About the course

Course overview
This MSc course provides a dynamic and current perspective across the various areas of clinical applications of psychology. Specifically, it aims to enable you to gain in-depth knowledge of the theories of psychopathology from childhood to adulthood, and of clinical applications of psychology in health and wellbeing. You will acquire basic counselling and cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) skills, and will attain a comprehensive knowledge of the professional issues relevant to clinical practitioners. The course will also provide opportunities for detailed and advanced study (via the dissertation) of a chosen area in clinical applications of psychology, enabling further development of your practical research skills.

What you will study
The course covers:
- theories of adult and child psychopathology;
- the biopsychosocial aspects of health and illness;
- the evidence base for psychological and behavioural change interventions in mental and physical health;
- advanced research methodology and statistics;
- basic skills in counselling and knowledge of cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) theory and practice; and
- issues relevant to clinical practice, such as context and settings for clinical practitioners, ethics and diversity.

Careers
This MSc in Clinical Applications of Psychology is aimed at psychology graduates. It can be considered as a bridging masters-level course that would favourably position students for subsequent clinical training (eg doctoral-level training in clinical psychology). Consequently, this course does not lead to a professional qualification as a clinical psychologist, nor does it guarantee entry to such a course. However, it is anticipated that completion of this course will significantly enhance your knowledge of the clinical applications of psychology and will benefit future career paths, be they in the domain of clinical training and practice or research, or other related areas of psychology.

Employability
Student development and enhancement of postgraduate employability are taken extremely seriously at Kingston University. This course will lead to further development of a number of key skills that are highly valued by employers and will enhance employability, such as written abilities, teamwork, statistical analysis, critical thinking, independent thinking and time management. Employability is also embedded within the personal tutor scheme, where you will meet with your personal tutor and discuss career options and be made aware of professional careers in psychology.

Personal tutor scheme
The personal tutor scheme has a key role to play in supporting and enhancing your academic and personal development and ensuring that you are able to make the most of your time at university. Each student will be allocated a personal tutor early in the first semester. Your personal tutor will provide academic guidance and advice throughout your university career, support you in making key transitions, and will foster a more personal academic relationship between yourself and teaching staff.

Course content

Students on this MSc course will take four, year-long, 30-credit modules. Students also take the psychology dissertation, carried out over the entire academic year.

Core modules
Psychopathology Across the Life Span focuses on the problems and disorders that have their onset in infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. The module provides an in-depth analysis of the factors relevant to diagnosis, assessment, aetiology, risk and protective factors, maintenance and treatment of psychological disorders. Key psychological disorders related to early development that are covered on the course include regulatory behaviour problems, prematurity, autism, language difficulties and externalising and internalising problem behaviours. The adult psychological disorders examined include anxiety, mood, schizophrenia and eating disorders. Particular emphasis is placed on discussing and evaluating the empirical evidence for different therapeutic approaches in the treatment of these disorders.

Professional Practice aims to help you develop an awareness of the professional issues relevant to clinical and counselling psychology and psychotherapy in the UK. You will learn about the structure of these professions within the National Health Service and the UK, and the roles, ways of working and issues and challenges that face clinical practitioners. Themes such as ethics, diversity and research in clinical settings will be discussed. The module will also provide an introduction to counselling and cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) theory and skills. This will be done by reviewing the concept of counselling and the various counselling paradigms. The core conditions in the therapeutic process will be examined, and your acquisition of generic counselling skills (eg listening, attention giving, reflection, empathy) will be facilitated during interactive workshops. The module progresses to the CBT component in which fundamentals of this approach are presented. The development of knowledge of CBT skills, such as assessment and problem formulation, identifying and modifying negative thoughts, promoting behavioural change and guided discovery, are facilitated through interactive lectures.

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Clinical Applications of Psychology examines how an understanding of health and the treatment of illness can be advanced through knowledge and techniques derived from the behavioural sciences. In the first semester, you will explore different approaches to the prevention and treatment of illness using behavioural methods, and will identify various psychological factors that contribute to successful rehabilitation programmes. Examples of topics covered in the first semester include cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, smoking and alcohol use, obesity, chronic pain, HIV/AIDS, and women’s reproductive health. In the second semester, you will have a choice of activities focused either on clinical practice or research practice. If you choose clinical practice, you will be expected to spend a minimum of 50 hours in a placement of your choosing, supervised by a professional from within the chosen institution, as well as by your academic supervisor at Kingston University. The extent of the role within the placement setting will vary with each student. You will be expected to apply and demonstrate your knowledge of psychology as applied to a given clinical setting. Our Department of Psychology has several links with organisations in the wider Kingston area that have enabled us in the past to facilitate students’ allocation to various placements. However, it is still expected that you will arrange your own work placements, the suitability of which will be discussed and agreed upon with the module leader and/or the course director. If you are interested in research, a suitable supervisor will be allocated so that you receive first-hand experience of working with an established researcher in an area of interest and, in that way, further develop your research knowledge and skills.

Research Design and Analysis provides an advanced coverage of the design and analysis of psychological research. Building on a revision of intermediate inferential statistics (eg ANOVA, factorial ANOVA, regression and multiple regression), the module moves quickly towards a consideration of more-advanced and specialised quantitative methods (eg multivariate statistics, co-variance, structural equation modelling, factor analysis, meta-analysis and advanced regression techniques) and their applications. You will be introduced to principles of questionnaire design, evaluation and data analysis, along with advanced qualitative research methods. Laboratory workshops combine formal teaching with hands-on activities. This module provides an important foundation for the development and execution of your master-level research dissertation.

The Dissertation project will be based on a thorough literature review, and will usually require the collection and analysis of empirical data. Through independent study and tutorials with a project supervisor, you will further develop your research skills and critical thinking abilities during this module. You will use experimental, observation and/or survey methods of the kinds used by academic psychologists.

Teaching staff

Our MSc in Clinical Applications of Psychology is taught by active researchers in psychology. Areas of expertise are described below.

Dr Chris Askew’s specialisms include anxiety disorders in children and fear-related beliefs, attitudes and behaviours in adults and children.

Dr Elisa Back has research interests in developmental psychology; in particular, relating to cognitive development, theory of mind and autism.

Dr Georgia Butler’s research covers drug use, eating behaviours, impulsivity, risk-taking behaviours and gambling.

Dr Sabina Mannan’s research is focused on disorders of perception, attention, and working memory in neurological populations.

Dr Ana Nikicovic’s research is in the area of perinatal psychology and addictive behaviours. In particular, she is interested in the role of cognitive and metacognitive processes in anxiety and mood disorders, and in physical health conditions.

Dr Louisa Pavey has research interests in social psychology; in particular, social cognition, the influence of health-risk information on behaviour, prosocial behaviours and wellbeing.

Dr Jess Prior’s research involves using qualitative methods to explore issues concerning facial disfigurement and impairment, particularly in young people.

Dr Muthanna Samara has research interests in developmental psychopathology. This includes the effects of early childhood experiences (such as bullying, premature birth and PTSD) on psychological development.

Professor Philip Terry’s specialist areas of research include recreational drug use, problem drinking and addictive behaviours.

Dr Jo Van Herwegen’s research focuses on cognitive development, especially language and social development, in typical and atypical populations such as Williams syndrome, SLI, autism and Down’s syndrome.

Dr Tushna Vandrevala’s research focuses on understanding the impact of living with long-term health conditions (e.g. living with dementia) and stress and burnout in health and social care workforce.

Dr Nora Vyas’s research focuses on schizophrenia, psychopathology, magnetoencephalography, position emission tomography, neuroscience and genetics.

Research publications

Our staff have had their research published in peer-reviewed journals. Here is a selection of examples of their work:

- Fernie, Bruce A. Murphy, Gabrielle, Wells, Adrian, Nikicovic, Ana V. andSpada, Marzantnio M (2015) Treatment Outcome and Metacognitive Change in CBT and GET for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy, ISSN (print) 1352-4658
Clinical Applications of Psychology MSc

Entry requirements
- We will accept entrants with at least an upper-second class BSc(Hons) or BA(Hons) in a subject where psychology is the major topic of study.
- Applicants should have British Psychological Society (BPS) eligibility (UK applicants) or equivalent (overseas applicants).
- Where a candidate’s first language is not English, advanced English language competence in the form of appropriate certificated learning (IELTS requirement of 6.5, with 7.0 in Writing, and a minimum of 5.5 in all other elements or equivalent) must be demonstrated, as detailed in Kingston University’s Admission Regulations. Please see the course webpage for details of individual component requirements.

Attendance/delivery
Our MSc Clinical Applications of Psychology is taught over two semesters. The compulsory dissertation is completed over the full academic year.

Duration
One year full time or two years part time

Assessment
There is a variety of assessment methods employed on this course, including essays, in-class tests, presentations, unseen examinations, laboratory reports and a dissertation.

Tuition fees
Please see the course webpage for information on tuition fees.

How to apply
Apply online at www.kingston.ac.uk/pgclinicalpsychology2016 – click on ‘Apply for this course’.

Location
Located beside the River Thames, Kingston University is within the London travel-pass zone. Easily accessible from surrounding areas such as Surrey and Middlesex, its local stations (Kingston; Surbiton) are also only 25 minutes from Waterlooo.

Further information
Please contact the Faculty’s Admissions Office with any further queries.
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