##

**MSc Forensic Psychology**

**Faculty of Business, Law**

**and Social Sciences**

**Department of Psychology**

This document is presented in three sections:

## Section One

This section will provide students with key information on their learning experience and how it will be continuously enhanced this will include;

* Programme Philosophy and Aims
* Programme Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy
* Statements of Intent for key learning experience themes

This section aims to address Quality Enhancement and Learning & Teaching excellence across the student learning experience.

## Section Two

This section addresses regulatory and quality assurance requirements for the purposes of programme validation and mapping of the student learning experience.

## Section Three

This section collates the Module Guides from across the programme.

## Section One

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| Programme Philosophy |
| The core aim of the course is to prepare you to work with clients and professionals in a range of forensic and forensic-related settings. The course integrates psychological theory with the development of practical skills and an understanding of professional practice. Equipped with a sound knowledge of key theoretical and applied issues in forensic psychology, you will gain not only a critical appreciation of theoretical and factual concepts, but also an awareness of the strengths and limitations of research evidence. This is in accordance with The Division of Forensic Psychology Training Committee’s (DFPTC) aim to develop forensic psychologists with a core body of knowledge and skills to ensure the highest of standards leading to Chartered Membership (CPsychol) and full membership of the Division of Forensic Psychology (DFP). Training in forensic psychology is typically conducted in two stages to achieve the standards for CPsychol and full membership of the DFP: Stage 1 and Stage 2. The first stage involves completion of a British Psychological Society (BPS) accredited Master’s degree in forensic psychology. BCU’s MSc Forensic Psychology programme has been accredited by the BPS DFPTC as meeting the first stage requirements for an academic course providing the highest standard of psychological knowledge and expertise, demonstrating a commitment to personal and professional development and high ethical standards of practice, teaching and research.Forensic psychologists work empirically and theoretically: that is, they adopt a scientist-practitioner perspective. UK forensic psychologists have contributed to the development of research and assessment tools, their implementation, and best practice guidance in legal contexts, including civil and criminal; at home and internationally. This combination of empirical base, theoretical understanding, and use of reputable guidelines ensures they deliver research, interventions and other forensic services of the highest standard. In conjunction with being equipped to teach or supervise other forensic professionals, forensic psychologists aim to create and sustain inclusivity and diversity across the domains in which they work. As with all other professional psychologists their work is subject to ethical, cultural and reflective practice in collaborative supervision with other psychologists, to achieve service user engagement and goals with particular populations, across diverse settings in dealing with particular problems. This programme begins this first formal stage in the process for you to become Chartered and/or Registered Forensic Psychologists.Stage One Accredited Masters’ degrees are designed to map onto the four core competencies required of forensic psychologists: (1) planning and managing psychological interventions; (2) research; (3) consultancy, teaching and training, and (4) generic professional (psychology) skills. In addition to these core competencies, forensic psychologists may acquire a range of other skills such as managing and bringing about change in thinking patterns during behavioural change interventions. Skills acquired during training are theoretically based and highly transferable across a range of contexts. The same behavioural change principles, for example, are applicable in settings as wide ranging as reducing the risk to the public of offending to enhancing investigation processes, and working with individuals and groups to the benefit of self, wider communities and society.Forensic psychologists work with those who may be imprisoned for long periods, including those serving indeterminate sentences, and can be responsible for accredited treatment programmes both in prisons and in the community, individual counselling, and writing risk assessment reports for the Parole Board. They also work with those who are the victims of crime. Interventions may be undertaken with those who have committed serious offences including murder, grievous bodily harm, domestic violence, rape and arson as well as with offenders who have mental health difficulties, personality disorders and those who have drug addictions or have misused other substances. Other criminal justice organisations also employ forensic psychologists, be it to assist victims, witnesses in court processes or investigations, to act as an ‘expert witness’, and/or to support the police and/or other law enforcement agencies. In addition, forensic psychologists have high level research and consultancy skills that enable them to develop appropriate and targeted research studies. These can range in scope from the analysis of outcomes of a service provision to large scale publishable research. Indeed, forensic psychologists have made significant contributions to international research focusing on a range of issues relevant to psychological applications relevant to the criminal justice system using evidence-based practice to guide their approaches as reflective science-practitioners.The programme upholds Birmingham City University’s four core values of:* Excellence - We take pride in ensuring the highest quality standards of academic achievement and professional service delivery.
* People focused - We value everyone, recognising that what we do is for the benefit of all those connected with the University.
* Partnership working - We work constructively with each other, our students and wider University community to create strong and successful working relationships.
* Fairness and integrity - We take a fair and balanced approach to our activities and are mindful of the impact of our actions.

Incorporated also are the British Psychological Society values of: * Respect - Psychologists value the dignity and worth of all persons, with sensitivity to the dynamics of perceived authority or influence over clients, and with particular regard to people’s rights including those of privacy and self-determination.
* Responsibility - Psychologists value their responsibilities to clients, to the general public, and to the profession and science of Psychology, including the avoidance of harm and the prevention of misuse or abuse of their contributions to society.
* Competence - Psychologists value the continuing development and maintenance of high standards of competence in their professional work, and the importance of preserving their ability to function optimally within the recognised limits of their knowledge, skill, training, education, and experience.
* Integrity - Psychologists value honesty, accuracy, clarity, and fairness in their interactions with all persons, and seek to promote integrity in all facets of their scientific and professional endeavours.

An awareness of current UK legislation applicable to the work of forensic psychology is promoted alongside facilitating an understanding of the complex issues involved when forming professional, particularly therapeutic relationships with clients and the issues and impact of working in highly secure, medium levels of security, and open or community forensic settings. Integral to this is the need to reflect upon and monitor one’s behaviour.Underpinning the programme is therefore the upholding of ethical principles, conduct, attitudes, and judgements through promoting and delivering the highest standards of behaviour, the expression of clear ethical principles and standards and, by providing discussion opportunities on these issues. The dignity and worth of all persons, acting in the interests of others, and recognising the potential conflict between assisting offenders and protecting the public are emphasised.In addition to providing teaching on the BPS’ Code of Ethics and Conduct and relevant supplementary ethical guidelines, you are made aware of the Health and Care Professions Council’s (HCPC) Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students. This includes formal teaching on ethics, embedding ethical principles within all modules and ensuring you understand the ethical frameworks that apply to their research, how to engage with these, as well as being aware of the ethical implications of the research that they encounter and working with people more generally. The programme will also seek to foster appropriate understanding of, and competencies in, ethical decision-making and practice, both at the general level and specific to the sorts of situations and contexts that applied psychologists face in their work, at the appropriate level. In evaluating an understanding of working ethically, there are in place mechanisms for identifying and dealing with academic and professional misconduct.The programme is delivered by a specialist staff team who have academic and/or professional backgrounds in forensic psychology. Their particular strengths help shape the programme with their professional contacts facilitating guest lectures by those currently working in forensic settings. This is an approach encouraged by the British Psychological Society’s Partnership and Accreditation Committee who are keen to create flexibility for programmes to develop distinctive identities, by making the most of particular strengths around research and practice shared by their staff team, or those that are reflected in the strategic priorities of their Department or University. Indeed, programmes are encouraged to develop specific emphasis and focus on some areas in more depth than others, to reflect the areas of strength of the staff team delivering the programme, or to promote a distinctive identity for the programme as a whole. As such, this programme has developed strong ‘assessment and treatment of offenders, ‘forensic and transferable skills’, ‘investigative psychology’, ‘psychology of law and justice’, and ‘victimology’ modules. These also build on the research undertaken by staff team members and emphasise the demonstrable research culture, evidenced by the active current publication record of members of the programme team and other staff allied to the delivery of the programme. |
| Programme AimsThis section articulates the programme level learning outcomes framed by the five themes of the Academic Plan. |
| 1. Pursuing Excellence
 | As a BPS accredited Masters’ programme you are supported to develop a range of core and transferable skills that are central to forensic psychology practice and to a range of other areas of employment. These are outcome based and cover:**Critical evaluation**Critically evaluating the current knowledge, theory, and evidence base relevant to the discipline (note: this may comprise both psychological theory and knowledge from other disciplines), and understand that this is an important first-step for all work/activities.**Skills**Identifying and developing skills and capabilities relevant to progression to forensic psychology practice.**Psychological enquiry**Using a range of techniques and research methods applicable to psychological enquiry.**Application**Applyingrelevant ethical, legal, and professional practice frameworks (e.g. BPS, HCPC), and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.**Communication**Communicating effectively (verbally and non-verbally) with colleagues, research supervisors, and a wider audience.**Reflection and synthesis**Critically reflecting on and synthesising all of the above to inform your developing identity as a forensic psychology Masters’ student.**Dissemination**You should be able to communicate and report your work in a range of appropriate written (e.g. professional reports, journal papers, conference posters) and oral (e.g. presentations, one-to-one feedback) formats. |
| 1. Practice-led, knowledge-applied
 | This programme reflects contemporary learning, research, and practice in psychology as the purpose of this Stage 1 training provision is to build upon undergraduate knowledge and skills to provide an in depth knowledge and understanding of the discipline. This is informed by current scholarship and research, including a critical awareness of current issues and developments in forensic psychology. This knowledge and understanding, and the associated core skills, will support you in your progression to Stage 2 training, where you can begin to develop your practice under supervision. |
| 1. Interdisciplinarity
 | While you will be provided with training in forensic methods primarily from a psychological standpoint, we will also familiarise you with the perspectives of a range of professions involved in the criminal justice system. In this the programme takes into account the Health and Care Council’s (HCPC) Standards of Proficiency (profession-specific knowledge) including:* understanding the structure and function of the human body, relevant to forensic practice, together with a knowledge of health, disease, disorder, and dysfunction
* being aware of the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process
* recognising the role of other professions in health and social care
* understanding the theoretical basis of, and the variety of approaches to, assessment and intervention
* understanding the impact of differences such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, culture, religion and age on psychological well-being or behaviour
* understanding the application of psychology in the legal system
* understanding the application and integration of a range of theoretical perspectives on socially and individually damaging behaviours, including psychological, social, and biological perspectives
* understanding theory and its application to the provision of psychological therapies that focus on offenders and victims of offences
* understanding effective assessment approaches with individuals presenting with individual and / or socially damaging behaviour
* understanding the application of consultation models to service-delivery and practice, including the role of leadership and group processes
* understanding the development of criminal and antisocial behaviour
* understanding the psychological interventions related to different client groups including victims of offences, offenders, litigants, appellants and individuals seeking arbitration and mediation
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| 1. Employability-driven
 | This programme is accredited by the British Psychological Society. BPS accredited Masters level courses in Forensic Psychology are a Stage 1 Qualification and enables access to the BPS Stage 2 Qualification in Forensic Psychology. This can then lead to membership of the BPS as a Chartered Psychologist, Full Membership of the BPS Division of Forensic Psychology, and registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Forensic Psychologist. In addition to providing a route to becoming a Practitioner (Forensic) Psychologist, this Masters’ degree enables you to have the core required knowledge to undertake a forensic based PhD or to engage in further forensic orientated research projects. It also offers the opportunity of enhancing employment prospects with other criminal justice agencies and health care providers in both secure and community settings working with offenders, victims, or those with specific psychological vulnerabilities as well as within academia. |
| 1. Internationalisation
 | Based on our BPS forensic psychology standards, that have applicability world-wide, and the applicability of our degree content to different contexts, our programme is suited towards internationalisation. With interdisciplinary perspectives and technological considerations underpinning both course content and assessment, many of the skills needed for postgraduates to work in a forensically based international setting are incorporated into the degree. Communication of knowledge and the understanding of culture are also covered in detail on the course, ensuring our postgraduates are ready to work in a global context.For both national and international students this programme will also:* Equip you with a detailed critical understanding of the key theoretical and applied issues in forensic psychology, including the development of offending behaviour, re-offending, the effects of offending on victims, and the assessment and treatment of offenders. In this ethical principles and thinking are key and underpin all modules.
* Enable you to acquire an advanced ability to design research, conduct statistical analysis, evaluate, and scientifically report research in forensic psychology.
* Enhance your skills in communication, group work, professionalism and ICT so that you can perform at a high level of competence in these respects.
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| Programme Learning, Teaching & Assessment Strategy  |
| **Programme Learning Outcomes**In accordance with BPS requirements, with successful completion of this programme you will attain the following outcomes: **Research and research methods**You will have the ability to use a range of techniques and research methods applicable to advanced scholarship in the discipline. You will learn how to conduct qualitative and quantitative research of relevance to forensic psychology, and you will conduct at least one empirical study. You will have the appropriate skills and capabilities to collect and analyse data relevant to forensic psychology. **The legal and criminal justice context for forensic psychology**You will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of the psychological theories and evidence of relevance to processes in the justice system, including: the legal framework of the civil and criminal justice systems; processes of investigation; the legal process; the process of detention; working with litigants, appellants, and individuals seeking arbitration and mediation; and interdisciplinary and multi-agency working.**Assessment and formulation**You will be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of different approaches to assessment and formulation in relation to assessing individuals, groups and / or organisations. You will also be able to demonstrate a familiarity with the processes and tools of assessment in line with the particular focus offered within this programme.**Interventions**You will demonstrate a critical understanding of the range of interventions available for offenders, patients and at risk individuals, victims / survivors, professionals, groups and organisations. You will understand different approaches, and be able to identify strengths and weaknesses of these approaches to inform the selection of appropriate interventions. You will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.**Client groups**You will have the knowledge and skills to enable you to progress to working with a range of client groups including: different types of offenders, patients and at risk individuals; victims / survivors; individuals across the lifespan (including children and young people in conflict with the law); males and females; professionals, groups, and organisations.**Forensic settings**You will have the knowledge and skills to enable you to progress to working within a range of settings and contexts relevant to forensic psychology, including: prisons; secure units; hospitals; mental health; police; courts (including criminal, family and civil); community settings; charities and social enterprise. You will understand issues of organisational culture and systems, and the ways in which these impact on the practice of forensic psychologists and other professionals. Your understanding of legal and professional practice frameworks, though relevant to the full Stage 1 curriculum, will be particularly relevant to your developing understanding of the work of forensic psychologists in different settings.**Development and training**You will be able to recognise the need to take responsibility for your own professional development, and you will therefore understand the principles and utility of reflective practice for your current and future development as a forensic psychology student, practitioner, or academic. You will also understand the forensic psychological theories and evidence underpinning the development and training of others.**Advice and consultancy**You will demonstrate a critical understanding of the forensic psychological theories and evidence relevant to working with organisations to contribute to the development of practice, guidance and / or policy. You will also understand the principles and procedures that forensic psychologists use when evaluating the practice of organisations and conducting consultancy. **Programme Teaching**Our learning and teaching principles are underpinned by practice-based and enquiry-led approaches. Both approaches will expose you to a range of learning activities that offer you opportunities to apply psychological theory and research to contemporary forensic phenomena. This will not only enable you to understand how people respond in varying forensic situations, but will also encourage you to challenge misconceptions about human behaviour and society as they relate to forensic psychology. A unique aspect of our programme is the on-going development of our modules, combining core forensic psychology in applied contexts supported by visiting practitioners. These applied modules reflect real world forensic contexts. This will give you a more interdisciplinary and holistic perspective of Forensic Psychology. You will explore why people commit crimes, how the society we live in perceives and treats offenders and victims of crime, the legal and criminal justice system and innovative, ‘cutting-edge’ investigative psychological techniques. You will be taught by academics and professionals who are active researchers with relevant qualifications (e.g. Chartered Psychologists, Registered Forensic Psychologists, PhDs in Psychology and Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching), ensuring that you will receive a curriculum which is up to date and relevant to today’s forensic issues. We are also continuously updating our teaching methods and on-line technologies to support and provide you with a blended learning experience. We have further ensured that our professionally accredited Master’s degree programme is inclusive to all students by taking a global perspective to the content of your degree. We also acknowledge that our teaching and assessment methods should be easily accessible to all students, regardless of race, gender, or disability.**Learning and Teaching content**To help you achieve the above learning outcomes, we have carefully planned the curriculum so that Term 2 modules build on the content of Term 1 modules. This ensures that your learning is progressive. During the first term full-time there are the ‘dissertation project sessions’, along with ‘psychology of law and justice’, ‘research methods’, and ‘victimology’ modules; with second term modules being ‘advanced research methods’, ‘assessment and treatment of offenders’, ‘forensic and transferable skills’, and ‘investigative psychology’. The dissertation is submitted in September at the end of the academic year.Part-time students study ‘research methods’ and ‘victimology’ in the first term of their first year and ‘assessment and treatment of offenders’ and ‘investigative psychology in the second term. In their second year they study ‘psychology of law and justice’ and have ‘dissertation project sessions’ in the first term with ‘advanced research methods’ and ‘forensic and transferable skills’ modules in the second term. The dissertation in submitted in September at the end of the second academic year.At the start of your Masters’ learning journey, we will manage your transition to Level 7 teaching by clarifying the core elements and structure of each module and emphasising the need for you to be more critically aware and to evaluate more critically research findings and current, sometimes conflicting, theories than was the case with your undergraduate studies. The dissertation, which is empirically focused, will enable you to undertake real-world quantitative or qualitative based research that will assist your understanding of individual behaviour, group functioning, or organisational performance and enhance your employment opportunities with a wide range of criminal justice agencies or, for some, in non-forensic settings.You will also further develop your psychological literacy skills, particularly your writing and presentation skills. This will include writing research reports and essays according to APA (6th ed.) style. You will also learn how to retrieve and organise effectively more sophisticated information than was the case at undergraduate level, handle primary source material critically and enhance your capacity to make defensible, well-argued, judgements. There will also be an increased emphasis on practical and transferrable skills. You will collect, comprehend and examine data effectively, with the opportunity to become increasingly computer literate in a number of statistical packages and experimental equipment.Specialist hardware and software has been purchased for teaching and research activities with the potential for students being taught how to use it, as part of their own research and learning. Equipment includes a fully functional EEG kit and dedicated laboratory; two eye-tracker kits; SPSS software; MATLAB software; E-Prime software; Inquisit software; various psychometric assessments and questionnaires; video recording equipment and portable audio recording equipment.In order for you to become an attractive postgraduate for employers, we will encourage you to problem solve, critically evaluate information and will provide opportunities for developing your emotional intelligence and resilience. You will work in small group settings that emulate collaboration within a working environment. Your presentation and communication skills will also be developed through the course as part of the assessment process and in group exercises. You will also develop the capacity to work independently with the planning of your work, completing your research ethics form, and undertaking your research project being three opportunities to further develop your academic, intellectual, and professional skills.**Your Learning and Teaching experience**.The range and depth of skills required from successful postgraduates in forensic psychology requires that a range of learning, teaching, and assessment strategies are employed on this programme. Learning takes place in the University through face-to-face teaching sessions, the University’s virtual learning environment, and in criminal justice settings. Learning and teaching on the course takes varied forms including lectures, workshops, personal tutorials, staff office hours, independent study, electronic learning, reflective thinking, court visits, prison visits, and discussion groups. To ensure that you are prepared for face to face teaching you will be expected to engage in pre-sessional tasks which will include reading recommended book chapters, journal articles, and pre-prepared material. Much of your learning will be self-directed, independently lead.**The assessment of your learning and teaching (formative and summative).**We have clearly aligned your learning outcomes, teaching content, and teaching approaches to your summative assessments. Our lectures though are much broader than this and provide both the context and additional material to enable you to have a fuller understanding of the module you are studying. A distinct feature of your postgraduate degree programme is the range of formative activities that are offered prior to the submission of your summative (formally assessed) work. Formative opportunities are integral to your learning and understanding as they articulate the requirements for summative assessments. The verbal or written feedback from these learning activities are also designed to improve and contribute to your learning. Examples of formative activities include comments on drafts essays, research proposals, ethics applications, dissertation chapters, and individual presentations. We also offer scheduled one to one meetings and office hours for more detailed feedback if required. The formative activities will help you complete your summative assessments with a clear focus and confidently. Your formative feedback will feed into a diverse range of practice based summative assessments which include essay and report writing; data analysis reports; individual and group presentations; reflective practice reports, and examinations. Once you have completed each module, your formative and summative feedback can be “fed-forward” to enhance future learning. **Our expectations of you as a student.**We expect you to take an enquiry-led and practice-based approach to your studies. Our students are expected to be the drivers of their own learning experience. We will provide the tools to establish both core and enhanced academic skills and psychological literacy. This will allow you to become increasingly autonomous, enabling you to supplement your knowledge with independent research and utilise the skills that you gain to solve real life problems. You are encouraged to effectively utilise feedback to improve future work. Our expectation is also that you attend all the teaching sessions offered. Merely reading the notes of others won’t give you the insight needed to fully understand subject content or the depth required in your answers. The teaching session allows the lecturer to explore subject material with you and typically provides you with an opportunity to ask questions. These teaching sessions will be most beneficial if you have done some preparation in advance. If there is material you do not understand from previous weeks but have done nothing to address the problem then you may find any new material harder to follow. You need to be active in your learning. Review previous notes to ensure you understand them, organise material so you can find it and plan you time so you can achieve a balance between work time and other time. Additionally, academic research across the education sector indicates a strong link between levels of student participation and academic achievement. As part of our learning community, we expect you to take responsibility for your attendance and active participation in your studies. The University monitors attendance and we undertake to contact students if their failure to participate gives cause for concern. Remember, employers often ask us about attendance when seeking references. Based on the content, assessment, and interactive experiences, you will be able to adapt in varied forensic and other settings, but also have the capability to continue learning. In turn, this will allow you to develop personally and meet future requirements both in the workplace and in further study. Overall, within this postgraduate degree we expect you to take advantage of the numerous opportunities provided in order to establish your own personal employment and academic pathway. The completion of your Masters’ degree should not be the end of your learning but the beginning of a continual process of personal and professional development. |
| The Whole Experience We recognise that there are key aspects to every programme that need to be addressed to ensure we are inclusive, holistic, and open about how your programme fits into your wider university experience and your ambitions for your future – below are Statements of Intent to explain how you will experience these critical learning themes. Each section offers a brief explanation of the theme, why it is important, and how your programme addresses these.Widening ParticipationHigher education has a vital role in improving social mobility and BCU’s Strategic Plan highlights the importance of our responsibilities in regards to supporting economic, social, and cultural improvement in the city region. We are committed to providing access, retention, and progression for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups. In the Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences (BLSS), our open days provide plenty of encouragement for applicants from all backgrounds to access the University. A key aim of our course is to promote a sense of belonging and inclusivity within the course, reflecting the multicultural diversity of Birmingham and the wider West Midlands Conurbation. Our students are typically at the forefront of this, gaining real world skills and developing networking opportunities, whilst giving back to the local community. The programme also attracts interest from Psychology graduates from a wider area, including from overseas. This is assisted by the option of both full-time and part-time study with full-time students attending lectures on 2 days each week, over 24 weeks, and part-time students attending lecture one day each week for 24 weeks. Consequently, there are opportunities for students to be able to meet their other domestic, wider family, work, and financial commitments. The MSc Forensic Psychology programme therefore contributes to BCU being a vibrant academic community, with staff and students from a range of nationalities, ages, and cultures. BCU has in place a number of sources of support to assist students with their studies. For example, the Centre for Academic Success, which is a learner development support service, runs workshops and gives advice in 1-1 and small group tutorials to all University students on a variety of subjects including English (including academic writing), study skills, maths, statistics, ICT, and Microsoft Office software, particularly MS Word and MS Excel. The Centre also provides English support in various forms for international students and guidance on the APA (6th edition) writing style which covers headings, tone, and length; punctuation and abbreviations; presentation of numbers and statistics; construction of tables and figures, citation of references; and many other elements that are a part of a manuscript.Students can also access a range of additional support through ASK, the University's integrated and confidential student enquiry service. Essentially, ASK is a one-stop-shop for student queries, linking students with advice on health and wellbeing, careers, finances, visas, and student records. In order to ensure that the programme meets the needs of our individual students as they progress through the course and to ensure progression, each student is able to discuss module specific concerns with each module coordinator, with their dissertation supervisor and with the Programme Leader, as Personal Tutor, these and all other issues and concerns. Furthermore, to ensure progression and retention, all modules provide ongoing formative feedback throughout the semester prior to the summative assessment which takes account of teaching throughout that module. Inclusivity We make every effort to ensure that BCU is an inclusive environment, where explicit consideration is given to the full diversity of our students. We provide an environment which is compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010). Our students benefit from learning in an environment where they feel included and where they are taught in ways that recognise their needs as individuals and as part of a learning community. In this respect, the role of the module coordinator, dissertation supervisor, and personal tutor are very important and efficient in facilitating the communication processes that are key to inclusive practice. Indeed, our curriculum is designed to ensure that all students succeed to their potential, regardless of any protected characteristics (disability, sexuality, religion, gender, and/or other socio-cultural identities). Most importantly, we recognise that diversity leads to a richer learning experience for all as our commitment to inclusivity means that we recognise and value our diverse student body. Inclusive practice at BCU means that we take measures to improve the success of specific groups, where research has shown that the route to educational success is less straightforward. For example, as some modules revolve around interacting with software, arrangements are in place for additional add-on packages that allow all users to proficiently interact with any computer programmes. Effective relationships with the local and central Information and Technology staff allow us to deliver learning, teaching and assessment materials in a variety of formats. Rather than offering different assessment methods as a bolt-on for any students with a disability or special needs that may require consideration of alternative arrangements, the MSc Forensic Psychology programme uses an inclusive approach which is designed to ensure accessibility for all students and reduces the need for modified assessment provision by empowering students with an element of choice regarding assessment. The MSc Forensic Psychology programme facilitates inclusivity with assessments by signposting support for exam technique or writing skill sessions; preparing students with feed-in activities and information, discussion and feed-in with clear assessment and marking criteria. You will be given opportunities to participate in a mock exam sessions and we will support you to be successful on your programme by ensuring you:* Receive feedback and marks within 20 working days;
* Access to software for electronic submission and originality checking software;
* Have the opportunity to type exams and use assistive software if this is included in a Disability Support Statement provided by a Mental Health and Well-Being Advisor.

Information & Digital Literacy The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) define digital literacies as 'those capabilities which fit an individual for living, learning and working in a digital society'. Thus, digital literacy includes the ability to find and use information—but it goes beyond this to encompass communication, collaboration and teamwork, social awareness in the digital environment, and creation of new information. Both digital and information literacy are underpinned by critical thinking and evaluation, which are essential life skills that allow students to access, process, and assimilate information in the broadest sense. Thus, this goal goes beyond the ability to use technology effectively and asks us to consider the journey of many of our students as 'digital natives', in addition to supporting the development of those students who have not yet acquired these skills. Indeed, within our MSc Forensic Psychology programme you will be required not only to access and extend your knowledge of digital information and sources, but also to be able to prepare digital products. For example, in one module within the MSc Forensic Psychology programme, your assessment will involve creating a digital presentation for a non-specialist, though informed, staff team. In order to aid and support you, the module teaching team will provide guidance about the digital platform that you will need to use, with further support available for the Centre For Academic Success, thus allowing you to actively participate and learn regardless of your initial digital fluency. Indeed, through our programme, you will be guided and supported throughout the programme in understanding and engaging in digital practices, finding and critically evaluating information, managing and communicating information, and collaborating and sharing digital content. Thus, e-learning tools such as Moodle have been integrated in the learning and teaching activities as the programme will offer online and blended learning elements. Staff will provide continuous and tailored support according to their expertise especially for your dissertation is you wish to use, for example, MATLAB, E-prime, SPSS and N-Vivo. Recently, the Department of Psychology has secured new equipment, such as the electroencephalogram (EEG) and an eye-tracking device, which will be fundamental in delivering hands-on research opportunities whilst enhancing your digital literacy. In terms of acquisition of information, you will benefit from the availability of an electronic Psychology database which houses all of the Psychology inventories that, for example, are available to students to use for their 10,000 word dissertation. Recently, there has been a move towards the purchase of e-books which has been encouraged at a university level for all programmes. Finally, the ability to articulate that information and to construct new understanding is also critical to postgraduate success. Through the MSc Forensic Psychology programme, you are encouraged to recognise different types of information and resources, to develop your ability to question the validity of that information or resource, and to recognise the importance of both print and online resources to facilitate development of your own knowledge. You will also have the chance to sharpen your ability to think critically and creatively, for example about the inter-relationships and integration of theoretical and empirical work in Forensic Psychology, your inter-relationships across multiple perspectives, research methodologies and applications to contemporary society. Sustainability & Global Citizenship BCU is committed to integrating sustainability into the curriculum. The notion that we should all seek to find ways to support reduce waste, increase recycling, and lower levels of environmental impact will be familiar, but this is a narrow view of sustainability. Our curriculum also considers sustainability in terms of its connection with Global Citizenship. The United Nations define Global Citizenship in education as 'enabling students to develop the attributes, behaviours and skills needed to work and live in a way that safeguards ecological, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations’. We encourage our students to live and work more sustainably whilst recognising the impact that their decisions, and actions, have on the local, national, and global communities to which they belong. We have made a commitment as an institution to create postgraduates and graduates with a global outlook (Graduate Attributes) and each of our programmes now includes an internationalised programme aim - the inclusion of sustainability within that is a logical connection. The BLSS Faculty and MSc Forensic Psychology programme demonstrate internationalisation by: * Encouraging students to reflect on and analyse global phenomena. For example, some of the MSc Forensic Psychology modules offer a global perspective by discussing issues and problems that we face in our contemporary society
* Using cultural and international experiences or knowledge as a learning resource
* Encouraging intercultural experiences, partnerships and collaborations
* Contributing to international scholarly activity and knowledge exchange
* Embedding and debating global exemplars and perspectives in the curriculum
* Providing and promoting a range of accessible opportunities for the international and intercultural learning
* Facilitating ongoing intercultural and international dialogue and partnerships
* Proactively developing inclusive learning outcomes, practices, skills, and/or attitudes appropriate for diverse societies, culture, and individuals
* Viewing and utilising the diversity of the academic community (whether differences in cultural and educational backgrounds, country of origin or languages spoken) as a key learning resource
* Using flexible and inclusive approaches that appreciate and respect individual differences in knowledge, education, and culture

Our programme specialises in enquiry-based learning that closely adheres to quality standards of the British Psychological Society and the international academic community. We aim to facilitate students’ ability to evaluate, synthesise, and apply information in order to contribute to contemporary knowledge. The transferability of these skills is also a key programme element, enabling learners to solve significant real world problems.Student Engagement BCU is renowned across the sector for its commitment and approach to Student Engagement, which aligns with Aim 5 of BCU’s Strategic Plan (namely ‘we will become recognised as the sector leader for student engagement’). We are committed to the notion that students’ full participation in all aspects of university life facilitates a more coherent, active, and vibrant learning community, which increases their sense of ownership of their learning experience (both at programme and institutional level) which in simple terms, leads to better student satisfaction levels. For example, there are significant opportunities for students to participate in OpportUNIty student engagement initiatives, which operate through a partnership between the University and Students’ Union. The aim is to enable students to work as co-designers and collaborators with staff on projects that strengthen the development of the University learning community and enhance the student experience, offering support for Student Academic Partner [(SAP)](https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/celt/student-engagement/SAP-Projects) projects. Our [Student Engagement Policy](https://icity.bcu.ac.uk/Notice/Student-Engagement-Policy) gives further insights to the University's expectation of what engagement should like and feel like for students at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. The MSc Forensic Psychology programme is designed to foster a sense of belonging so that students feel part of the learning process. For example, you will have an element of choice in some of the assessments and with your dissertation project. Furthermore, mid-module feedback and ongoing Student Academic Leader feedback will enable you to influence the design and delivery of the programme, within limits, in an effort to increase the quality of the learning experience. The MSc Forensic Psychology programme has a range of schemes to engage students in research activities and teaching assistant positions beyond those scheduled in the curriculum. For example, the Volunteer Research Assistantship scheme enables you to apply for research posts, which will allow you to work with an academic member of staff on a current research project. This scheme enables you to understand the work involved at the various stages of a research project, from the design of the study to the analysis and implications of the findings. Relatedly, students will have the chance to participate in the selection process that will allow the successful candidates to be assigned to a pool of student research assistants, who will be remunerated for any research activities that they participate in. At the heart of your programme is the collaboration and development of professional relationships between staff and students. A key attribute emphasised within the programme is transferability of professional skills to real world contexts. This involves acknowledging one’s own developed skills, communicating them to prospective employers and then applying them within employment. Our focus on contemporary and innovative learning practices, such as virtual learning environments and visits, further contributes to employability. We also acknowledge that our students come from a wider range of backgrounds. Flexible and innovative content delivery is just one way in which we cater for different needs. Partnership Engagement Successfully completing the MSc Forensic Psychology programme will enable you to become a postgraduate who is particularly adept when applying for Stage 2 ‘forensic psychologist in training’ positions or other support and programme roles advertised by HM Prison Service, NHS (both secure and non-secure facilities), police forces, restorative justice providers, other criminal justice system agencies, the civil service, and the third sector (amongst others). Engagement with partners is a key BCU priority which features strongly in BCU’s 2020 Strategic Plan. Our partners are students, as are the wider educational community, and external stakeholders such as employers and cultural/social organisations. Through our partnership working, we aspire to be recognised in the region as a collaborator supporting economic, social, and cultural improvement in the city region. Our students are our most important partners so we try to involve you in every level of decision making within the University. Employers are particularly valued partners, advising us on our curriculum developments, providing dissertation opportunities for students, contributing to their learning, and teaching activities. Visits are also arranged to local and national criminal justice establishments and facilities. **Induction & Transition** As postgraduate students you have experience of university study (be at a specific institution in the UK or abroad, or via the Open University) so the induction process is not as extensive as it is for undergraduate students. Nor will you be living on campus with most students travelling in ‘from home’ for lectures. Additionally, as mature students, there is also a greater expectation that you will ask if you are unsure or unfamiliar with regards to how Birmingham City University operates and when Birmingham City University’s processes are not the same as in your previous university. While you will have an awareness of Birmingham City University following your visit for the application interview, you will need more detailed information of the programme and on the University. This is provided during the Induction Day and with additional material posted on Moodle to support information given then. The ASK desk on the First Floor of the Curzon Building, the Centre For Academic Success as well as library and IT staff members are continual sources of additional advice and guidance. During the first semester, there are on-going induction activities embedded into lectures such as referencing guidelines, how to electronically submit coursework, writing skills, and avoiding plagiarism. Clear explanations are given in order to help you understand our expectations not only in terms of involvement and induction, but also in terms of your responsibilities as students and what the university and the programme’s accredited body, the BPS, expects of you. Progression & Retention We want all students to perform to the best of their ability and to successfully complete the programme. We try to provide the best learning and assessment experiences we can to help students achieve this. Education is a partnership. We can provide you with learning materials, guidance and stimuli, but you won’t succeed unless you engage with the University and take full advantage of everything it has to offer. For this reason, we monitor attendance and try to help if we notice that any of our students are not attending regularly. Progression will also be aided by the tight rapport between you, module coordinators, your dissertation supervisor, and the programme leader. They will all actively engage with you to ensure that you benefit from existing support schemes with the university and will liaise with the remainder of the teaching team in order to ensure engagement, support professional and personal development, and to monitor performance. Such processes allow for early detection of difficulties and increased support if necessary. The programme leader will also be able to provide or to co-ordinate the additional support needed to help you on your learning journey (such as signposting to Health and Wellbeing Services if you are in need of a Support Statement). You will also benefit from an increased amount of personalised formative feedback across the programme, which will allow you to gauge your weaknesses and strengths and to adjust your learning strategies accordingly in collaboration with staff. Progression will also be enhanced by structured support nearer to the assessment points.Support & Personal Tutoring As mentioned above, every student has a support team of module coordinators, dissertation supervisors, and the programme leader (as personal tutor). All are there to advise you on your academic progress and can also direct you to additional help, if needed. You can expect to regularly meet with the module coordinator if you are experiencing difficulties with that module, with your dissertation supervisor in considering and planning your research project, and with the programme leader as personal tutor for any other specific or personal issue that arises throughout your period of study.In addition, every School also has a Student Success Adviser, a recent graduate who has also experienced life as a BCU student. If you are having any problems, the Student Success Adviser can also help you. The University as a whole offers an array of support, such as the Centre for Academic Success, Careers, Child Care, Finance/Money Matters, Health and Wellbeing, Visas and Immigration, and Student Mentoring. All of these services can be accessed direct or via our ‘one stop shop’ ASK. The role of the MSc Forensic Psychology support team is also safeguarded by the BPS accreditation standards, which require a student to staff ratio of 10:1. Thus, the academic staff will not be overwhelmed by the number of students, but rather they will be able to cater for the different students’ needs and aspirations. Personal Development PlanningThe programme has in place mechanisms for the support of students’ personal and academic development. This is important as it is recognised that as close attention to students’ personal and academic development is key to their employability. In assisting with this visiting lectures provide opportunities to speak with them about their work, training, experiences, and the factors that assisted them to be successful in their job application. For example, they will explain how their training equipped them with transferrable skills that are of value to employers. Visits to prisons and courts assists in this process and helps students develop their identity potential future academic or practitioner psychologists. The personal tutor system additionally enables students to have access to advice on their career development in the field of forensic psychology.Systems for student support empower learners to take personal control of their own development by providing opportunities for the exercise of choice, decision-making, and responsibility within a supportive environment, in order to promote the development of autonomous learning. Detailed and up to date records on student progress are kept. Throughout students receive prompt and helpful feedback about their performance and progress in relation to assessment criteria so that they can appropriately direct their subsequent learning activities.Employability BCU Masters’ programmes aim to provide postgraduates with a set of attributes which prepare them for their future careers. The BCU Postgraduate:* is professional and work ready
* is a creative problem solver
* is enterprising
* has a global outlook

The BLSS Faculty is committed to practice-led active learning and teaching that will give you experiences of the world of work. Combined with the academic knowledge and forensic experience of the course team are a range of visiting lecturers who bring into their lectures practice-informed knowledge and professional insights and accounts from working in a forensic setting. This assists with supporting students’ development of the four core and transferrable skills that are central to forensic psychology practice and to a range of other areas of employment. These are outcome based and encourage the development of critical thinking skills and ways of working such that students engage with the discipline of forensic psychology by:* Critically evaluating the current knowledge, theory and evidence base relevant to the discipline
* Identifying and developing skills and capabilities relevant to progression to forensic psychology practice
* Using a range of techniques and research methods applicable to psychological enquiry
* Applying relevant ethical, legal and professional practice frameworks (e.g. BPS, HCPC), and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries
* Communicating effectively (verbally and non-verbally) with colleagues, research supervisors, and a wider audience
* Critically reflecting on and synthesising all of the above to inform their developing awareness of forensic psychology and in preparation for and continuity with Stage 2 training and professional practice.
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## Section Two

This section addresses the key regulatory and quality assurance requirements for validation. The programme learning map tracks the programme level learning outcomes, credit structure and (where appropriate) KIS data, assessment and feedback scope and forms, module delivery mode and module learning outcomes, and any exit awards that are possible from the programme.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level 7** Core Modules | **Advanced Research Methods** | **The Assessment and Treatment of Offenders** | **Forensic and Transferable Skills** | **Investigative Psychology** | **The Psychology of Law and Justice** | **Research****Methods in Forensic Psychology** |
| Credit level (ECTS value) | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Study Time (%) S/GI/PL | 20/80/00  | 20/80/00  | 20/80/00  | 20/80/00 | 20/80/00 | 20/80/00 |
| Assessment method | Open book exam | Structured literature review | 1) Design a Training Session2) Report | Essay | Reflective report | Open book exam involving multiple choice questions, short open-ended questions, and a practical element using statistical software |
| Assessment scope | 2 hours | 3,000 words | 1) Preparing 2 Hour Training Session2) 2,000 words | 3,000 words | 3,000 words | 2 hours |
| Assessment week  | 34-36 | 31 | 35 | 19 | 31  | 17 |
| Feedback scope  | 20 working days later | Electronic 20 working days later | Electronic 20 working days later | Electronic 20 working days later | Electronic 20 working days later | 20 working days later |
| Delivery mode | Standard Blended | Standard Blended | Standard Blended | Standard Blended | Standard Blended | Standard Blended |
| Learning Outcomes  | 1 Demonstrate advanced and critical understanding of a variety of advanced data analysis techniques and statistical concepts. | 1 Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the psychological theoretical and empirical underpinnings of the assessment and treatment of offenders. | 1 Evaluate the importance of ethical practice in forensic psychological practice and the ethical dilemmas that can occur when working with various client groups | 1 Demonstrate a critical awareness of psychological concepts relating to police investigations. | 1 Demonstrate knowledge and critical appreciation of the Criminal Justice System and its processes. | 1 Analyse, compare and contrast the characteristics of different methodological approaches and methods of research. |
| 2 Apply and justify the selection of the appropriate advanced inferential statistics and research methods techniques based on the research question/hypothesis and the type of data. | 2 Critically evaluate a range of assessment methods relevant to offending behaviour in a variety of forensic contexts | 2 Exhibita critical understanding of the function, knowledge requirements, and skills of a forensic psychologist in the role of consultant. | 2 Exhibit a thorough understanding of key aspects of techniques used in investigative psychology | 2 Explain and appraise the application of psychological research and theory at various stages of the criminal justice process. | 2 Apply and justify the selection of appropriate data analysis methods to specific research questions. |
| 3 Analyse, interpret and evaluate research data, and answer complex research questions with the use of appropriate software packages. | 3 Critically evaluate a range of treatment interventions relevant to offending behaviour in a variety of forensic contexts | 3 Recommend appropriate procedures in forensic psychological practice and produce insightful professional reports. | 3 Critically evaluate the utility of investigative psychology techniques  | 3 Explain and critically evaluate the psychological factors which may be relevant at the various stages of the criminal justice process. | 3 Use software packages to successfully analyse research data and produce research outputs. |
| 4 Report and interpret results from advanced statistical analyses in a concise and informative manner and in line with the APA guidelines.  | 4 Evaluate potential barriers to successful assessment and treatment for offenders and propose logical ways to avoid and overcome these barriers | 4 Effectively communicate knowledge in forensic psychology. | 4 Communicate effectively complex ideas and theoretical frameworks in investigative psychology. | 4 Reflect on your learning, experiences, and your role as a psychologist in the Criminal Justice System. | 4 Interpret and evaluate results and reports these in line with the APA guidelines.  |
| Programme Aim Links | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 |
| Linked PSRB (if appropriate)  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  |

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| **Level 7** Optional Modules | **Victimology**  | **Dissertation** |  |  |  |  |
| Credit level (ECTS value) | 20 | 40 |  |  |  |  |
| Study Time (%) S/GI/PL | 20/80/00  | 10/90/00  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment method | Case Study Report | Dissertation (Research Project) and Presentation |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment scope | 3,000 words | 8,000-10,000 words10 mins |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment week | 17 | 50/51 |  |  |  |  |
| Feedback scope  | Electronic 20 days later | Electronic 20 days later |  |  |  |  |
| Delivery mode | Standard Blended | Standard Blended |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Outcomes  | 1 Demonstrate a thorough understanding of key theories and research relating to victims of crime | 1 Critically review relevant literature / methodologies, select and justify a topic that requires further investigation through the design and implementation of an empirical study |  |  |  |  |
| 2 Systematically evaluate the impact of crime on victims | 2 Demonstrate a critical appreciation of ethical issues in conducting research in forensic psychology. |  |  |  |  |
| 3 Critically analyse the ethical issues when researching and working with victims | 3 Collect, analyse and evaluate data in a systematic and rigorous manner using appropriate techniques. |  |  |  |  |
| 4 Display high-level communication skills when working with victims and their families | 4 Undertake independent research to produce a report with clear, logical findings critically appraised. |  |  |  |  |
| Programme Aim Links | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 | 1🗹 2🗹 3🗹 4🗹 5🗹 |  |  |  |  |
| Linked PSRB (if appropriate)  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  | Compulsory for BPS MSc FP Stage 1 accreditation  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Level 7 Programme** |
| Entry Requirements and pre-requisites, co-requisites & exclusions | Accreditation of Prior Experience or Learning (APEL) | Study Time Breakdown  | Exit award(s) |
| 2:1 Honours Psychology Degree or above accredited by the British Psychological Society as providing the Graduate Basis for Chartership. Also BPS/GBC recognised postgraduate masters degree or diploma.International students must demonstrate a similar standard of competence as evidenced by the GPA score and transcripts demonstrating modules studied and attainment, particularly in regard to Research Methods and Statistics. | This will be assessed on an individual basis in line with University policy | **Scheduled** learning and teaching activities(including time constrained blended or directed tasks, pre-sessional and post-sessional tasks) | 20% | MSc Forensic Psychology (180 credits)PG Diploma in Forensic Psychology (120 credits)PG Certificate in Forensic Psychology (60 credits) |
| **Guided Independent** learning (including non-time constrained blended tasks & reading and assessment preparation) | 80% |
| **Placement** (including external activity and study abroad) | 0% |
| **Impact of options** (indicate if/how optional choices will have a significant impact) |  |

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| Additional Information  |
| **Structure and Delivery**

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| MSc Forensic Psychology Programme  |
| PG Cert Stage | The Assessment and Treatment of Offenders(20 credits) | Investigative Psychology(20 credits) | Victimology(20 credits) |
| PG Dip Stage | Research Methods in Forensic Psychology(20 credits) | Forensic and Transferable Skills(20 credits) | The Psychology of Law and Justice(20 credits) |
| Masters Stage | Advanced Research Methods in Forensic Psychology(20 credits) | Dissertation(40 credits) |

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## Section Three