UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

Handbook for

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY (HONOURS)

Course 769AA

2022–2023

Course Convenor

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Table of Contents

1 Welcome

Thanks for your interest in the Bachelor of Science in Psychology (Honours) program at the University of Canberra (UC).

An Honours degree builds on knowledge and skills acquired during undergraduate study and helps to prepare for a professional career in psychology. Honours is a dedicated fourth year of tertiary study during which students are given considerable autonomy and independence in developing learning, research, and organisational skills whilst working under the supervision of experienced academic staff. Half of the Honours course is coursework focused on applied topics and skills and the other half consists of an independent research thesis.

Studying Honours provides a vital capstone to an undergraduate psychology degree. A successful Honours degree provides opportunity to continue in the psychology profession by qualifying to undertake an internship or entering a Masters or PhD program. Honours is a period of intense social, professional, and intellectual development during which students become better acquainted with features of academic life such as seminars, workshops, peer review, research design and communication of scientific findings.

Honours in Psychology can be an incredibly rewarding experience, especially in undertaking an own original research project. In this way, you can study a topic of particular interest and contribute new knowledge in a chosen field, whilst experiencing the benefits of working in a close, collegial way with an academic expert. Students commonly report that their Honours study was the most challenging, but also the most rewarding, of their university career.

2 The Discipline of Psychology

The Discipline of Psychology is located within the School of Health Sciences and the Faculty of Health at UC. The Discipline of Psychology offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) and approved by the Psychology Board of Australia (PBA). Staff who work within the discipline are engaged in a range of applied research and teaching in fields such as health psychology, social psychology, cognitive psychology, clinical psychology, sport psychology, forensic psychology, and environmental psychology.

Links:
- https://www.canberra.edu.au/about-uc/faculties/health/study/psychology
- https://www.psychologycouncil.org.au
- http://www.psychologyboard.gov.au

3 Course Overview

The Bachelor of Science in Psychology (Honours) course at UC requires completion of 24 credit points, consisting of:

1. **Honours Thesis in Psychology**   (12 credit points)
2. **Research Methods in Psychology**   (3 credit points)
3. **Issues in Psychological Research and Practice** (3 credit points)
4. **Psychological Measurement**   (3 credit points)
5. **Counselling Psychology**   (3 credit points)

Link: https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/769AA/4/2023

3.1   Accreditation

The Bachelor of Science in Psychology (Honours) at UC is accredited by the APAC and the PBA. On completion, graduates may apply for Associate Membership of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) and provisional registration as a psychologist with the PBA. After the completion of two years of approved supervised practice or postgraduate studies, the provisional registration may be changed to full registration. Information about any updates to these requirements is available on the PBA website.

The APAC *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses* (2019) state that graduates of a Bachelor Honours Degree (categorized as a program for pre-professional competencies) should:

2.1 Demonstrate successful (prior or concurrent) achievement of foundational competencies.
2.2 Demonstrate appropriate interpersonal communication and interview skills in situations appropriate to psychological practice and research. This includes active listening, clarifying and reflecting, effective questioning, summarising and paraphrasing, developing rapport, appropriate cultural responsiveness and empathic responding.
2.3 Demonstrate basic assessment strategies in situations appropriate to psychological practice and knowledge of psychometric theory and principles of the construction, cultural considerations, implementation and interpretation of some of the more widely used standardised psychological test instruments.
2.4 Explain how basic psychological intervention strategies can be applied across a range of contexts.
2.5 Investigate a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of psychology.

(Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs;
Australian Psychology Accreditation Council, p12)

Links:
- http://www.psychology.org.au
- https://apac.au/education-providers/standards/

3.2　Career opportunities

Graduates may either seek employment or apply to enrol in a Master or Doctoral program. Employment opportunities exist in many human service organisations.

Graduates commonly find jobs in areas such as youth work, drug and alcohol treatment, advertising and marketing, policy and research, consumer research, industrial relations, human resources, program co-ordination, justice and policing, child protection, and social welfare.

Provisional psychologists work in a variety of settings including educational, human services, community, health, and corporate organisations under the supervision of an experienced registered psychologist. To become eligible to apply for full registration as a psychologist, graduates need to complete a coursework Masters degree in psychology (two years full-time) or a clinical PhD (four and half years full-time).

3.3　Delivery mode

This course is offered as FLEXIBLE; however, some on-campus attendance may be required. Please contact the course convener if you have questions about the delivery mode.

3.4　Cost

The course provides Commonwealth Supported (HECS based) places. For more information, see UC Fees and Contributions: http://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/courses/glossary/fees-and-contributions.

4 Entrance Requirements

4.1 Eligibility

The minimum requirements for entry to the course are:

- completion of a three-year sequence in psychology (or a course deemed equivalent) which is accredited by APAC and approved by the PBA, within the last 10 years; and

- a Credit average (GPA of 5) or higher in the required (core) psychology units (i.e., do not count general 1st year, or non-psychology units).

4.2 Ranking

Demand exceeds the number of places, thus eligible applicants are ranked by GPA for the APAC-required second and third year psychology (or equivalent) units. GPA is calculated using as per UC policy: P = 4, CR = 5, DI = 6, HD = 7. For more information, see the Measures of Academic Achievement Policy and Procedures –
https://www.canberra.edu.au/Policies/PolicyProcedure/Index/533

https://www.canberra.edu.au/Policies/PolicyProcedure/Index/534

Where applicants are equally ranked, particular attention is paid to:
- marks and performance in the Level 2 and 3 psychology research methods units
- students who completed their undergraduate psychology degree at UC.

GPA cut-offs may vary from year to year. In 2022, offers went to applicants with a GPA of 5.75 and above.

4.3 Number of places

There are approximately 50-60 new places each year (40-50 starting in Semester 1 and ~10 starting in Semester 2). The number of new places depends, in part, on the availability of academic staff and thesis supervisors in any given year. There are approximately 150-200 eligible applications per year.

4.4 Indigenous Australian pathways

UC aims to increase Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student numbers in all courses. Up to two designated places per course may be made available for Indigenous Australian students who meet the standards for likely completion of the course but may not be offered places in the standard admissions process. Prospective students who identify as Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and meet the minimum entry requirements for the course are encouraged to apply.

4.5 Work experience

Ranking of applications is based on academic results. Work experience is not necessary. Additional documentation can be included in the application, but there is no guarantee that it will be examined or considered.

4.6 Deferring

Offers for ranked courses such as Honours cannot be deferred. If you receive an offer, but wish to start in a later teaching period, you will need to reapply.

4.7 Other options

If you do not get an offer, consider these other options:

1. **Apply for entry to 4th year APAC-accredited courses at other institutions**. For a list of courses, see http://www.psychologycouncil.org.au. Other institutions may have higher or lower entry cut-offs.
2. **Consider pursuing a career path in related allied health fields**. For example, consider working in counselling, youth work, social work, education, or human resources. You may be eligible for PG training in such areas. For example, consider the Master of Counselling at UC: https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/SCM401/1/2023
3. **Consider pursuing a 4th year in an alternative health field.** For example, The Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) https://www.canberra.edu.au/course/HLH201/1/2023
4. **Consult with the UC Careers Service**. Take a look at the big picture and discuss other career options:
   https://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/student-experience/employability
   https://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/support-at-uc/careers-support
5. **Improve your GPA and reapply**. The GPA for ranking purposes is based on your *best attempt* at each of the required psychology units. It is possible to undertake units on a non-award basis or complete equivalent units at another APAC-accredited institution. Note that if you've already completed a unit through HECS, then you may be required to pay up-front fees. Note that reattempting units does not guarantee entry, as it requires careful calculation of the required increase in grades and substantial personal investment to increase grades. Given the cut-off for entry may change from year to year, increasing your GPA may not necessarily lead to an offer if the cut-off changes.

4.8 How to apply

Domestic student applications are submitted online, via the UC Applicant Portal:
https://student-canberra.studylink.com/index.cfm?event=security.showLogin&msg=eventsecured&fr=sp&en=default
Note: You **do not** need to complete an Honours Supplement in addition to this form, even if this is requested during the application process. For Psychology Honours, research topics and supervision are arranged **after** you have been accepted.

International applicants should:

1. Enquire about the administrative aspects of admissions with UC's International Office (https://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/apply-to-uc/international-student-applications).

2. Get overseas qualifications assessed by the APS for equivalency to an APAC undergraduate psychology course before applying (https://www.psychology.org.au/About-Us/What-we-do/Assessing-overseas-qualifications)

4.9   Due dates

For first round offers:
- **Semester 1 2023** applications are due by **30 October, 2022** – first-round offers will be made November-December 2022.
- **Semester 2 2023** applications are due by **30 June, 2023** - first-round offers will be made July 2023.
- **Semester 1 2024** applications are due by **30 October, 2023** – first-round offers will be made November-December 2023.
- **Semester 2 2024** applications are due by **30 June, 2024** - first-round offers will be made July 2024.

Further offers may be made if sufficient first-round offers are declined.

5 Course Components

5.1   List of units

The Bachelor of Science in Psychology (Honours) is a 24-credit point course which consists of the following components:

1. **7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology** (12 credit points): An empirical thesis of between 8,000 and 10,000 words, worth 50% of the overall final grade.

2. **10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG** (Semester 1, 3 credit points): Advanced research methods, design, ethics, data analysis, and related issues in applied psychological research.

3. **11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG** (Semester 1, 3 credit points): Ethical and professional issues in psychological research and practice, understanding cultural competence, emerging and priority areas for research and practice of psychology.

4. **6489 Psychological Measurement PG** (Winter Term, 3 credit points): Issues in psychological measurement, testing, assessment.

5. **9815 Counselling Psychology PG** (Semester 2, 3 credit points): An introduction to counselling psychology theory and skills.

5.2   Timetable

Classes are offered during the day. There are no evening classes. Coursework units are delivered during Semester 1, Winter Term, and Semester 2. Semester dates are available from the principal dates web page: https://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/apply-to-uc/key-dates Classes are usually concentrated on a couple of days per week. Check more exact times through the timetable system. Meetings with a research supervisor are arranged separately.

5.3   Study patterns

The course involves the equivalent of one year of full-time study (24 credit points). For domestic students, the course can be studied part-time. For example:

1. 12 months (two semesters, starting S1) or
2. 18 months (three semesters, starting S2) or
3. 24, 30, or 36 months (starting S1 or S2)

International students must enrol full-time and thus can only commence at the beginning of the first semester. Examples of one to two year course structures follow.

Full-time (2-semester) Structure, starting Semester 1:		
Year 1 Semester 1	**Year 1 Winter Term**	**Year 1 Semester 2**
7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology 10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG 11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG	6489 Psychological Measurement PG	7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology cont'd 9815 Counselling Psychology PG

Part-time (3-semester) Structure, starting Semester 2:

		Year 1 Semester 2
		9815 Counselling Psychology PG

Year 2 Semester 1	Year 2 Winter Term	Year 2 Semester 2
7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology 10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG 11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG	6489 Psychological Measurement PG	7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology cont'd

Part-time (4-semester) Structures, starting Semester 1:

Year 1 Semester 1	Year 1 Winter Term	Year 1 Semester 2
11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG (or this unit could be done in Year 2 Semester 1)	6489 Psychological Measurement PG (or this unit could be done in Year 2 Winter Term)	9815 Counselling Psychology PG (or this unit could be done in Year 2 Semester 2)
Year 2 Semester 1	**Year 2 Winter Term**	**Year 2 Semester 2**
10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG (or this unit could be done in Year 1 Semester 1) 7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology (or this unit could be done in Year 1 Semester 1)		7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology cont'd (or this unit could be done in Year 1 Semester 2)

Part-time (4-semester) Course Structure, starting Semester 2:

		Year 1 Semester 2
		9815 Counselling Psychology PG
Year 2 Semester 1	**Year 2 Winter Term**	**Year 2 Semester 2**
7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology 10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG	6489 Psychological Measurement PG	7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology cont'd
Year 3 Semester 1		
11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG		

Part-time (5 or 6-semester) Structures, starting Semester 1 or 2, are also possible, based on models above.

6 Unit Descriptions

6.1   7366 Honours Thesis in Psychology
Description: https://www.canberra.edu.au/unit/7366/6/2023

Convener: Dr Janie Busby Grant   *Credit points*: 12 (Semester 1 and 2)

Pre/co-requisites: 10112   *Class contact*: workshops + supervision

Syllabus: The syllabus is based on the requirements of the Australian Psychological Accreditation Council. Students will undertake an individual supervised research project in psychology, comprising topic definition, literature review, design, data collection and analyses, and write up a thesis of between 8,000 and 10,000 words. The project will be conducted within appropriate ethical guidelines. The topic will reflect the mutual interests of supervisor and student.

Learning outcomes: On successful completion of the unit, students will be able to:

1. Design and execute a research project relating to a psychological issue to a standard acceptable to the profession;

2. Independently undertake an analysis of data derived from quantitative and/or qualitative designs in psychology; and

3. Communicate the results of an independent research project in a form acceptable to the profession.

6.2   10112 Research Methods in Psychology PG
Description: https://www.canberra.edu.au/unit/10112/4/2023

Convener: Dr James Neill   *Credit points*: 3 (Semester 1)

Prerequisites: None   *Class contact*: 3 hours per week

Syllabus: This unit will consider advanced research methods, design, ethics, data analysis, and related issues in applied psychological research.

Learning outcomes: Upon successful completion, students will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate research designs in psychology;

2. Analyse research data using appropriate statistical analyses and statistical software;

3. Effectively communicate research findings.

### 6.3	11760 Issues in Psychological Research and Practice PG

Description: https://www.canberra.edu.au/unit/11760/1/2023

Convener: Dr Dimity Crisp			*Credit points*: 3 (Semester 1)

Prerequisites: None			*Class contact*: Up to 6 hours per week

Syllabus: This unit engages students in advanced critical analysis of emerging and priority areas for research and practice of psychology (e.g. cognitive neuroscience, ageing). It directly addresses cultural competence and the understanding of ethical and professional issues central to ensuring best practice in psychology.

Learning outcomes: On successful completion of this unit, students will be able to:
1. Evaluate and apply the relevant codes of ethics and guidelines as they relate to conducting research and the professional practice of psychology;
2. Demonstrate cultural competence as it relates to research and professional practice within the discipline of psychology; and
3. Critically evaluate research in emerging areas of research and practice in psychology.

### 6.4	6489 Psychological Measurement PG

Description: https://www.canberra.edu.au/unit/6489/5/2023

Convener: A/Prof Amanda George & A/Prof Tricia Brown

Credit points: 3 (Winter Term)

Prerequisites: None			*Class contact*: Up to 6 hours per week

Syllabus: In this unit, students study the principles, practice, and issues in psychological measurement and its application to psychological testing and assessment in professional settings, including conceptual underpinnings and psychometric aspects of test construction and evaluation, including reliability, validity, and standardisation. Students gain practical experience in the administration, scoring and interpretation of selected measures and learn to appreciate the potential utility and shortcomings of psychological measurement in general, and in relation to specific professional psychological tests.

Learning outcomes:

1. Delineate the assumptions, functions, and desirable properties of psychological measures.

2. Critically review the psychometric, ethical, and sociocultural issues in the construction, validation, implementation and interpretations of psychological measures with critical consideration of their appropriateness when working with people from culturally diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and

3. Critically evaluate the reliability, validity, and standardisation procedures of selected psychological tests.

6.5 9815 Counselling Psychology PG

Description: https://www.canberra.edu.au/unit/9815/1/2023

Convener: Dr Vivienne Lewis   *Credit points*: 3 (Semester 2)

Prerequisites: None   *Class contact*: Up to 6 hours per week

Syllabus: This unit explores theory, knowledge and methodology in the professional practice of psychology and prepares students for entry to professional psychology programs. The unit focuses on advanced theoretical and empirical knowledge in the history and philosophy of psychological interventions (including psychoanalytic, behavioural, phenomenological, and cognitive-behavioural models) and develops practical interviewing and counselling skills. The unit examines evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention and counselling models and critiques the philosophical, theoretical, and empirical bases of evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention.

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

1. Knowledge of theoretical and empirical bases underpinning evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention;

2. Knowledge of interviewing and counselling skills; and

3. Reflective practice through reviewing their own practice of interviewing and counselling.

7 Resources

7.1   Technical resources

Psychology staff will advise on technical aspects of research, such as use of software, equipment, and other university resources. Psychology students have access to a PC computer lab, with 24/7 access. These and other UC computers are equipped with a variety of software programs, including SPSS. Laboratory space in Building 12 is also available for research activity - ask your supervisor about what is currently available.

7.2   Financial resources

The Discipline of Psychology does what it can financially to support research and extends support for Honours research projects. Examples are photocopying of questionnaires, and equipment that need to be purchased. However, no guarantees can be made as to the availability of funds. Discuss needs for financial assistance with your thesis supervisor.

7.3   Library resources

In addition to UC library access, students may also use other academic libraries in the ACT and the National Library. ACTUAL borrowing (https://anulib.anu.edu.au/actual/actual_recip.html) includes the ANU, ACU, ADFA, CIT libraries on presentation of a current UC Student ID card and a letter verifying the student's Honours status from the course convenor. Ask the Faculty of Health Administration Team (health.student@canberra.edu.au) to arrange a letter of verification.

7.4   Course website

A dedicated website is available for students enrolled in the course. This website allows for online sharing of information and discussion amongst students and with academic staff.

7.5   Scholarships and prizes

1. **UC scholarships**: Various scholarships may be available. For more info, see the UC Scholarships Office: https://www.canberra.edu.au/future-students/financial-support/scholarships-and-financial-support

2. **Non-UC scholarships**: Non-UC scholarships are also available, such as through the APS: https://www.psychology.org.au/About-Us/What-we-do/Awards-and-scholarships

3. **ACT APS 4th year prize**: The top-ranking Honours in Psychology student each year is nominated for the ACT APS 4th year Prize. For more info, see https://www.psychology.org.au/About-Us/What-we-do/Awards-and-scholarships/APS-Awards/APS-prize

4. **UC CAP research award**: The Discipline of Psychology offers a $300 Research Award for Honours students who submit their thesis for journal publication soon after thesis submission. For more info, see the Honours thesis unit website.

8 Research Supervisors

8.1 Supervisor research interests

Academic staff who are likely to be available for Honours thesis research supervision are listed below; however, please note that supervisor availability can change each year.

Staff member	Research interests
Ananthan Ambikairajah	Genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors which 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 (including ADHD); interactions between culture and cognition/experience of psychological distress; evaluation of the impact and usefulness of neuropsychological assessment and intervention **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**

Staff member	Research interests
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; 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**

Staff member	Research interests
Léan O'Brien	Identity; Pro-environmental behavior; 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**

8.2 How do I find a supervisor?

Once you have accepted your offer you will be sent further detailed information about available supervisors and research projects and will be invited to nominate your preferred supervisor/s. Instructions on how to do this will be provided. **Note that first preferences cannot be guaranteed** (e.g., because of workload allocations some supervisors may be oversubscribed).

Prior to nominating your preferred supervisor/s you are welcome to (but not required to) approach academic staff to discuss possible projects. When meeting with potential supervisors, you might like to discuss:
- The supervisor's research interests and research plans for the coming year
- Your own interests and ideas
- Your working style and supervisor's supervisory style

9 Honours Classifications

Honours Classifications are based on a final mark for the course which is calculated as the weighted average of unit marks. Part final marks are rounded up to a whole number. UC grade/mark cut-offs are then applied:

- H1 = HD (85+) (1st class Honours)
- H2a = DI (75+) (2nd class Honours)
- H2b = CR (65+) (2nd class Honours)
- H3 = P (50+) (3rd class Honours)

10 More Information

If you have further questions or queries about the application process, please contact the Student Centre (1300 301 727 or student.centre@canberra.edu.au). For course-specific questions, email health.student@canberra.edu.au or contact the course convenor (Dimity.Crisp@canberra.edu.au). For information about specific units, please contact the appropriate unit convener.