

BSc (Hons) Forensic Psychology

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Awarding institution	Bath Spa University
Teaching institution	Bath Spa University
School	School of Sciences
Main campus	Newton Park
Other sites of delivery	n/a
Other Schools involved in delivery	n/a
Name of award(s)	Forensic Psychology

Qualification (final award)	BSc (Hons)
Intermediate awards available	CertHE, DipHE, BSc
Routes available	Single
Sandwich year	Optional
Duration of award	3 years full-time, 4 years with sandwich course
Modes of delivery offered	Campus-based
Regulatory Scheme[1]	Undergraduate Academic Framework
Exemptions from regulations/framework[2]	Yes
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body accreditation	British Psychological Society (BPS) (60 credits are necessary for accreditation at levels 4, 5 and 6)
Date of most recent PSRB approval (month and year)	July 2019
Renewal of PSRB approval due (month and year)	2021/22
UCAS code	HH30
Route code (SITS)	FPSSIN

Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statements (including date of publication)	Psychology (November 2019)
Date of most recent approval	December 2020
Date specification last updated	December 2020

[1] This should also be read in conjunction with the University's Qualifications Framework

[2] See section on 'Exemptions'

Exemptions

The following exemptions are in place:

Programme/Pathway	Regulations/Framework	Brief description of variance	Approving body and date
BSc (Hons) Forensic Psychology	Undergraduate Academic Framework	Exemption to depart from Framework, paragraph 1.8	Curriculum Committee, 16 December, 2020

Programme Overview

Forensic Psychology is the area of psychological research and practice at the interface of Psychology and the Law. It covers topics such as offenders and victims of crime, the processes of law and the courts, and the psychology of criminal investigations. It is rooted in the criminal system of England and Wales. Understanding the psychological, social, philosophical and criminological causes and implications of crime are at the heart of this discipline. Forensic psychology questions what type of person is most likely to commit a crime, and how crime and anti-social disorders could be reduced. The discipline is also involved in exploring the relationship between crime and psychopathology, whether a person with mental health problems should be held responsible for a crime, as well as preventing such people committing crimes. The majority of forensic psychologists in the UK work in prisons, secure accommodation and probation services. You will have an opportunity to explore those career options, including an overview of professional graduate destinations. You will also have an opportunity to explore the more academic discipline of forensic psychology, including forensic skills for interviewing, eyewitness testimony, forensic mental health, as well as exploring the ethical dilemmas of the field.

This course will follow the prescribed path of an accredited Psychology degree, with 40 credits (2 modules) a year of dedicated criminological or forensic psychology. You will have an opportunity to experience an introduction to the key themes, theories and research of the area in the first year, proceeding to a closer look at criminal investigations in level 5. Level 6 is focussed upon a closer look at advanced and contemporary topics and issues in Forensic Psychology, mental health and criminal behaviour.

This course retains the core Psychological skills prized by the British Psychological Society, alongside a specialisation in Forensic Psychology. Our course equips graduates for a range of careers in Forensic Psychology, (although a Forensic Psychology MSc qualification is required for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) for a graduate to be able to practice as a Forensic Psychologist).

Programme Aims

1. To teach an understanding of criminal behaviour in its psychological, social, political, biological and philosophical context.
2. To demonstrate the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory and also how forensic theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data.
3. To help you acquire a range of research skills and methods for investigating experience and behaviour, culminating in an ability to conduct research independently.
4. To teach an understanding of ethical, legal and moral dilemmas within forensic psychology.
5. To develop your abilities in acquiring knowledge, leading to an appreciation of theory and research findings, including relevant ethical and socio-cultural issues around crime as the causal factors of criminal behaviour.
6. To help develop an understanding of employability issues and your future role in the workforce, whether with forensic psychology or in the wider employment context.
7. To demonstrate the role of forensic psychology within the wider discipline of Psychology.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

A Subject-Specific Skills and Knowledge

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
A1	The systematic and detailed knowledge and conceptual understanding of psychological concepts and research skills and ability to accurately apply these skills across multiple perspectives to forensic psychological issues.	Ability to evaluate knowledge and apply understanding to multiple perspectives in a range of psychological issues, with an emphasis upon forensic psychology.	Knowledge of the underlying concepts, theories, principles, methods and applications across the multiple perspectives associated with psychological issues, with an emphasis upon forensic psychology.
A2	The ability to deploy coherent and detailed integration of ideas and findings from within forensic psychology and to integrate those ideas and findings with the wider field of psychology.	Ability to apply and evaluate underlying psychological concepts, integrating forensic psychology with other strands of psychology including knowledge of forensic and criminological applications within the context of employability.	Knowledge of distinctive psychological approaches to relevant issues of contemporary forensic psychology theory.
A3	Conceptual understanding to identify and critically evaluate patterns in criminal and wider behaviour, psychological functioning and experience in order to devise and sustain critical arguments.	Ability to identify and evaluate patterns in criminal and wider behaviour, psychological functioning and experience in order to devise and sustain arguments.	Knowledge of patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning and experience in forensic psychology and other areas of psychology.

A4	Ability to generate, explore and test hypotheses and research questions drawing on relevant theory and research to critically evaluate particular aspects of current forensic research, as well as the other sub disciplines of psychology.	Knowledge and critical understanding of the main methods of enquiry within forensic psychology, drawing on relevant theory and research in order to describe and comment upon the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of forensic psychology and the wider discipline.	Knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in psychology, including the ability to explore hypotheses and research questions drawing on relevant theory and research with an emphasis upon forensic psychology.
A5	Ability to evaluate established techniques of analysis and enquiry used in forensic psychology and the wider field of psychology in order to analyse, present and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and research findings using a variety of methods of data collection.	Ability to present, deploy and interpret qualitative and quantitative data and evaluate research findings to develop lines of argument and make judgements in accordance with the underlying theories and concepts across psychology and to differentiate the different methods and tools of the forensic psychologist.	Ability to present and interpret research methods within forensic psychology as well as core psychological areas and knowledge of the differences in experiments and investigations within forensic psychology.
A6	Ability to employ evidence-based reasoning and examine practical, theoretical, ethical and legal issues around crime and criminals using established methodologies associated with the field of forensic psychology.	Examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues around crime and criminals using a broad range of methodologies in an applied context.	Ability to explore a range of methodologies to examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues around crime and criminals in an applied context.

A7	Ability to use a variety of forensic psychological tools and software to understand crime and to apply forensic psychological knowledge ethically, morally and safely to real world problems including an appreciation of the limits of knowledge.	Ability to use a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software and psychometric instruments, applying forensic psychological knowledge ethically and safely.	Ability to use a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software and psychometric instruments.
A8	Ability to critically evaluate forensic psychological theory and research and to spot gaps in the literature and develop the means of answering them.	Critical understanding of the limits of forensic psychological theory and research, and how this influences evaluations, analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.	Ability to evaluate forensic and criminological theory and research.

B Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
B1	On Achieving Level 6 Communicate effectively and reliably, with structured and critical arguments information, ideas, problems and solutions to specialist and non-specialist audiences	Communicate information, coherent arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences.	Communicate, using cogent argument supported by relevant evidence and sensitivity to the needs and expectations of an audience.

B2	The ability to reflect upon and manage your own development and training to acquire new skills of a professional or equivalent nature.	The ability to undertake further training to develop existing skills and acquire new competencies, demonstrating numerical reasoning skills and computer literacy.	Demonstrate numerical reasoning skills and be computer literate in the use of word processing, databases and analytic software packages.
B3	Retrieve and organise critically evaluated information, from primary sources. Be computer literate in specialist Psychological software.	Effectively retrieve and organise evaluative information found in library book and journal collections, and online.	Retrieve and organise information found in library, book and journal collections, and online.
B4	The creative and enterprising ability to develop applications that provide solutions to contemporary issues and to adapt solutions to changing circumstances.	Demonstrate strategic and creative thinking by generating original and realistic ideas for solving identified issues and/or to achieve a specific outcome.	The ability to identify contemporary issues and opportunities to apply learning to create solutions.

C Skills for Life and Work

	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) On Achieving Level 6	On Achieving Level 5	On Achieving Level 4
C1	Autonomous learning (including time management) that shows the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility and enables decision-making in	Autonomous learning (including time management) as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making such that significant responsibility	Autonomous learning (including time management) as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility.

	complex and unpredictable contexts.	within organisations could be assumed.	
C2	Team working skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace with an ability both to work in and lead teams effectively.	Teamwork as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making for effective work with others such that significant responsibility within organisations could be assumed.	Team work as would be necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility for effective work with others.
C3	Communication skills that ensure information, ideas, problems and solutions are communicated clearly to both specialist and non-specialist audiences.	Communication skills commensurate with the effective communication of information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences in which key techniques of the discipline are deployed effectively.	Communication skills that demonstrate an ability to communicate outcomes accurately and reliably and with structured and coherent arguments.
C4	IT skills and digital literacy that demonstrate core competences and are commensurate with an ability to work at the interface of creativity and new technologies.	IT skills and digital literacy that demonstrate the development of existing skills and the acquisition of new competences.	IT skills and digital literacy that provide a platform from which further training can be undertaken to enable development of new skills within a structured and managed environment.

[3] i.e. the ability to review, direct and manage one's own workload

Programme content

This programme comprises the following modules

Key:

Core = C

Required = R

Required* = R*

Optional = O

Not available for this status = N/A

If a particular status is greyed out, it is not offered for this programme.

Subject offered as single award

Forensic Psychology				Status			
Level	Code	Title	Credits	Single	Major	Joint	Minor
4	PSY4010-20	Introduction to Psychology (BPS)	20	C			
4	PSY4011-20	Research Methods in Psychology 1 (BPS)	20	C			
4	PSY4012-20	Individual Differences: Personality and Intelligence (BPS)	20	C			

4	FPS4000-20	Introduction to Criminal and Forensic Psychology	20	C			
4	CRI4000-20	Crime and Disorder in Everyday Life	20	C			
4	PSY4014-20	Debates in Psychological and Critical Thinking	20	C			
5	PSY5104-20	Research Methods in Psychology 2 (BPS)	20	C			
5	PSY5105-20	Cognitive and Developmental Psychology (BPS)	20	C			
5	PSY5106-20	Biological and Social Psychology (BPS)	20	C			
5	FPS5001-20	The Psychology of Criminal Investigations	20	C			
5	CRI5001-20	Criminal Justice: Theory, Policy and Practice	20	C			
5	PSY5103	Psychology of Mindfulness	20	O			
5	BMA5120-20	Work Placement	20	O			
5	SOC5102-20	Health: Mind, Body, Society	20	O			

5	PUB5103-20	Science and Journalism Publishing	20	O			
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	120	O			
6	PSY6011-20	Dissertation: Design and Pre-registration (BPS)	20	C			
6	FPS6001-20	Forensic Dissertation: Research Report (BPS)	20	C			
6	PSY6010-20	Contemporary Application of Psychological Science (BPS)	20	C			
6	FPS6003-20	Advanced Contemporary Topics in Forensic Psychology	20	C			
6	FPS6002-20	Forensic Mental Health	20	C			
6	PSY6101-20	Evolutionary Neuroscience and the Origin of the Human Mind	20	O			
6	PSY6105-20	Applied Behavioural Psychology	20	O			
6	PSY6106-20	Psychology of Sexual Health	20	O			

Assessment methods

A range of summative assessment tasks will be used to test the Intended Learning Outcomes in each module. These are indicated in the attached assessment map, which shows which tasks are used in which modules.

Students will be supported in their development towards summative assessment by appropriate formative exercises.

Please note: if you choose an optional module from outside this programme, you may be required to undertake a summative assessment task that does not appear in the assessment grid here in order to pass that module.

Work experience and placement opportunities

The majority of professional Forensic Psychologists in the UK work in the Criminal Justice system, whether in prisons or in probation services. Such places frequently employ undergraduates for roles such as befrienders/mentors integrating offenders back into the community as well as prison visitors. There are roles within places that deal with the repercussions of crime to work with victims. The police service recruit psychologists to help prevent crime. Additionally, forensic psychologists to work with those with mental health problems who are at risk of either committing a crime or at risk within the criminal justice system.

This programme can also be taken as a 'Sandwich' degree, which is studied over 4 years and includes a yearlong work placement in a sector of your choice. The placement year is completed between years 2 and 3 of the degree and counts for 120 Level 5 credits. During this time, students will be able to utilise knowledge gained as part of their studies in a real work environment to gain 'hands on' experience. The University has a dedicated Careers & Employability team to help find and prepare for a placement. Following the placement year, students will return to University to complete your final year of study.

Graduate Attributes

	Bath Spa Graduates...	In Forensic Psychology, we enable this...
1	Will be employable: equipped with the skills necessary to flourish in the global workplace, able to work in and lead teams	By making sure that our modules are shaped with your eventual employment in mind. You will have an opportunity to learn about the kinds of things you would have to do as a forensic psychologist. You will have an opportunity to learn to work with and listen to others. You will also have an opportunity to learn to work as part of a group. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to work towards professional accreditation in our British Psychological Society-recognised degree.
2	Will be able to understand and manage complexity, diversity and change	By showing how any science, whether social or not, is fluid. Our suite of programmes emphasises that people are individuals motivated by many different factors. We teach you to link concepts between the core psychological areas and integrate them within a Forensic Psychology framework, while at the same time, appreciating the developments within this fast-moving discipline.
3	Will be creative: able to innovate and to solve problems by working across disciplines as professional or artistic practitioners	By teaching you about theory building and showing how canonical ideas within Psychology were created and developed. Psychology has always worked with other disciplines. We are a professional degree working with people with mental health problems, brain injuries etc. Creativity comes as standard in science, and we show you this throughout the course.
4	Will be digitally literate: able to work at the interface of creativity and technology	By using subject-specific software such as statistical packages, psychological databases, experimental suites and psychometric tests.

5	Will be internationally networked: either by studying abroad for part of the their programme, or studying alongside students from overseas	We have an international teaching team, with experience of working professionally in many different countries. Encouraging students to take up opportunities to study abroad (e.g., BSU's Global Citizenship Award).
6	Will be creative thinkers, doers and makers	Giving students opportunities to think creatively and imaginatively in their interpretation and presentation of scientific information and within their eventual practice.
7	Will be critical thinkers: able to express their ideas in written and oral form, and possessing information literacy	Teaching you to think critically. To assess the validity and veracity of the work you read. To write scientifically and accurately through a variety of assessment types.
8	Will be ethically aware: prepared for citizenship in a local, national and global context	Teaching you about how The British Psychological Society has a code of professional ethics that shapes our experimental and clinical practice. You will have an opportunity to learn how to design and report on investigations ethically and responsibly.

Modifications

Module-level modifications

Code	Title	Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect

Programme-level modifications

Nature of modification	Date(s) of approval and approving bodies	Date modification comes into effect

Attached as appendices:

1. Programme structure diagram
2. Map of module outcomes to level/programme outcomes
3. Assessment map
4. Module descriptors

Appendix 1: Programme Structure Diagram – BSc (Hons) Forensic Psychology

Note: The programme is designed so that you cover the British Psychological Society's accredited core curriculum necessary for their Graduate Basis for Chartership.

Semester 1	Semester 2
Level 4	
Introduction to Psychology (BPS) Core) 20 credits	Individual Differences: Personality and Intelligence (BPS) (Core) 20 credits
Research Methods in Psychology 1 (BPS) (Core) BPS 20 credits	Debates in Psychological and Critical Thinking (Required) 20 credits
Crime and Disorder in Everyday Life (Core) 20 Credits	Introduction to Criminal and Forensic Psychology (Core) 20 Credits
Level 5	
Research Methods in Psychology 2 (BPS) (Core) 20 credits	Biological and Social Psychology (BPS) (Core) 20 credits
Cognitive and Developmental Psychology (BPS) (Core) 20 credits	20 credits from Psychology of Mindfulness; or Work Placement; or Health: Mind, Body, Society; or Science and Journalism Publishing
The Psychology of Criminal Investigations (Core) 20 credits	Criminal Justice: Theory, Policy and Practice (Core) 20 credits
Level 6	

Dissertation 1: Design and pre-registration (BPS) (Core) 20 credits	Forensic Dissertation: Research Report (BPS)
Contemporary Application of Psychological Science (BPS) (Core) 20 credits	Forensic Mental Health (Core) 20 credits
Advanced Contemporary Topics in Forensic Psychology (Core) 20 credits	20 credits from Psychology of Sexual Health or Evolutionary Neuroscience and the Origin of the Human Mind or Applied Behavioural Psychology

Appendix 2: Map of Intended Learning Outcomes

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)[4]	Intended Learning Outcomes																
				Subject-specific Skills and Knowledge								Cognitive and Intellectual Skills				Skills for Life and Work				
				A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4	
4	PSY4010-20	Introduction to Psychology (BPS)	C	x	x	x	x		x		x	x			x		x	x	x	x
4	PSY4011-20	Research Methods in Psychology 1 (BPS)	C	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x

4	PSY4012-20	Individual Differences: Personality and Intelligence (BPS)	C	x	x	x			x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x
4	PSY4014-20	Debates in Psychological and Critical Thinking	C	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
4	FPS4000-20	Introduction to Criminal and Forensic Psychology	C	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
4	CRI4000-20	Crime and Disorder in Everyday Life	C	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
5	PSY5104-20	Research Methods in Psychology 2 (BPS)	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
5	PSY5105-20	Cognitive and Developmental Psychology (BPS)	C	x		x	x	x			x	x		x		x		x	

5	PSY5106-20	Biological and Social Psychology (BPS)	C	x	x		x	x	x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x
5	FPS5001-20	The Psychology of Criminal Investigations	C	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
5	CRI5001-20	Criminal Justice: Theory, Policy and Practice	C	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
5	PSY5103-20	Psychology of Mindfulness	O	x	x	x	x					x		x		x	x	x	x
5	SOC5102-20	Health: Mind, Body, Society	O	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x				x	x
5	BMA5120-20	Work Placement	O		x							x		x		x	x	x	x

5	PUB5103-20	Science Journalism and Publishing	O	x			x		x							x	x		
5	PPY5100-120	Professional Placement Year	O									x		x		x	x	x	x
6	PSY6011-20	Dissertation: Design and Pre-registration (BPS)	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	FPS6001-20	Forensic Dissertation: Research Report (BPS)	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	PSY6010-20	Contemporary Application of Psychological Science (BPS)	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	FPS6003-20	Advanced Contemporary Topics in Forensic Psychology	C	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x
6	FPS6002-20	Forensic Mental Health	C	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x

6	PSY6101-20	Evolutionary Neuroscience and the Origin of the Human Mind	O	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
6	PSY6105-20	Applied Behavioural Psychology	O	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x
6	PSY6106-20	Psychology of Sexual Health	O	x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	

[4] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional

Appendix 3: Map of Summative Assessment Tasks by Module

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Status (C,R,R*,O)[5]	Assessment method																			
				Coursework							Practical					Written Examination							
				Composition	Dissertation	Essay	Journal	Project Plan	Portfolio	Report	Performance	Practical Project	Practical skills	Poster	Presentation	Set exercises	Written Examination	In-class test	In-class test (unseen)				
4	PSY401 0-20	Introduction to Psychology (BPS)	C								1x						1x						
4	PSY401 1-20	Research Methods in Psychology 1 (BPS)	C								1x						1x						
4	PSY401 2-20	Individual differences: personality and intelligences (BPS)	C														1x		1x				

5	PSY510 6-20	Biological and Social Psychology (BPS)	C							1x							1x		
5	FPS500 1-20	The Psychology of Criminal Investigation s	C			1x				1x									
5	PSY510 3-20	Psychology of Mindfulness	O							1x							1x		
5	SOC510 2-20	Health: Mind, Body, Society	O			1x											1x		
5	PUB510 3-20	Science Journalism and Publishing	O			1x			1x										
5	BMA51 20-20	Work Placement	O					1x	1x				1x						

5	CRI500 1-20	Criminal Justice: Theory, Policy and Practice	C			1x				1x									
5	PPY510 0-120	Professional Placement Year	O				1x		1x										
6	PSY601 1-20	Dissertation: Design and Pre- registration.	C		1x									1x					
6	FPS600 1-20	Forensic Dissertation: Research Report	C							1x									
6	PSY601 0-20	Contempora ry Application of Psychologica l Science (BPS)	C						1x			1x							

[5] C = Core; R = Required; R* = Required*; O = Optional