth risk factors for early offending careers, grievance escalation stages in online dating and online abuse, bystander invention in domestic violence, topics around the psychology of police investigations. View Profile
Vivienne Lewis	Body image; Eating disorders; Well-being and mental health. Qualitative Researcher. View Profile
James Neill	Positive psychology; Motivation and emotion; Environmental psychology; Social media; Educational psychology; Adventure therapy; Outdoor education. View Profile
Caroline Ng	Multicultural identities and psychological well-being; diversity ideologies; intergroup relations; social psychology. View Profile
Léan O'Brien	Identity; Pro-environmental behaviour; Well-being and mental health; Utopianism. View profile
Carly Pymont	Psychosocial stress and mental health. Mediators of the stress relationship such as attachment. Anger as a stress response. View Profile
Debra Rickwood	Youth & adolescent mental health & wellbeing; Help-seeking; Service use & engagement; Prog. eval.; Promotion, prevention, early int. & recovery in mental health. Technology and mental health. View Profile
Jeroen van Boxtel	Cognitive Psychology. Autism spectrum disorder, predominantly broader autism phenotypes, and perceptual/cognitive functioning (like action understanding). Link between attention and consciousness perception. Noisy brains, and their influence on perception and performance. Visual illusions. View Profile
Clare Watsford	Child and adolescent mental health; Young people's help-seeking behaviours and experiences of mental health services; Factors affecting engagement in therapy; Perinatal mental health. View Profile

11825: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 1 PG

Unit Summary

This unit is the first stage in the psychology research project. Working with supervisors, students will develop a research question relevant to the profession of psychology, including completing a background and scoping review for their topic. This unit will form the basis for the production of the final master's research project.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically review psychological literature relevant to their research question;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of cultural and ethical considerations relating to psychological research; and
3. Plan a master's level piece of psychological research

11826: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 2 PG

Unit Summary

This unit is the second stage in the psychology research project and an extension of Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 1. Working with supervisors, students will develop a research proposal and complete an ethics application (where applicable). This unit will form the basis for the production of the final master's research project.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Design a master's level psychology research project; and
2. Apply cultural and ethical considerations to a piece of psychological research.

11827: Postgraduate Psychology Research Project 3 PG

Unit Summary

In this unit, students will build on their knowledge and skills acquired in Postgraduate Psychology Research Projects 1 and 2. Students will conduct research and produce a report based on their proposal and ethics application. This will involve data collection and analysis, writing a master's level report, and regular meetings with their research supervisor.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Select appropriate methodological techniques and demonstrate advanced competence in research methodology; and
2. Demonstrate advanced competence in written communication of professional psychology research.

10255: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R FT

This research unit is a full-time, 12 credit point research unit.

Unit Summary

Candidates are required to undertake original research resulting in a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding and/or the application of knowledge within a designated area of study within the field of clinical psychology.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:

1. To successfully complete the doctoral thesis in clinical psychology candidates will: develop independent research skills within the field of clinical psychology; formulate a research problem or issue; select and use appropriate conceptual and methodological skills; prepare a substantial and well-ordered thesis demonstrating a thorough understanding of the state of knowledge in the area of inquiry and the relationship of the research to the broader framework of the field(s) of study.

10260: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT

This research unit is a part-time, 6 credit point, research unit designed to replace the 6 credit point research unit in the masters sequence.

Unit Summary

As above for 10255

Unit Learning Outcome

As above for 10255

10261: Doctoral Thesis in Clinical Psychology R PT

This research unit is a part-time, 3 credit point, research unit designed to replace the 3 credit point research units in the masters sequence.

Unit Summary

As above for 10255

Unit Learning Outcome

As above for 10255

Appendix: APAC Competencies

APAC Level 3 competencies relate to the 5th year of university training, after Level 2 competencies which are Honours year (4th year) level competencies. Level 3 competencies are generally expected to be have been met by the end of the first year of the MCP; however, as you are completing a packaged Level 3 and 4 coursework masters, some of these competencies may be met during the second year (e.g., 3.17)

Year 1 (APAC Level 3) Competencies

Taking into account the broad diversity of clients, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically:

- 3.1 Demonstrate successful (prior or concurrent) achievement of pre-professional competencies.
- 3.2 Apply evidence-based and scientific methods to professional practice across the lifespan in empirically valid and culturally responsive ways.
- 3.3 Employ professional communication skills, in a culturally responsive manner, with a range of socially and culturally diverse clients.
- 3.4 Perform appropriate standardised psychological testing, as part of broader assessment, to assess and interpret aspects of functioning.
- 3.5 Identify psychological disorders using a recognised taxonomy.
- 3.6 Conduct professional interviews and assessments and synthesise information from multiple sources, including assessment of risk, to formulate a conceptualisation of the presenting issues to determine the most appropriate interventions, including management of risk.
- 3.7 Monitor outcomes and modifications based on evolving case formulation, including health and health concerns, family and support networks, and organisational, cultural or community contexts, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the client within their wider context.
- 3.8 Interpret and communicate findings in oral and written formats, including formal psychological reports, using culturally appropriate language.
- 3.9 Implement appropriate, empirically supported interventions, and monitor clients' progress and intervention outcomes.
- 3.10 Demonstrate respect for the skills and contribution of other professionals.
- 3.11 Work effectively with a range of professional and support staff in the workplace and communicate and collaborate effectively, within the bounds of ethical and legal requirements.
- 3.12 Operate within the boundaries of their professional competence, consult with peers or other relevant sources where appropriate, and refer on to relevant other practitioners where appropriate.
- 3.13 Rigorously apply professional practice policies and procedures, including as they relate to referral management and record-keeping, across a range of workplace settings and with recognition of different organisational cultures and practices.
- 3.14 Engage in self-reflective professional practice, taking account of the impact of their own values and beliefs, and taking appropriate actions as a result.
- 3.15 Evaluate the effectiveness of their professional practice, identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes where needed.
- 3.16 Critically evaluate contemporary scientific literature to inform practice.
- 3.17 Investigate a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of psychology.

Year 2 (APAC Level 4) Competencies

Taking into account the broad diversity of clients and development across the lifespan, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks, mental health practice standards, occupational settings and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply advanced psychological knowledge to competently and ethically:

- 4.2.1 Apply advanced psychological knowledge of the following to their practice in clinical psychology:
 - i. psychological theories of the aetiology, progression and/or recovery, precursors and sequelae of psychological disorders, including incidence, prevalence and predisposing, risk, protective and maintenance factors

- ii. both developmental systems and biopsychosocial models of health as they apply to psychological disorders as well as the multiple factors that impinge on mental health across the lifespan
- iii. psychopathology and relevant international taxonomies of classification of psychological disorders, including severe, complex and chronic mental illness
- iv. psychopharmacology, particularly as it relates to complex psychological disorders.

4.2.2 Apply advanced psychological knowledge to culturally responsive assessment in the area of clinical psychology, including:

- i. evaluation of psychological disorders with reference to relevant international taxonomies of classification, including disorders of moderate to severe level and complexity
- ii. use of assessment tools and processes related to a wide range of psychological disorders, and including psychometric tests, structured or semi-structured interviews, behavioural observations, measures of functionality and processes that enable collection of collateral information from multiple sources, including groups and systems relevant to the client
- iii. integration, interpretation, and synthesis of clinical psychological assessment data with the knowledge of psychopathology to inform case formulation, diagnosis and intervention
- iv. evaluation of symptom reduction, therapeutic outcomes, the therapeutic alliance and client progress throughout therapy.

4.2.3 Apply advanced psychological knowledge to culturally responsive interventions in the area of clinical psychology, including:

- i. selection, tailoring and implementation of appropriate evidence-based interventions on the basis of an initial case formulation, whether individuals, dyads or carers/dependents
- ii. monitoring of outcomes and modifications based on evolving case formulation and intra- and interpersonal processes, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the client or clients within their wider context
- iii. consultation and collaboration with other professionals regarding clinical planning and referrals, particularly in the context of complex case presentations
- iv. evidence-based practice in the understanding and management of psychological disorders, including across the age range and across modalities such as e-health approaches.

Appendix: APAC Standards Glossary

Below is a relevant selection of a glossary of terms used by APAC in their Standards (APAC, 2019a) and Evidence Guide (APAC, 2019b).

Client:

- Client includes individuals, groups and/or organisations that are provided with services by a psychologist or a provisional psychologist.

Client-related activities:

- Client-related activities support students to acquire graduate competencies as relevant to the level of graduate competency and/or the area or areas of practice undertaken, and are distinct from direct client activities (though supportive of it). Client-related activities may include the following activities: phone calls, focus groups, and meetings in the service of data-gathering or case management in support of service provision to clients; file review; report writing; team reporting and meetings where the student reports to the team to advise of client progress; delivery of psychoeducational content to service providers/organisation; completing log books and assessment tasks for the placement; supervision; professional development activities (e.g., simulated activities, role plays, workshops); travel with regard to client sessions.

Travel, in regard to client care, should be limited to a maximum of 20% of client-related activity hours; this is particularly relevant for regional and remote interns.

Direct client activities:

- Direct client activities provide opportunities for students to acquire graduate competencies as relevant to the level of graduate competency and/or the area or areas of practice undertaken, and may include the following activities directly in support of client-focused assessment or intervention: phone calls with clients; face-to-face contact with clients (including e-health modes of delivery); and meetings where the student reports to the team/organisation (e.g., in the context of a nursing home, an employee assistance program), if the team/organisation will enact interventions to the client or is in fact the focus of interventions; work with clients, their families, employers, supervisors, teachers, health providers or legal guardians with regard to client care.

References

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council. (2019a). *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs Version 1.2*. Author.

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council. (2019b). *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs: Evidence Guide Version 1.1*. Author.

Australian Qualifications Framework Council. (2013). *Australian Qualifications Framework* (2nd ed.).