

What are the aims of the MRes Clinical Psychology?

Aims

- To develop understanding and experience of research methods and techniques appropriate for clinical and applied settings.
- To develop students' skills in planning and conducting research, and in the dissemination of their research outcomes.
 - Generating research questions - designing projects which will answer those questions
 - Liaising with service-users and professionals
 - Acting ethically, sensitively and professionally
 - Information-handling; data-analysis, and critical evaluation).
- To develop students' transferable 'professional skills' in team work and effective communication (both written and spoken), to facilitate entry into further research and/or clinical training in related disciplines.

Course ethos

- Our aim is to provide you with a range of learning opportunities – some of which may be quite structured (e.g. the taught component), and others may require considerably more independence (e.g. the research component).
- Taken together, we hope that these elements will help you to adopt a spirit of critical open-mindedness towards the research process, and a sensitive and responsible attitude towards working in clinical settings.

How long is the course?

1 year full-time, 2 years part-time.

Can I do the course part-time?

Part time is an option for this programme. In order to follow this path you will need to be able to be released from other commitments for:

- Up to two weeks in October, a week in January for teaching blocks, and ongoing Mondays for teaching during Trimester 1 and 2.
- Ongoing placement and project related work as agreed with a supervisor (commonly three days per week)

These tasks are spread over two years, and there are a different ways of putting the elements together. Feel free to contact one of the course team if you wish to discuss this further.

I'm working in the NHS already. Can I do my placements at my current place of work?

This is a possibility, if you have appropriate supervision. Again, contact someone from the course team, and we'll help you to work it out.

What is the structure of the course?

Trimester 1 AUTUMN	Trimester 2 SPRING	Trimester 3 SUMMER & VACATION
Foundation: Psychological issues <i>Mondays</i>		Research Placement 3 (Project) 6 months (with supervision on a clinically relevant project)
Psychological Research in Clinical Settings 1 [with Msci] <i>Delivered in teaching block, Semester 1, week 2.</i>	Transferable skills	
One from: - Design and Analysis 1 - Principles of Applied Psychology	Psychological Research in Clinical Settings 2 <i>Delivered in teaching block, Semester 2, week 1.</i>	
Research Placement 1	Research Placement 2	

The grey background relates to taught components, and the green research.

What are the fees?

Please see the University website for the latest fees.

I have a 2:2 – is it worth me applying?

Unfortunately, due to the strength of the applications to the programme, we are currently unable to offer places to applicants with a 2:2.

How much prior experience do I need? How are applicants selected?

We don't have a threshold for work experience, but on top of the basic academic requirements, we rate each application in terms of:

- Academic strengths – for example degree classification, publications or conference presentations
- References
- Evidence of ability to communicate clearly
- Evidence of interest in and suitability for clinical or applied psychological research [e.g. work experience]
- Personal statement – especially if this shows an understanding of the programme/area and why it fits the applicant, in terms of clinical research and personal/professional development

When can I apply?

Applications can be made any time up until the 31st of May in the year in which you wish to study.

When will I hear?

No decisions are made until June/July. After the closing date, we rate and order all of the applications we have received. We have around 15 places to fill each year, and we offer telephone interviews to the highest-ranked applicants on our list in June/July.

We will normally also keep a reserve list of applicants each year, and as we hear back from the recipients of our initial offers we are often able to make some further offers during July and August.

What do I write in the personal statement part of my application form?

Please also see the more detailed guidance on ‘The MRes Clinical Psychology Application Process’. Try to tell us why you would like to take the course, what you hope to gain from it, a sense of *some general areas* that you are interested in, and a sense of *how you see the role of research* in clinical psychology. Also, please tell us about what you have learned from any relevant experiences of working with people (generally) or in applied psychology (specifically).

Do I need to contact a supervisor for my research? Do I need to submit a proposal?

For the MRes, you *don't* need to submit a proposal for a particular idea, or find a supervisor. It can be confusing as the University has some standard instructions, and the same application form, for all research degrees, but ours is a bit different. What we do like to have is a sense of *some general areas* that you are interested in, which can inform our thinking in organising research studies. You can write this information on the personal statement part of your form.

What are the placements?

- A placement is a bit like working as a Research Assistant or an Assistant Psychologist.
- The placements are all research-based; they are all clinically-relevant; some of them are based in the NHS, and some at the University.
- It might involve one or two of: literature review, ethics application, recruitment, pilot study, data collection, data analysis, audit, service evaluation, dissemination, direct clinical contact – etc. etc.
- We allocate autumn placements in advance, and try to match them to your interests and prior experience as best we can.
- We offer some choice for spring placements and projects, depending on what is on offer, and will discuss this with you prior to the programme commencing.

What is the research project?

- The project is a complete piece of Masters level work, with ‘standalone coherence.’
- It may well lead to a publication – and should be of standard which makes this a possibility.
- All of our projects are in ‘clinically relevant’ areas.

Do I get to choose my placements?

- We allocate autumn placements in advance, and try to match them to your interests and prior experience as best we can.
- We offer some choice for spring placements and projects, depending on what is on offer, and will discuss this with you prior to the programme commencing.

Do I get paid on placement?

You do not get paid to attend placements but some expenses are recoverable.

What kind of placements are offered?

In practice, the research that MRes students get involved with in any one year is driven by the interests of the supervisors who offer placements and projects. These vary a bit from year to year, but all of them have applied and clinical relevance.

For example, previous students have been offered placements in the areas of:

- Clinical health psychology [cancer, diabetes, coeliacs]
- Psychosis and early intervention
- Addiction and substance use
- Physical ill-health and distress
- Older adulthood, dementia and end of life issues
- Neuropsychology and rehabilitation
- Childhood neuro-developmental disorders
- Community-based interventions for young people and families
- Therapeutic process [CBT, systemic and psychodynamic]

Example projects from previous years:

- Developing a simple and reliable measure of wellbeing for older adults
- Using longitudinal data to investigate the relationship between diabetes and depression
- Evaluating the effectiveness of a support group for people diagnosed with bipolar mood disorder
- Exploring therapists’ experiences of unsuccessful therapy
- Understanding service-users’ experiences of re-learning to walk using an electrical stimulation device

How many days do I need to be at the University?

University attendance for teaching is up to two weeks in October and a week in January for teaching blocks, and ongoing Mondays for teaching during Trimesters 1 and 2.

How many days do I need to be on placement?

This is flexible: placement-and project-related work is as agreed with your supervisor; but we ask you to be available to work on placement and project related work for around three days per week if you are full-time.

Who takes the course?

- People who have applied experience but who want to boost or refresh their research skills in order to improve their chances of obtaining a D.Clin.Psy training place
- People looking for a career in clinical research and are planning on taking a PhD, or on pursuing employment in an applied research organisation
- People hoping to build up a profile of knowledge and experience that will enable them to compete for Psychology Assistant posts

What do previous students say about the course?

Our student feedback is very good! Students enjoy the course and learn a lot from it.

- ‘Invaluable in building my confidence and skills’
- ‘Excellent supervision and guidance – truly grateful for the experience’
- ‘You gain and grow so much personally and professionally’
- ‘Has given me the confidence to carry out all forms of research’
- ‘Thoroughly enjoyed all parts of the course, especially the placements’
- ‘I never learned so much in one year!’

What should I expect to learn?

Successful graduates will, at an appropriate Masters level, be able to:

- Identify relevant research objects of enquiry, and investigate these with answerable research questions.
- Design, perform, analyse and interpret research within the relevant areas.
- Demonstrate theoretical understanding of current approaches within the relevant areas.
- Demonstrate practical expertise with current techniques within the relevant areas.
- Adopt a flexible approach in formulating appropriate strategies for conducting research in applied settings.
- Demonstrate awareness of commitments to service-users and participants throughout the research process.
- Demonstrate awareness of professional and ethical issues in the development, dissemination and application of research findings.

- Employ a reflexive and critical approach to the evaluation of research.
- Express themselves clearly in written and spoken English to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- Work effectively as individuals and in groups.

Where do graduates from the program end up?

Our students have consistently gone on to take up places on clinical training courses, PhD programs, Assistant Psychologist posts and postgraduate research jobs.

Is there any recommended reading?

- *It would be worth reading one of these general methods books, because they relate quite well to the taught modules:*
- <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Real-World-Research-Scientists-Practitioner-researchers/dp/0631213058>
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Research-Methods-Clinical-Psychology-Practitioners/dp/047149089X/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1311671075&sr=1-1
- *People without any prior knowledge of clinical psychology may also find these useful:*
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Clinical-Psychology-Practice-Helen-Beinart/dp/140516767X/ref=pd_sim_b_2
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Formulation-Psychology-Psychotherapy-Lucy-Johnstone/dp/1583917004/ref=pd_bxgy_b_img_b

Other Important Information

It is a requirement of the programme that you supply *two* references, at least one of which must be academic.

As you may have contact with vulnerable populations, during your time on the programme, it is a requirement that all MRes students complete a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and Occupational Health check. We will organise these for successful applicants who accept a place on the programme.

Who to contact?

Thank you for your interest in the programme, please also review our programme handbook, and 'The MRes Clinical Psychology Application Process'. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact either:

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