



Australian
National
University

Master of Professional Psychology

Program Handbook 2021

Research School of Psychology

(January 2021)

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1 GENERAL

This handbook provides information about the Master of Professional Psychology (MPP) Program in the Research School of Psychology (RSP) at the Australian National University (ANU). It is designed to be a reference and a guide for students and staff.

It should be read in conjunction with

- the [ANU MPP FAQs](#)
- ANU webpages and online Policies and Procedures - links will be provided in relevant sections of this document
- MPP Placement Handbook
- Class summaries for each course

1.1 The Australian National University (ANU)

The ANU is located in Canberra, the national capital and a part of the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people.

The Research School of Psychology and the University recognise the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people as the traditional custodians of this land and acknowledge and respect their past and continuing culture and the contribution they make to the city and region.

Canberra is home to approximately 395,000 people and several national museums, galleries, cultural institutions, intellectual centres, and government organisations. It is also host to the Australian Institute of Sport and several professional and semi-professional sporting teams. The city is a national leader in parkland development, green energy, and education. In 2014, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) rated Canberra as the most liveable city in the world, and it was named the *Lonely Planet's* third best city in the world to visit in 2018.

The ANU was founded in 1946 and developed on a 146 hectare block of land, which is just a 10-minute walk from the city, surrounded by extensive native bushland, and adjacent to Lake Burley Griffin. Its founding mandate was to advance the nation's scholarship and research and to develop its intellectual and creative capacity to be in line with the best international standards.

Since its creation, the ANU has expanded steadily and today has over 4,000 staff and 21,000 students, representing approximately 100 countries. Its ongoing aim is to generate world-class performance in fundamental, applied and strategic research scholarship and creative activity in all fields represented at the University. Integrating research capacities into teaching is one of the ways the ANU provides a stimulating approach to teaching and learning. In the QS World University Rankings, the ANU has been ranked as Australia's leading university several years in a row (2015-2018), with the ANU currently ranked 24th in the world.

1.2 The Research School of Psychology (RSP)

The ANU Research School of Psychology is part of the ANU College of Health and Medicine, and has a strong complement of academic staff engaged in teaching undergraduate and postgraduate programs in psychology.

Research in the School is conducted within three broad groups: clinical/health psychology, social psychology, and cognitive/perceptual psychology. Issues in developmental psychology, research methods and statistics, are covered under all three areas and the biological basis of behaviour is studied separately in relation to cognitive psychology, perception, and clinical/health psychology.

The School also has a strong teaching and research focus and is regarded as one of the very best psychology programs worldwide, ranking 44th in the 2019 QS World Rankings.

RSP's academic staff are complemented by highly qualified and experienced professional psychology practitioners, who contribute to the postgraduate professional training programs.

The MPP staff include clinical academics who have produced significant research in the areas of psychotic, affective and anxiety disorders (Associate Professor Bruce Christensen); psychological stress, body image, eating disorders and obesity (Dr Kristen Murray); Machiavellianism, personality disorders, and clinician well-being (Dr Conal Monaghan); cognitive development, organisational health, first responder mental health (Dr Sara Quinn); conduct problems, family-based intervention, parent-child interaction, maltreatment (Dr Dave Pasalich); and the use of technology in clinical practice (Julia Reynolds).

The School offers a range of seminar series which offer a collegial environment in which to deepen learning related to clinical practice and psychological research.

Two streams of seminars are offered within the school. These seminars are interesting and relevant. They offer opportunities for students to participate in an important academic community and help to build a professional identity.

- i. **The RSP Seminar Series** is scheduled every **Wednesday, 12-1pm on each week of semester and will begin on Wed 24th February, 2021**. The Seminar is delivered over Zoom and you will receive the login details via email.

Speakers are drawn from within RSP, the ANU more broadly, and external organisations or institutions, with topics selected to reflect the diversity of psychological science and its applications. This series incorporates the Cecil Gibbs Psychology Colloquium and Judy Slee/HDR Seminars:

Cecil Gibbs Psychology Colloquium

This is a forum for academic staff, students, and guest speakers to present recent research and theory to a school-wide audience. The series aims to promote research engagement and discussion between students and staff in the School with topics covering the breadth of psychological science including cognition, perception, development, research methods, social, personality, clinical and health psychology. Information about scheduled presenters is available on the events page of the RSP website.

Judy Slee Higher Degree Research (HDR) Seminar

This is a forum for HDR students to present their research and related theoretical and/or methodological ideas. Speakers for this seminar are invited to present on a voluntary basis and organised by a fellow HDR student. The seminar offers an excellent opportunity for HDR students to present their research and seek input from fellow students and staff. The schedule is available on the events page of the RSP website.

- ii. **The Clinical Seminars** may also be offered. *Because these seminars focus on clinical and professional issues, participants must be registered or provisionally registered with the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA). Therefore, MPP students are invited to attend these seminars during their 5th year of study.*

Although attendance at these seminars is not mandatory, it is expected that MPP students will attend

- the RSP Seminar Series in *both* years of the MPP program and

- the Clinical Seminars in the *second* year of the MPP program, when they are registered or provisionally registered with PsyBA.

An absence should be due to an unavoidable conflict.

1.3 The Master of Professional Psychology (MPP) Program

The need for a MPP program was identified in 2017, in discussions between industry partner Canberra Health Services and RSP. A mutual partnership was formed to develop the program, support the psychology workforce in the ACT and contribute to broader reforms in the profession. The School has conducted extensive consultation in developing the MPP program and has collaborated with key stakeholders from the Canberra Health Services, especially those in the division of Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services, who brought to the MPP their extensive experience of developing and delivering a comprehensive internship program to provisional psychologists.

1.3.1 Program Vision and Mission

The MPP program is guided by the values and aspirations expressed in its Vision and Mission Statement, developed by RSP in collaboration with colleagues from Canberra Health Services.

Vision: To create a society where psychological practice and science support people, communities and nations to flourish.

Mission: To train and educate future generations of psychologists to:

- Deliver high quality services across diverse settings.
- Respond and adapt to evolving contexts.
- Innovate and lead with integrity and excellence.
- Be evidence based, reflective and respectful.

We will create a collaborative environment which is open, enthusiastic, and respectful, and which supports intellectual and personal growth.

These efforts are designed to increase access to extensive, high quality psychological services for everyone.

1.3.2 Program overview

The MPP program is a two-year (full-time) program. It includes coursework on psychological assessment, interventions and professional skills; a group research project in the first year and a capstone project as well as 300 hours of simulated and practicum experience in the second year.

Two key principles underlie all aspects of the program:

- *The scientist-practitioner model of psychology*, which emphasises and integrates psychological practice and research as core activities of professional psychology. It is a distinguishing feature of the psychology discipline and profession.
- *Professional values of psychological practice* are enacted through an ethical, reflective and respectful approach at all times. This approach emphasizes social justice and a commitment to continuous personal and professional learning and development.

1.3.3 Accreditation and regulation of psychology in Australia

The MPP aligns with the national psychology accreditation framework and is designed to prepare graduates to progress along training pathways specified by the national psychology regulator.

Key organisations for the accreditation and regulation of psychology training in Australia include:

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC): the independent organisation that is responsible for accrediting psychology programs in Australia.

Australian Psychological Society APS: a professional society for psychologists and psychology students. It is responsible for assessing the equivalence of psychology degrees obtained outside Australia.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) is the national organisation responsible for implementing the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) across Australia. Ahpra works with professional Boards to protect the public and set standards and policies that all registered health practitioners must meet.

Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) is the professional Board for Psychology in Australia. It works with Ahpra under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act ('the National Law'). The Board regulates the profession of psychology. It is responsible for registering psychologists and for approving programs of study in psychology that have been accredited by APAC.

The MPP is designed to meet APAC standards and accreditation requirements for the fourth and fifth year of the PsyBA [5+1 pathway to General Registration as a Psychologist](#).

1.3.4 The 5+1 Pathway to Registration as a Psychologist

In Australia, Registration as a Psychologist requires completion of approved university training and supervised practice over a minimum of six years full-time training.

Postgraduate university training in professional psychology was not available in Australia until relatively recently. In the 1950s and 1960s, an apprenticeship training model was developed and is known as the 4+2 pathway to Registration. It is composed of four years' university study and two years' supervised professional practice internship.

PsyBA has noted that it has become increasingly difficult to sustain the two-year internship as it is demanding for interns, employers, supervisors and regulators. In recent decades, there have been calls for the six-year training pathway to be composed of a higher degree + a one-year internship. This would reduce the burden of the 4+2 pathway, better align Australian registration requirements with overseas regulators and provide a more standardised, fully accredited, postgraduate training pathway.

Accordingly, the 5+1 pathway was introduced in 2010. In 2019, the PsyBA announced its intention [to retire the 4+2 pathway](#). From 30 June 2022, it will not be possible to apply for internships in the 4+2 pathway.

The 5+1 pathway consists of:

- *five years of university training:* many universities offer a single-year Graduate Diploma in the fourth year and a single-year Masters course in the fifth year. This is a 3+1+1 sequence of university study. In order to provide a coherent, fully professionally focused program, ANU offers a comprehensive two-year program that covers both the fourth and fifth years. It is a 3+2 sequence of university study.
- *one year of internship training:* undertaken in the field under the auspices of the PsyBA, which describes the [professional psychology internship](#) as follows:
“an intensive supervised training program that enables you to develop and demonstrate the eight core competencies required for general registration. During

the one-year full-time program (or equivalent part-time), you will consolidate the skills and knowledge developed during your study and apply these in a practical setting. The internship involves:

- *psychological practice carried out in an approved work role*
- *supervision by a Board-approved supervisor (one principal supervisor and one or more secondary supervisors), and*
- *professional development activities.”*
- At the end of the internship, the final step in the pathway is to complete the [National Psychology Exam](#). On successful completion, trainees will be eligible to apply for General Registration as a Psychologist.

Steps in the 5+1 pathway are shown in Figure 1.

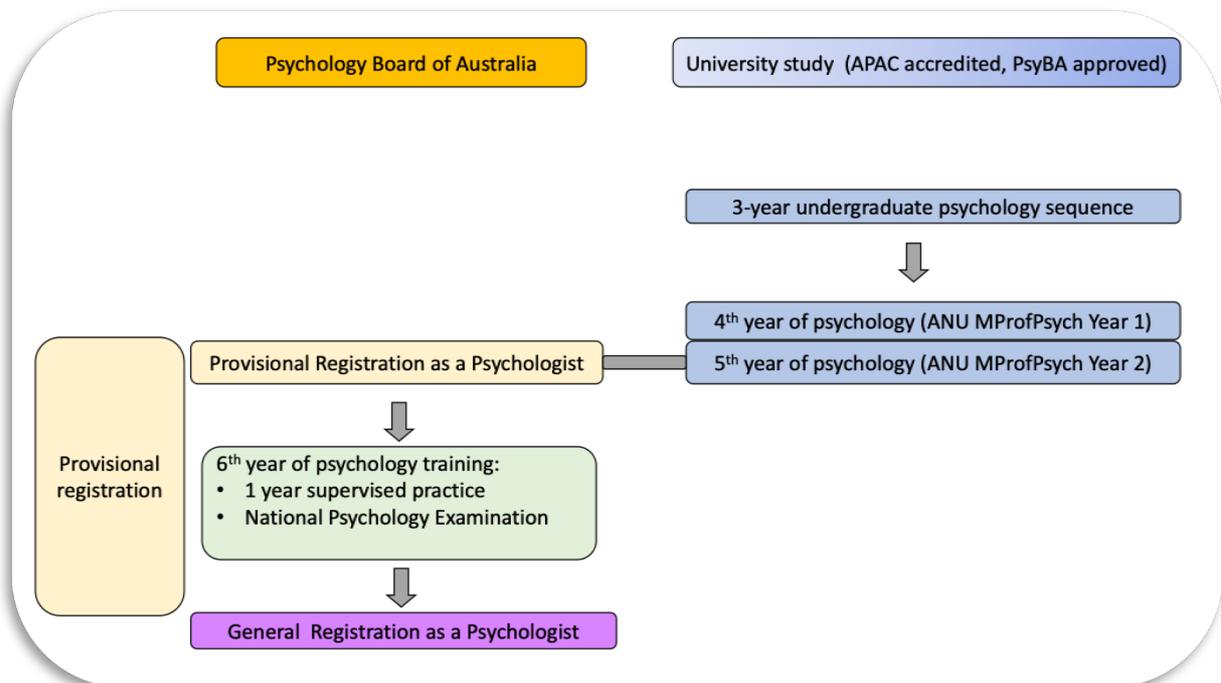


Figure 1: The 5+1 pathway to General Registration as a Psychologist in Australia

1.3.5 Program accreditation, recognition and graduate careers

The ANU has designed the MPP program to achieve APAC accreditation as the 4th and 5th year of the 5+1 pathway to General Registration as a Psychologist.

Psychologists with General Registration are a very important part of the mental health workforce in Australia and work across diverse settings. These include public mental and medical/physical health settings, private practice, educational institutions, non-government and not for profit organisations and state and federal government services.

According to the [APS](#), Psychologists with General Registration practice in many different areas including:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Education and training
- Population health
- Drug and alcohol
- Justice and corrections

- Public policy
- Corporate and commercial
- Marketing and communication
- Emerging technology and design

The ANU MPP aims to provide a solid grounding in professional psychology practice that will equip graduates to progress through the final steps to General Registration. Our aim is to provide a foundation that is broad and supports graduates in pursuing diverse careers in psychology and develop new roles that expand community access to psychological skills and interventions.

MPP graduates will be eligible for [Associate Membership of the APS](#) and may be eligible to join other professional psychology bodies.

Psychologists with General Registration can apply for Psychologist roles in organisations, become Registered Providers for Medicare services and other funders. They are also eligible for full Membership of the APS and other professional organisations.

The current status of the ANU MPP program is that it is listed as an approved program with AHPRA. It is in the final stages of the APAC accreditation process and is currently [Accredited with Conditions](#). This means that APAC will monitor the roll-out of the program in 2021, as the first cohort of students progress into the second year of the program, to make sure that it is being implemented as intended.

1.3.6 Graduate eligibility for further study and training

PhD program eligibility: The applied research component of the MProfPsych degree is not sufficient for direct entry into a PhD combined Masters/PhD professional training program.

Graduates who wish to pursue further research training and seek entry to a PhD program may need to demonstrate other research achievements such as completing a research-intensive degree. For example, the minimum academic requirement for applicants to the RSP PhD program is completion of an Australian Bachelor Degree with at least Second Class Honours – Upper (First Class Honours or equivalent is often required) or its international equivalent or, a post graduate degree with a significant research thesis component. More information is available on the [RSP website](#).

Further professional training programs: MPP graduates may be eligible to apply for other Masters programs. For example, people who wish to pursue advanced training in a particular area of practice to progress towards an [Area of Practice Endorsement](#) may apply to enter programs such as a Master of Clinical Psychology. The PsyBA has outlined [four pathways to Area of Practice Endorsement](#) as shown in Figure 2 below. ANU MPP graduates will be able to apply for Pathways 1-3 when they complete their degrees and for Pathway 4 once they have obtained General Registration as a Psychologist.

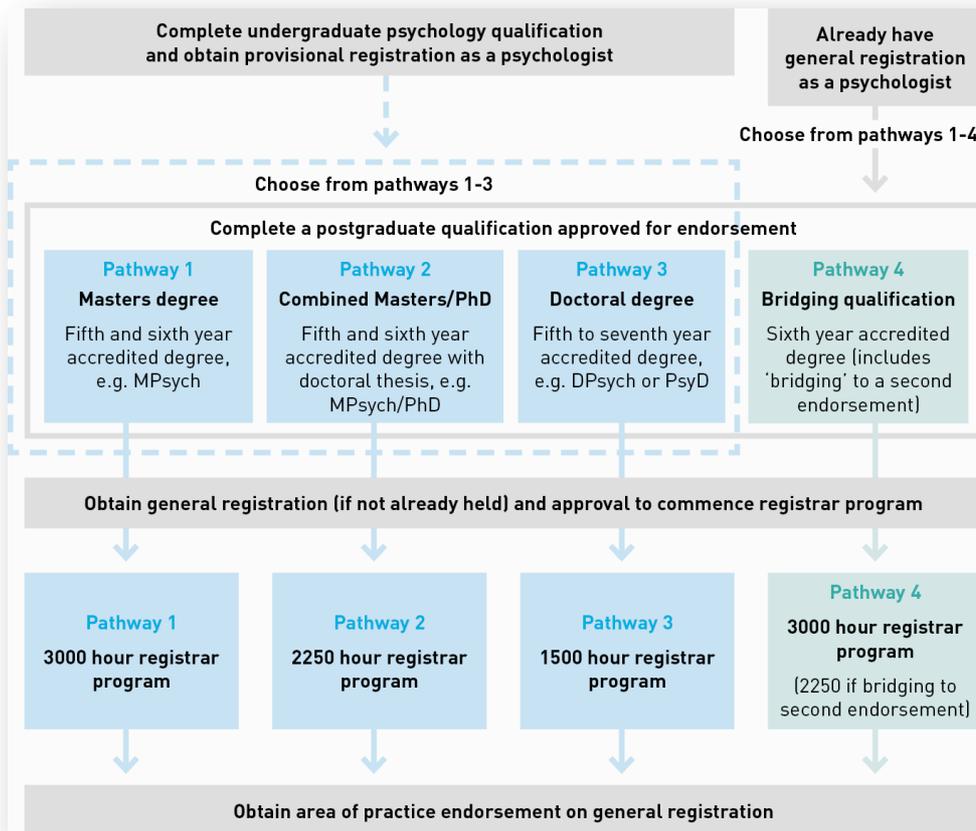


Figure 2: Psychology Board of Australia: [Pathways to Endorsement](#)

2 Program information

2.1 Applying to the program

Applicants are required to provide evidence of previous relevant academic study, two referee reports and evidence of English language skills that meet the requirements of the [ANU English Language Policy](#).

Competitive applicants will be invited to participate in a suitability assessment process which will include a panel interview and other activities. Full details of the application process each year will be available on the RSP website and applicants should consult this information prior to applying.

Please be aware that in order to progress from the first to the second year of the program, students will need to complete additional requirements – see Section 2.5 below.

2.2 Credit for previous study

It may be possible to obtain some credit in the first year of the program for previous completion of an AQF 8 APAC accredited sequence such as a Psychology Honours or Graduate Diploma degree.

An application for credit will be considered by the Research School of Psychology only where the student can demonstrate to the Program Director/Convener that the previous courses (for which they are seeking credit) are strictly equivalent to those on offer in the MPP program and have assessed relevant competencies specified in the 2019 APAC Standards for Pre-Professional (Level 2) programs of study. The Research School of Psychology will make a recommendation to the College of Health and Medicine for approval.

Credit is most likely to be given for research projects and statistics courses completed in previous study and for a maximum of 24 units (6 months equivalent) of study. Credit cannot be given for courses completed more than *seven* years prior to making an application for the MPP in accordance with [ANU's Coursework Awards Rules 2019](#).

2.3 Enrolment

Students are required to enrol before coursework commences each semester and can do this through their [ISIS account](#).

General information about ANU processes for enrolling and re-enrolling, including deadlines for completing and changing enrolment is [available at the "Enrol for the first time as a coursework student" page on the ANU website](#). Students should ensure that they understand the relevant dates for withdrawal and deadlines for academic and financial penalty periods.

Once you accept your offer and are sent your password, you will be provided with an ANU email address. All School and University correspondence will be sent to this address so students are strongly encouraged to check this account regularly. Staff will not respond to emails sent from non-ANU addresses.

2.4 Study patterns and workload

Over the two years of the program, the component courses must be completed in the sequence prescribed by RSP. This will occur automatically for full-time students as there will be only one student intake at the beginning of each year. Part-time students and / or those who receive credit for previous study will still need to take their courses in the prescribed order, and each course will be offered only once each year.

The pattern of enrolment for a full-time student can be found on Wattle and Programs and Courses (links are provided in the "Study Options" table on the ["Study" page](#)). The schedule of activities for will be advised via email and available in Wattle.

Courses will usually run in business hours during semesters and students are expected to be available during these times. Classes may also be scheduled outside working hours or during semester breaks if additional teaching days are required or if it is necessary to access particular teaching spaces. Where unforeseen timetabling adjustments are required, we will endeavour to provide as much notice as practicable to students. Please note that students are expected to make themselves available for all training activities.

At ANU, a full-time load is equivalent to **minimum of 40 hours per week**. Students should note that this is a minimum commitment and will vary from student to student. Students in similar programs often report that they need to devote more time than this to their studies (coursework and placement).

The part-time workload is approximately half of the full-time load. Students wishing to study part-time should be aware that they must study 12 units per semester, otherwise they will not be able to complete the courses in the prescribed sequence. Part-time students studying 12 units (2 courses) per semester are expected to devote a **minimum of 20 hours per week** during the year towards their studies; noting again that students may need to commit time in excess of this.

While it is understood that some students have other responsibilities and may need to undertake employment while they are studying, students must maintain satisfactory progress in the program.

Students are encouraged to consult MPP staff at an early stage if they are finding it difficult to manage their study load.

2.5 Progression from the first to the second year of the program

Upon successful completion of the first year (48 units) of the program, students will need to obtain Provisional Registration as a Psychologist with the PsyBA in order to enrol in the second year of the program.

In order to apply for Provisional Registration, students need to demonstrate to the Board that they have completed their fourth year of study and are eligible to enrol in their fifth year. ANU MPP students proceeding to the second year of the program will not receive a fourth-year degree, so PsyBA has developed a process for ANU students that is slightly different to the process established for students for other universities who have taken out a fourth year degree from a single-year program.

The ANU process is as follows:

- 1) Towards the end of the first year of the program MPP staff will invite you to provide consent for RSP to send your results to PsyBA.
- 2) When you complete the first year of the program, enrol in the second year of the program *as soon as you have your results*.
- 3) RSP will send the Board confirmation of your successful completion of the first year of the program AND confirmation that you have enrolled in the second year of the program.

You can then apply to PsyBA for provisional registration. PsyBA has provided the following FAQs in late 2020 and these will be updated in late 2021 if required:

Question	Answer
What form should I use to apply?	APRO-76 which can be found on the Board website here .
What <i>Title of qualification</i> should be entered for question 9?	Title of qualification: Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology *you do not need to provide any transcripts or academic qualification
How will I confirm my enrolment for 5th year of study at ANU?	ANU will confirm with us directly who is enrolled in this program for the February 2022 intake.
Is there anything else I need to know when applying?	There are tips for assisting you with your application here .
I'm ready to submit my application, where do I send it?	You can upload your application form through this webpage here . When selecting what document to upload, please choose "provisional application – 4 th and 5 th years combined program".

Students will need to maintain their Provisional registration throughout the entire program. Please see the [Board's Provisional Registration Standard](#) and all other [Standards that apply to Provisional Registration](#) with the Psychologists' Board of Australia. Please note that these Standards include the [English Language Registration Standard](#) **and that these Standards are not the same as those specified in ANU English Language Policy.**

In addition to obtaining Provisional Registration, students will need to provide further documentation prior to enrolling in the placement course in the second 48 units of the program. Requirements vary across placements, and likely include:

- [ACT Working with Vulnerable People \(WWVP\) Card](#)
- An Australian Federal Police [National Police Check Certificate](#)
- Any requirements including immunisation and health screening set by the ANU and external placement providers such as [ACT Health](#), [NSW Health](#)

2.6 The Exit pathway: Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology

Students who successfully complete the first year but are not eligible or choose not to progress to the second year of the program may be awarded a GradDipProfPsych as an exit degree (Figure 2).

This degree will provide an accredited fourth year of psychology study in the 5+1 pathway. Graduates may be eligible to apply to other Master of Professional Psychology programs or to psychology programs that provide a fifth and sixth year of psychology study and lead to an Area of Practice Endorsement (e.g., Master of Clinical Psychology programs).

Like the MPP, the GDPP program will not provide sufficient research training to allow students to apply directly for a PhD program.

2.7 Program staff, contributors and governance

2.7.1 Staff

The following RSP staff have core roles in the development, oversight and day-to-day operations of the Program.

Program Director/ Convener (Associate Professor Bruce Christensen; Associate Director (Professional Training))

The role of the Program Director is to provide leadership and oversight to the curricular, training, research and administrative aspects of the Professional Program. In addition, they are responsible for strategic planning and liaison with Research School of Psychology professional and academic staff in order to monitor outcomes, refine operations, build capacity, and plan for the future of the Program.

Course Conveners

Each course has a Convener whose responsibilities include course administration, design and delivery, including the finalisation of marks and the submission of marks and grades to the Examiners' Committee and student issues relating to the Discipline Rules including possible breaches of academic integrity.

Current teaching staff in the MPP and the courses for which they are responsible are listed below:

Dr Kristen Murray:

PSYC8421 Psychological Interventions

PSYC8521 Advanced Applications in Psychological Practice

Dr Conal Monaghan:

PSYC8411 Research Methods and Statistics in Professional Psychology (co-convened with Dr Yiyun Shou)

PSYC8413 Psychological Assessment

PSYC8510 Advanced Assessment in Professional Psychology

Dr Murray, Dr Monaghan, Dr Sara Quinn

PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research Project

Dr Dave Pasilich

PSYC8410 Foundations of Professional Psychology

Dr Sara Quinn

PSYC8422 Contextualizing Professional Psychology

PSYC8511 Advanced Psychological Interventions

Julia Reynolds

PSYC8513 Preparation for Professional Psychology Placements

PSYC8522 Professional Psychology Placement

Student Administration Coordinators (Mrs Robin Dearlove, Ms Vicki Kilby)

The role of the MPP Student Administration Coordinator is to provide assistance and advice to students in relation to the program lifecycle (admission, enrolment, fees, scholarships, prizes, program management and graduation). Robin and Vicki can be contacted via the Enquiries Desk or via email rsp.hdr.sa@anu.edu.au

Additional teaching and professional staff are being appointed to the MPP program. External staff will also be invited to contribute their expertise to aspects of the program as appropriate.

2.7.2 Industry and professional partners

RSP has conducted extensive consultation in developing the MPP program and has collaborated with key stakeholders from Mental Health, Justice Health and Alcohol & Drug Services and other areas of Canberra Health. As the program is further developed, additional collaborators and partners will be engaged.

2.7.3 Student representatives

Student representatives will be appointed from first and second year courses each year.

Student representatives are required to attend the monthly MPP Committee meetings, an External Liaison Committee meeting at least once a year and other meetings as required such as a Staff/Student consultation meeting at the end of each semester. The student representatives must be prepared to be available to other students within the course who wish to raise concerns or issues, and provide feedback in relation to the course. It is the role of the student representatives to communicate these matters at consultative meetings in a professional manner, and ensure the voice of students is represented accurately and respectfully at all times. Student representatives may also be invited to canvas student feedback on specific matters at the request of staff within the program, and to feed back discussions with staff to students.

2.7.4 Governance

Program governance is led by the Program Convener supported by the following key committees and other structures.

The MPP Committee is the major source of review and decision-making for the Program. The Committee meets at least once a month for 2 hours. Its role is to advise the Program Convener on the oversight, management, administration and direction of all aspects of the Program including decision-making in relation to student issues.

This committee meets regularly throughout the year and currently consists of:

- The Program Convener (Chair)
- MPP Teaching Staff
- Student Administration Coordinator
- Staff Representative from the RSP Clinical Psychology Program
- One Psychology representative from Canberra Health (Psychology Profession Lead or Psychology Educator or their delegates)
- Additional industry stakeholders will be appointed by the Committee as full or ex officio members as appropriate.
- Student Representatives

Committee meetings will have two parts:

- a) All Committee members will participate in the first section of the meeting, in which program issues will be discussed and resolved.
- b) The second part of the meeting will provide an opportunity for discussion of confidential matters including those related to monitoring student progress and will be restricted to RSP staff.

Meetings will be formally minuted and Minutes will be stored in a manner consistent with ANU policy and procedures. Items for the Agenda should be submitted to the Administration team at least 24 hours prior to the meeting

The Committee can also

- call on non-members to act in an advisory role.
- arrange consultations with other stakeholder groups about specific issues (for example, Service User and Carer representatives).
- form sub-committees and task forces as required.

The **External Liaison Committee** is the forum for formal consultation between the MPP Program and the wider community stakeholders in the Program. It occurs once a year, generally in the first semester. This committee is comprised of:

- The Director of the Research School of Psychology
- The MPP Program Director
- The MPP Placement Coordinator
- Other MPP Staff
- Representatives of Canberra Health and other placement agencies
- Student representatives from each year of the MPP Program
- MPP graduates completing internships
- Other stakeholders as relevant

Examiners' Meetings are held towards the end of each Semester and are attended by RSP staff. The progress and grades of each student is reviewed in these meetings.

Marks that are allocated during Semester are to be considered provisional until formalised by the College Examiners' meeting at the end of each Semester. If appropriate, some moderation of marks will be applied prior to final results being released.

An MPP Planning Day is held each year to review the program and plan for the following year. This Day is attended by Program staff, RSP Executives including the School Director and School Manager and representatives of key external partners such as Canberra Health Services.

3 Academic progression

The Research School of Psychology is charged with ensuring that graduates achieve the competencies required to prepare them for professional psychological practice. Timely completion of all assessments is required and students must satisfy all performance requirements in each and every component of the MPP Program (coursework, clinical placement and research) in order to be awarded the MProfPsych degree.

The MPP program is a postgraduate program and its focus is on the achievement of the competencies required to prepare students for professional practice. In professional training, a Pass grade or higher indicates that a student has attained competence in the learning outcomes being assessed. Staff in the MPP program emphasise professional development throughout the training, with teaching and learning scaffolded to support growth in competencies across the program. An important part of this process is the provision of constructive feedback, including strengths and areas for development. Although this can be challenging, it enables students to foster their own skills in reflective practice which will support development throughout their professional career.

This approach differs from those often undertaken in undergraduate study, where students may compete for a relatively small number of distinctions and focus on achieving the highest possible grades across all domains. In the MPP, students are not in competition with one another and are encouraged to support one another in the personal and professional growth afforded through professional training in psychology.

3.1. Program structure and progression

The MPP is a highly structured program. Students must pass all courses offered in each semester before they will be able to continue into the following semester.

Assessments: If a student fails a particular assessment piece, they will be provided with feedback identifying the areas which need to be addressed and offered the opportunity to resubmit the assessment.

Failing a course: Students who fail a course will be able to repeat the course. They will need to wait for the next offering to retake the course and proceed with the required sequence of study.

Students who fail a course for a second time will have not maintained satisfactory academic progression ([ANU Academic Progress Rules 2019](#), item 15). They will receive a formal warning of their first breach, may be placed on academic probation and will need to seek permission from the Delegated Authority prior to being allowed to enrol in the course again.

If a student is permitted to attempt a course on a third occasion and fails again, they may be excluded from further participation in the program for up to 5 years. If an excluded student wished to return to the program at the expiry of the exclusion period, they would need to re-apply to the program, demonstrate the capacity to succeed and compete for another place in the course. If a student was re-admitted in these circumstances, credit for previously completed coursework will be allowed at the discretion of the Delegated Authority and will not be automatically granted.

Further information is available from MPP staff and ANU's guide to [academic performance expectations](#).

3.2 Late submission, extensions and special assessment consideration

The [ANU Student Assessment \(Coursework\) Procedure](#) applies to the MPP Program and provides detailed guidance on late submission and conditions for special consideration in course assessments. Key points of this procedure include:

Late submission of Assessment Tasks: a penalty may be applied where an assessment task is submitted after the due date. The penalty is 5% of the possible marks available for the assessment task *per working day* or part thereof. If a late assessment penalty has been applied, the student will be notified when the assessment item is returned and will be given the initial mark, the penalty and the final mark after the penalty was applied.

Assessment Task Extensions: students who wish to extend the due date for an assessment must submit their request in writing with relevant documentation to the Course Convener on or before the assessment date (unless the student could not reasonably be expected to have applied by the appropriate date due to illness or other medical conditions).

Extensions to assessment deadlines will only be granted for health reasons or for exceptional and unforeseen circumstances (i.e. that arose due to factors beyond the student's control). Extensions will not be granted for employment reasons or due to circumstances that should have been anticipated by the student.

A new due date must not extend beyond the date for the return of the assessment item specified in the Class Summary.

Special Assessment Consideration or Deferred Examinations: If special consideration is required, an extension request form should *not* be submitted. Specific online instructions, forms and templates are available for applications for [Special Assessment Consideration](#) and for [Deferred Examinations](#).

3.3 Review of assessment decisions

Students who wish to seek a review of their course result can do so in accordance with the ANU's [Assessment Appeals Process](#)

3.4 Attendance

The program relies on instructional scaffolding processes and the classes and workshops are designed to support the continuous development of professional competencies. Learning is developed systematically and progressively so that new experiences draw on knowledge and skills acquired previously in the program.

In order to gain the required competencies, students are expected to attend and engage with *all* classes and other specified training activities unless extenuating circumstances (such as significant illness or personal crisis) prevent them from doing so.

Where students cannot attend or have not attended required activities, they are expected to notify the Course Convener or Placement Coordinator and comply with all staff requests to make up the learning experience that they have missed.

Preparation for, attendance at and engagement in program activities is critical for competency development and is listed as a student responsibility in the [ANU Code of Teaching and Learning](#).

If a student is having significant difficulties in participating in the program, MPP staff will meet with the student to discuss the situation, offer support and explore potential solutions – these may include withdrawing from the program and re-enrolling at a different time.

4 Conduct Requirements

The MPP program requires that student conduct aligns with the standards expected in psychology practice, academic study and research as outlined below.

4.1 Professional integrity:

The protection of public safety is at the forefront of professional psychology training and regulation. Throughout the MPP program, the safety and wellbeing of the public, students and staff is of primary concern.

As part of their studies, students will learn about relevant regulatory, legal and ethics bodies, frameworks, guidance and codes that cover academic, research and professional activities in psychology. These include requirements set by ANU, RSP, the MPP program and external placement providers as well as external regulatory and professional bodies such as the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Psychology Board of Australia.

In the second year of the program, students will be required to maintain Provisional Registration with the PsyBA and to understand and to comply with all [Standards, Guidance, Policies and other obligations](#) specified by the PsyBA including the [Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics](#) which has been adopted by the Board. Students are expected to understand and meet their obligations and the obligations of the program and its staff in this regard.

Furthermore, students will be required to comply with all safety, ethico-legal and other requirements of any external agencies in which they complete placement activities.

Students should also be mindful of how they present themselves in public settings, including on the internet. Helpful guidance about appropriate online behaviour is available in the [ANU Policy](#) and the PsyBA guidance on [social media use for health professionals](#). Students enrolled in a professional training program are representatives of the profession and the institution at all times.

4.2 Research integrity:

All staff and students at ANU engaged in research must conduct their research in an ethical and responsible manner and behave in accordance with the ANU's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) and [Code of Research Conduct](#) as well as the standards set by the [National Health and Medical Research Council](#). The [Academic Misconduct Rule](#) also applies to any student breaches of the Code.

4.3 Academic integrity

Academic integrity is an essential requirement for all students at ANU. In a professional training program like the MPP, the university has a particularly critical obligation to ensure the integrity of its assessment activities.

While co-operation and collaboration is encouraged in the MPP program, students must submit work that is original, appropriately attributed and referenced.

Students must understand and comply with ANU's [Academic Integrity](#) principles and processes, including those relating to plagiarism. The ANU requires that students agree to integrity declarations when submitting their work and prefers assessments to be submitted online using

[Turnitin text-matching software](#). This software helps students check that submitted coursework is original and appropriately attributed. Students who do not submit assessments online must make alternative arrangements as agreed with Program Staff and consistent with the [ANU Policy - Student assessment \(Coursework\)](#)

The University takes academic misconduct seriously as outlined under its [Academic Misconduct Rules](#). Students are encouraged to consult MPP staff and/or the [Academic Skills and Learning Centre](#) if they need further advice.

4.4 Response to concerns about student capacity to undertake professional training

If there are concerns about students' conduct, fitness and/or capacity to undertake professional training, program staff will discuss these issues with students and seek to resolve the concerns.

MPP students should be aware of their conduct obligations under the [ANU Discipline Rule](#).

In the second year of the program, students will be required to maintain provisional registration with the Psychology Board of Australia and this will entail additional professional obligations.

Professional psychology registration in Australia is ultimately governed by a nationally consistent law which has been passed by each state and territory parliament – the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law](#). Practitioners, employers and education providers have obligations to report 'notifiable conduct', as defined in section 140 of the National Law, to Australian Health Practitioner Regulatory Authority (Ahpra) in order to prevent the public being placed at risk of harm.

Students must be familiar with the [Guidelines for Mandatory Notifications](#) (and especially Section 5) set out by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) as well as their own reporting obligations as registered health professionals. In circumstances where there are substantial risks to the public, the MPP Program Convener will refer concerns to the Delegated Authority at the ANU for appropriate action, which may include reporting to Ahpra.

5 Student support

Students' progress in achieving academic, professional and research competencies will be monitored by program staff and supervisors. Where students are identified as having difficulties, staff will engage with them at an early stage and explore additional support and remediation opportunities where necessary.

5.1 Consultation with program staff

If students have any concerns about courses, the program or their performance or progress, they are encouraged to approach course and program staff as soon as possible so that difficulties can be addressed quickly.

Staff will advise of their availability for consultations, but it is generally expected that students will schedule appointments with staff during University business hours.

Some lecturers who work outside ANU will be invited to contribute to the program. These external staff may not be available to consult with students and in these situations, the Course Convener will be the first point of contact for student consultation.

Students are welcome to email MPP and other ANU staff (such as the Dean of Students, PARSA and College Sub-Deans) at any time but staff do not routinely respond to emails outside University business hours. Like other communications in the program, emails need to be phrased in professional language and sent through the student's University email account.

5.2 ANU academic support

Students in the MPP program will have access to ANU's [academic support](#) services provided by learning advisors, coaches and peers.

5.3 Student self-care

While professional training and practice can be exciting and rewarding, it can also be demanding, confronting, and sometimes draining. The workload can be heavy and it can be personally challenging – for example, to learn how to give and receive feedback about interpersonal and clinical skills and psychological processes.

Collectively, these demands can stretch students' coping resources and they can find themselves in need of additional support. Students are encouraged to keep Course Conveners abreast of personal stress and challenges (to a degree that they are comfortable with) so that the Program can best support and assist them in meeting these challenges.

In addition, students often benefit from seeking outside psychological support from professionals. As practitioners and consumers of psychological services, we want to do our utmost to destigmatise the engagement of professional support and, instead, cast it as a positive, productive, and healthy response to dealing with stress and/or personal challenges. Moreover, the Program endorses clinicians seeking their own therapy as a means to becoming a better practitioner.

It is the Program's practice, that when students need additional psychological support, to provide tangible support to its students in the form of adjusting program requirements, offering active listening and empathy, and helping to find an appropriate health practitioner for additional support.

Some student perspectives on managing the demands of professional psychology training and practice [are available here](#).

5.4 Peer support

Peer support is very important in professional psychology practice and will be fostered within the program.

Students may also like to join the ANU Psychology Society - a student-led society that provides extra academic and social support for psychology students. It organises a number of events each year that range from Meet and Greet BBQs and self-care activities to the ANUPS Ball. It also assists new students to find their way around and work out their timetables. The Society is a very valuable way to meet other students across different years and courses and to have some fun! More information is available from [the RSP website](#).

5.5 Disability support

The ANU's [Disability Policy](#) aims to "promote an inclusive work and study environment for students and staff with a disability at the Australian National University."

The ANU [Office of Access & Inclusion](#) assists students who have a disability, long-term illness or other medical condition or who are recognised primary carers of a person with a disability to participate fully in their program of study by providing advice, supports and adjustments that minimise the impact of disability in education. Where students who have an illness or disability wish the ANU to provide equipment or adjust its processes, policies or procedures, they will need to provide information about the nature and extent of the illness or disability to staff at the Office of Access and Inclusion.

6 The learning environment

The program cultivates a supportive learning environment that supports students to achieve excellence in their academic and professional development.

Students will develop appropriate self-reflection and advanced communication skills including the ability to give and receive feedback that is supportive and constructively critical. Students are expected to practice these skills in their interactions with peers and staff at all times. This contributes to a supportive culture and helps prepare students for professional roles later in their careers.

6.1 Student evaluation and feedback

The MPP Program places strong emphasis on excellence in teaching and welcomes constructive feedback from students about aspects of the program that are working well and about things that could be improved.

Although it is natural and tempting to discuss complaints or criticisms among peers, this type of communication rarely allows valuable feedback to influence positive change. Students are encouraged to express any concerns they may have in regards to their experience in the Program in a respectful, ethical, and timely manner to program administration and/or student representatives.

Feedback can be provided through a number of formal and informal channels including:

- a) **Student representatives:** program staff regularly consult student representatives and receive their feedback. Student representatives also contribute to regular program meetings that monitor teaching quality and student feedback.
- b) **Personal feedback to staff:** Program staff welcome feedback and the Program Convener is eager to meet with students as needed to discuss personal and program issues. Please email them to make an appointment.
- c) **Course evaluations:**

Two main types of evaluation will be undertaken. Student feedback is very important and taken seriously, so please engage with the evaluation process in a considered manner.

 - **Internal (RSP) course evaluations:** courses in the MPP program will be evaluated and these data will help Program staff to continually improve the courses.
 - **SELT Surveys:** Like all ANU programs, the MPP will be subject to systematic student evaluation in each year that they are delivered. These evaluations will be collected by the ANU Evaluations team using [Student Experience of Learning and Teaching \(SELT\)](#) surveys which provide course and teaching evaluations across both semesters. SELT outcomes will be reviewed by individual staff members, their academic supervisors, the Associate Director of Science Education and the School Director.

6.2 Complaints procedure

RSP and the ANU aim to provide a positive and supportive learning environment. However, situations can arise in which students may wish to raise concerns. Feedback is welcomed by MPP staff and more broadly by RSP. If concerns do arise, students are encouraged to discuss them with staff at an early stage so they can be quickly resolved.

Should students experience circumstances (personal, interpersonal, or programmatic) that are negative, distressing, and/or concerning, they are encouraged to share these with the Program Director.

More broadly, the ANU has [comprehensive procedures and support processes](#) that students can access as needed, including concerns about unfair treatment or [adverse interpersonal interactions](#).

6.3 Academic resources for students

6.3.1 Libraries

MPP students will be able to access [ANU's extensive library resources](#), much of which is available online. In addition to scholarly information, the Library provides study facilities and training.

The ANU collection is located in several buildings, each of which houses a collection focusing on one broad discipline. Material of most relevance to psychology can be found in the Chifley (Arts) and Hancock (Science) libraries. Students may also consult the Law Library, Menzies Library and/or the library at the John Curtin School of Medical Research.

The National Library may also be a valuable source of material. The library aims to stock all material published in Australia. Material can be borrowed for a period of several hours, but cannot be taken from the building. Photocopiers are available, but be prepared with change to purchase photocopy cards. The National Library is located in Parkes Place, Barton, near Old Parliament House.

6.3.2 Other ANU resources

The ANU's main student platform is WATTLE: Web Access To Teaching & Learning Environments. Program administration information and course material is available through WATTLE. [Information about using](#) WATTLE is available online.

Services and facilities are available specifically for [postgraduate students](#) and the [ANU Postgraduate and Research Students Association](#) also provides support, information and free passes to programs including free exercise classes. ANU's [personal support](#) services including medical, counselling and wellness services on campus are available to all students.

6.3.3 RSP resources

In addition to the resources provided by the University for postgraduate students, the Research School of Psychology has resources that students in the professional training programs can access

RSP Intranet: the [RSP intranet](#) contains helpful information about the School and University including key contacts and relevant forms.

Psychological Test Library (Manager: Dr Linda Nicholson)

The Research School of Psychology maintains an extensive library of psychological tests and test materials that students can access.

In the *second* year of the MPP program, students will be eligible to borrow tests for periods of up to two weeks depending on the demand for a particular instrument. Students will need to be familiar with and comply with the ethical guidelines on psychological assessment procedures published by the [Australian Psychological Society](#). Students will also need to ensure that they meet the qualification criteria specified by the publisher before using any particular test.

Please note that students are responsible for any test materials that they borrow from the test library and they will be held accountable for any missing items.

For details of the specific tests held in the library and the borrowing protocols, please consult the [RSP Intranet Test Library Information page](#).

The Test Library also houses a selection of books and audio-visual resources to encourage students' self-directed training. These resources cover various treatment modalities and clinical populations. Borrowing procedures similar to those used the Psychological Test Library will be employed in relation to these resources.

Meeting and Workspace (Manager: Amy Seath)

MPP students have their own meeting and workspace in Room 2.04 in the Peter Baume Building. The room contains some shared computers, desks for students' own devices and lockers. This room is intended to be a welcoming base that supports collaboration and MPP students are strongly encouraged to use it.

A printer is available nearby in the Peter Baume building (Room 2.09). Printing will need to be sent from the ANU computers using students' logins, rather than from students' own devices. Survey materials can be printed using the photocopier in the resource room. However, students need to be prudent with the printing and collection of material. Students who intend to print a large number of surveys and questionnaires should contact the Student Administration team.

Keys to the MPP room will be issued to students and must be returned at the completion of the program. Entry into the building after-hours is via student cards.

Research Funds: MPP students can access up to \$350 in the first year of their program to support research activities and \$500 in their second year. Funds could be used to pay for participant recruitment, participant payment, minor equipment and other associated costs. Funding proposals should be discussed with supervisors in the first instance. More information and the Application Form is available [on the RSP Intranet](#).

Student Travel

All students who are undertaking study related travel outside of the ANU / ACT / Queanbeyan region are required to complete an online Approval to Travel form *before* the commencement of travel.

Information about travel funds and travel procedure is available [on the RSP Intranet](#). For all queries relating to travel please contact the School administrative staff via email enquiries.psychology@anu.edu.au or in person at the Psychology Administration Office.

Travel insurance

Failure to submit the online Approval to Travel form means that the traveller does not have the approval of the Director of the School (Delegated Authority) to travel. If involved in an accident, the traveller may not be covered by the ANU's insurance provider. Staff and students should familiarise themselves with the [ANU Travel Policy](#).

Work health and safety

The Research School of Psychology is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment for all their workers, students and visitors under the ANU Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS).

The Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) was developed to enable the University to manage the work-related health and safety of its workers and HDR students and to meet Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2011 (Cth), WHS Approved Codes of Practice,

National Self-Insurer WHS Audit Tool (NAT) and other relevant requirements. Please refer to [WHS Management System Policy and Procedures](#).

The ANU principles of this commitment to work health and safety can be found in the [ANU Work Health and Safety Policy](#).

Students must adhere to COVID-19 protocols and practices. These will be advised via the [ANU COVID-19 Advice page](#), updates on Wattle, RSP emails and during workshops and classes.

Intellectual property

The ANU does not, in general, claim ownership of the intellectual property (IP) that students generate, but under some (rarely seen) circumstances it will ask individual students to sign an agreement assigning their ownership rights. For more information about how ANU manages IP, please consult research supervisors and read the [Policy: Intellectual Property](#).

6.4 Learning outcomes

Course learning outcomes: these are specified in the Class Summaries and are cumulative over the two years of the program.

Program learning outcomes: Upon successful completion of the program, students will have attained the following competencies:

1. Advanced knowledge of the theoretical and conceptual foundations of assessment and intervention relevant to professional psychology practice.
2. Advanced communication skills in oral and written formats.
3. Understanding of, ability to apply and commitment to the ethical, legal, culturally competent and self-reflective professional practice of psychology.
4. The ability to critically analyze and synthesize complex information relevant to the practice of professional psychology.
5. The ability to collaborate effectively with clients and other service providers.
6. The ability to conduct and interpret research relevant to the professional practice of psychology.
7. The skills required to engage in psychological assessment under appropriate supervision.
8. The skills required to engage in psychological interventions under appropriate supervision.
9. Awareness, knowledge and skill in interacting and working with clients across the lifespan and from diverse cultural settings including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

Course and Program Outcomes are aligned with the competencies for Pre-Professional (Level 2) and Professional (Level 3) specified by APAC (2019) in its Accreditation Standards for Psychology programs Version 1.2) A list of these competencies is provided in APPENDIX I and the full document is available on [the APAC website](#).

6.5 Component Courses

The MPP program is composed of the following courses. All courses are compulsory and must be completed in the sequence shown.

FULL TIME STUDY PROGRAM STRUCTURE				
Year 1				
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8410 Foundations of Professional Psychology	PSYC8411 Research Methods and Statistics in Professional Psychology	PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research Project	PSYC8413 Psychological Assessment
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8421 Psychological Interventions	PSYC8422 Contextualising Professional Psychology	PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research Project	
Year 2				
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8510 Advanced Assessment in Professional Psychology	PSYC8511 Advanced Psychological Interventions	PSYC8512 Ethics and Professional Practice	PSYC8513 Preparation for Professional Psychology Placement
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8521 Advanced Health Psychology and Lifestyle Medicine	PSYC8520 Evidence in Professional Psychology	PSYC8522 Professional Psychology Placement	

INDICATIVE PART TIME STUDY PROGRAM STRUCTURE		
Year 1		
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8410 Foundations of Professional Psychology	PSYC8413 Psychological Assessment
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8421 Psychological Interventions	PSYC8422 Contextualising Professional Psychology
Year 2		
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8411 Research Methods and Statistics in Professional Psychology	PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research Project
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research Project	
Year 3		
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8511 Advanced Psychological Interventions	PSYC8510 Advanced Assessment in Professional Psychology
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8521 Advanced Applications in Psychological Practice	PSYC8520 Evidence in Professional Psychology
Year 4		
<i>Semester 1</i>	PSYC8512 Ethics and Professional Practice	PSYC8513 Preparation for Professional Psychology Placement
<i>Semester 2</i>	PSYC8522 Professional Psychology Placement	

For each course, the workload is expected to be at least 130 hours, including study time, spread over the semester. Weekly contact hours will comprise three hours of face-to-face activities including lectures and/or workshops.

6.6 Brief course descriptions

Links to individual courses and detailed Class Summaries for courses will be made available on the [ANU Programs and Courses website](#) and on [Wattle](#).

A brief overview of first year courses is provided below:

[PSYC8410 Foundations of Professional Psychology](#)

This course will provide an in-depth understanding of

- the application of psychological theory and research to mental health and
- major paradigms including behaviourism, cognitivism, psychobiology and the scientist-practitioner approach.

You will also be introduced to

- major conceptualisations of psychological wellbeing and pathology,
- major taxonomies related to mental disorders,
- professional regulation and ethics in professional psychology,
- reflective professional practice.

[PSYC8411 Research Methods and Statistics in Professional Psychology](#)

This course will provide the knowledge and skills required to undertake research and utilize scientific literature in professional practice settings. You will learn about

- research methods, statistical analyses and relevant software,
- ethical frameworks relevant to the conduct of psychological research,
- synthesizing and interpreting scientific literature relating to professional practice.

[PSYC8412 Professional Psychology Research project](#)

In this course, small groups of students will investigate a substantive research question in psychology over the course of the year. In the first semester, one course (6 units) will be allocated to the project and in the second semester, two courses (12 units) will be allocated to the project. Assessment tasks include presenting a research proposal and writing a report.

Students will complete a group research proposal presentation, and will be required to meet additional milestones throughout their research project, including a presentation at the Clinical Forum each year, research integrity training, and others as discussed with research supervisors.

With regards to the report, students will develop and write up the research *individually*, collect data *collaboratively*, participate in *group* supervision and *individually* complete a report of about 5000 words. The report will be in the style of a journal article with students required to select a target journal and include a copy of the author guidelines for this publication in the appendix.

Supervisors will be clinical researchers in the School, including MPP program staff. Topics and projects will be offered by supervisors and will vary from year to year. The reports will be marked by expert examiners who have not supervised the projects.

Students will be assigned to supervisors and topics. Students' individual preferences will be accommodated where possible.

In addition to completing a research project, this course provides students with the opportunity to develop their skills in collaborative practice. This is a critical skill in the practice of professional psychology. Key aspects of participating in group research supervision will include:

- preparing for supervision sessions to ensure that the time can be used productively,
- participating constructively and staying focused on relevant issues in group discussion,
- showing respect and encouraging others to provide their perspective,
- clearly negotiating the distribution of tasks in a fair manner and reliably completing work,
- and, giving and receiving constructive feedback in a professional manner.

Supervisors will help guide the research in a practical and productive way, and advise students on writing their reports to the highest possible standard. Students will benefit most where they are able to collaborate with their peers, submit drafts of their work to supervisors on time and carefully consider the advice provided by supervisors.

Detailed information about the research project will be provided by Course Conveners in a separate document.

[PSYC8413 Psychological Assessment](#)

This course provides knowledge of the theory and principles of major forms of psychological assessment (including standardised psychometric tests) and relevant cultural, developmental and ethical considerations. There will be practical workshops in which you will learn and practice interpersonal communication and interview skills and plan, conduct, interpret and report basic psychological assessments, including an introduction to risk assessment.

This course is an introduction to major evidence-based psychological interventions for a range of psychological disorders, the theory and research that underpins these interventions and the ethical frameworks that guide their implementation. Information on basic psycho-pharmacology will also be covered. The course includes workshops in which you will build skills in counselling, including risk management.

[PSYC8422 Contextualizing professional psychology](#)

This course considers important contextual factors in psychological ethics, theory, research and practice with diverse populations over the lifespan. Key determinants (e.g., social, structural, economic and interpersonal factors) and contextual factors (e.g., geographic and cultural) will be examined.

A brief overview of second year courses is provided below:

[PSYC8510 Advanced Assessment in Professional Psychology](#)

Students will extend and apply their knowledge and skills in psychological assessment in this course. You will learn how to select, administer and interpret the results of major standardised tests and acquire advanced skills in interviewing, assessment of risk and the use of taxonomies.

The course also develops advanced skills in the synthesis, use and communication of assessment findings and in developing formulations that are culturally, socially and developmentally appropriate to inform intervention planning.

[PSYC8511 Advanced Psychological Interventions](#)

In this course, students will extend and apply their intervention knowledge and skills by drawing on assessment findings and scientific literature to plan, implement and monitor intervention strategies for psychological disorders. The course will emphasise links between formulation and intervention.

and will teach students how to incorporate cultural, social and developmental considerations in psychological interventions.

[PSYC8512](#) Ethics and Professional Practice

This course addresses the regulatory, organisational, ethical and legal frameworks that apply to psychologists and how these are applied across a range of population groups, professional roles and practice settings. The course will address ethical codes, guidelines, resources and reasoning; relevant legislation; practice management and professional administration; supervision, consultation and career management.

[PSYC8513](#) Preparation for Professional Psychology Placements

In this course, you will prepare for your external placement. This course has an applied focus and will provide opportunities for you to participate in simulated learning exercises to practice and integrate the knowledge and skills you have acquired in psychological assessment and intervention. The 40 hours of simulated learning experience in this course will contribute to the 300 hours practical experience required by APAC.

[PSYC8520](#) Evidence in Professional Psychology

This focus of this course is on developing your capacity to apply the scientific-practitioner by integrating your skills in research and professional self-reflection. You will complete a capstone project that addresses a question related to a particular area of your professional practice.

[PSYC8521](#) Advanced Applications in Psychological Practice

Psychological practice contributes to society in many domains and this course will provide students with an overview of current practice, challenges and opportunities in key areas. Students will have the opportunity to extend their knowledge of assessment, intervention and practice.

[PSYC8522](#) Professional Psychology Placement (12 units which must be taken in the final semester of the program)

In this course, you will apply your knowledge and skills in assessment and intervention and develop your ability to provide safe, high quality, person-centered care through supervised experience in one or more professional psychology settings, where you will undertake a range of client-related activities under the supervision of a registered psychologist. This 12 unit course provides 260 of the 300 hours of practicum and skills training required by APAC in the 5th year of the 5+1 pathway to registration. The aim is to provide you with practical experience and prepare you to enter an external internship in the 6th year of the 5+1 pathway to registration.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1: 2019 APAC Competencies relevant to the MProfPsych

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council specifies two levels of competencies relevant to the MProfPsych:

- Pre-Professional (Level 2)
- Professional (Level 3)

The following competency list is replicated from the Accreditation Standards of Psychology Programs Version 1.2, (2019). The full document and related resources are available from [the APAC website](#).

LEVEL 2 PRE-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Purpose

Graduates of programs at this level have basic knowledge and skills in the professional practice of psychology and the independent conduct and evaluation of scientific research.

Programs for pre-professional competencies are typically a Bachelor Honours Degree or Graduate Diploma (if the graduate competencies in research can be met).

Entry requirements

As a general principle, entry to the program for pre-professional competencies requires successful completion of an APAC-accredited qualification that achieves foundational competencies. The program could be a Bachelor Degree in psychology, or a Bachelor Degree in any discipline plus an APAC-accredited sequence in psychology, or a qualification obtained from an overseas education institution that has been assessed as comparable to an APAC-accredited qualification in psychology or an APAC-accredited sequence in psychology.

Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically:

2.1 Demonstrate successful (prior or concurrent) achievement of foundational competencies.

2.2 Demonstrate appropriate interpersonal communication and interview skills in situations appropriate to psychological practice and research. This includes active listening, clarifying and reflecting, effective questioning, summarising and paraphrasing, developing rapport, appropriate cultural responsiveness and empathic responding.

2.3 Demonstrate basic assessment strategies in situations appropriate to psychological practice and knowledge of psychometric theory and principles of the construction, cultural considerations, implementation and interpretation of some of the more widely used standardised psychological test instruments.

2.4 Explain how basic psychological intervention strategies can be applied across a range of contexts.

2.5 Investigate a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of psychology.

LEVEL 3 PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

Purpose

Graduates of programs at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional practice and research in psychology. Programs for professional competencies are typically a Masters Degree (Coursework).

Entry pathways

As a general principle, entry to the program for professional competencies requires successful completion of an APAC-accredited qualification that achieves foundational competencies and pre-professional competencies. This could be an Australian qualification or an equivalent qualification from an overseas education institution that has been assessed as comparable by the PsyBA when assessing individual applicants for registration. *

Entry to the program also requires applicants to demonstrate suitability for the program through an assessment interview or other assessment processes, as decided by the HEP.

Because programs at this level include a component of direct client activities, all students enrolled in the program are required to be provisionally registered as a psychologist on commencement of the course. *

Practice placements

Achievement of the professional graduate competencies is through a program of study which includes practice placement, with the latter designed to integrate theory and practice in an appropriate professional environment to prepare graduates to provide safe quality client care and service.

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

- 3.1 Demonstrate successful (prior or concurrent) achievement of pre-professional competencies.
- 3.2 Apply evidence-based and scientific methods to professional practice across the lifespan in empirically valid and culturally responsive ways.
- 3.3 Employ professional communication skills, in a culturally responsive manner, with a range of socially and culturally diverse clients.
- 3.4 Perform appropriate standardised psychological testing, as part of broader assessment, to assess and interpret aspects of functioning.
- 3.5 Identify psychological disorders using a recognised taxonomy.
- 3.6 Conduct professional interviews and assessments and synthesise information from multiple sources, including assessment of risk, to formulate a conceptualisation of the presenting issues to determine the most appropriate interventions, including management of risk.
- 3.7 Monitor outcomes and modifications based on evolving case formulation, including health and health concerns, family and support networks, and organisational, cultural or community contexts, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the client within their wider context.
- 3.8 Interpret and communicate findings in oral and written formats, including formal psychological reports, using culturally appropriate language.
- 3.9 Implement appropriate, empirically supported interventions, and monitor clients' progress and intervention outcomes.
- 3.10 Demonstrate respect for the skills and contribution of other professionals.
- 3.11 Work effectively with a range of professional and support staff in the workplace and communicate and collaborate effectively, within the bounds of ethical and legal requirements.

- 3.12 Operate within the boundaries of their professional competence, consult with peers or other relevant sources where appropriate, and refer on to relevant other practitioners where appropriate.
- 3.13 Rigorously apply professional practice policies and procedures, including as they relate to referral management and record-keeping, across a range of workplace settings and with recognition of different organisational cultures and practices.
- 3.14 Engage in self-reflective professional practice, taking account of the impact of their own values and beliefs, and taking appropriate actions as a result.
- 3.15 Evaluate the effectiveness of their professional practice, identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes where needed.
- 3.16 Critically evaluate contemporary scientific literature to inform practice.
- 3.17 Investigate a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of psychology.
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* See PsyBA requirements, Appendix I.