



APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

Higher Education Provider	Federation University Australia, Discipline of Psychology
Date of determination	28 July 2014
Standards version	June 2010 ver 10
Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation	Bachelor of Psychological Science Bachelor of Health Sciences Bachelor of Arts (Humanities & Social Sciences) Bachelor of Arts (Rural Social Welfare) Graduate Diploma of Psychology Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) (Honours) Master of Psychology (Clinical)

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Discipline of Psychology at Federation University Australia (FUA) and its programs of study. This summary highlights selected key features of the assessment. Comprehensive analysis of the assessment is contained in the full APAC Assessment Team Report.

As of January 2014 The University of Ballarat and the University of Monash Gippsland campuses were incorporated into the new Federation University Australia. This accreditation assessment therefore includes the addition of the programs and staff of Gippsland Campus to the Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) and programs of study previously assessed at Ballarat (Mt Helen). At the time of preparing this report the Head of Discipline reported the evolving nature of the administrative and academic organisation of psychology resources and programs at Federation University. APAC will conduct ongoing monitoring of structural changes in and around the AOU and the program development at Gippsland. (Rule 2.4 o).

The Psychology AOU is identified as the Discipline of Psychology within the School of Health Sciences. The Head of Discipline, however, does not have direct line management authority, nor have financial and administrative control. Therefore Standards 2.1.4 (i) and (ii) are not met.

The academic staff is comprised of a diverse representation across psychology with foci including discipline and professional oriented teaching and research. The research milieu is supported through the appointment of 3 level E's and more than 80% of staff have PhD's and have records of published work or

refereed conference presentations. It is noted that senior academics share published research authorship with less active researchers suggesting a growing mentorship amongst the staff.

The School of Health Sciences has a series of teaching and learning workshops and a compulsory teaching evaluation process which forms the basis of regular quality review of teaching processes and education content. Annual staff performance reviews, and students' unit and program assessments, consider the data from these evaluations to inform ongoing goals and objectives for individual staff and program coordinators.

With the exception of Standards 2.1.4 (i) and (ii) other Standards for the AOU are met.

The geographical organisation of the Federation University in 2014 resulted in two campuses on which the AOU is represented; Mt Helen in Ballarat and Gippsland. The primary campus on which the University Administration and Offices of Head of Discipline are located is Ballarat which is a 3 hour commute to the Gippsland Campus. Due to this distance it is not practical to consider programs and resources as shared between campuses. Rather the Gippsland campus will have to develop its staffing and resources to accommodate an independent offering of the proposed 3 year undergraduate programs. At the time of the accreditation assessment Federation University had commenced the early stages of developing the program at the Gippsland campus and therefore Standards 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 are not met.

While most of the Nomenclature Standards are met, Standards 2.3.2 and 2.3.7 are not met. In endeavouring to comply with changes required by the Australian Qualifications Framework, the previously titled 4th year Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology was discontinued in December 2013 and renamed Graduate Diploma in Psychology (commencing in 2014) and the former Graduate Diploma in Psychology (3-year bridging program) was discontinued. However, confusion has arisen as students are still enrolled in the 3-year bridging program while it is being taught-out. Following the accreditation assessment the University advised APAC that the University will annotate academic transcripts to clearly differentiate the two programs of study.

The overall student to staff ratio for the AOU meets Standard 2.4.3. While the student to staff ratio is satisfactory to commence year 1 of the undergraduate program on the Gippsland campus in 2015, further staffing will be required on that campus to meet Standard 2.4.11 so that at least 8 full time EFT are appointed. In addition, the AOU will need to ensure that the appropriate level of academic is appointed so that at least 1 level E or D and a further 2 at level C are employed (Standards 2.4.5 and 2.4.11). The postgraduate professional program is adequately staffed with suitably qualified academics.

Most staff of the AOU demonstrated research and teaching experience. The AOU has a mentoring system whereby junior staff are facilitated in their research and teaching processes.

At the Mt Helen campus, the administration and technical support for the Discipline is shared within the central staff of the School. This results in there being no dedicated administrative support for the Head of the Psychology Discipline, or the Discipline itself. This is highly unusual and APAC considers resources inadequate and advise that Standard 2.5.1 is not met.

The Discipline is physically accommodated within a suite of individual staff offices, a dedicated student computer laboratory, research dedicated rooms, test library, counselling rooms and central library and shared computer labs. A significant recent acquisition for the Discipline is a Psychology Clinic which opened in March this year. It is located in the CBD Ballarat. Standards 2.5.2 – 2.5.12 are met at Mt Helen

campus. While the Mt Helen campus is adequately resourced (with the exception of Standard 2.5.1) the Gippsland campus does not meet Resources Standards 2.5.2-2.5.5.

The AOU has a well-established online learning management system (Moodle). For each unit of study, students are provided with a unit outline specifying the content of the unit, the nature of the assessments, details of textbooks and readings. Unit material is regularly updated to ensure the information reflects the current knowledge in the area, and students have regular and timely access to staff.

Three-year programs are currently offered in the Bachelor of Psychological Science and Bachelor of Health Sciences, Bachelor of Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences) and Bachelor of Arts (Rural Social Welfare) at Mt Helen campus. The AOU is proposing to offer identical Bachelor of Psychological Science and Bachelor of Health Sciences programs at the Gippsland campus.

Years 1 and 2 are identical in all programs. Year 3 differs to the extent that the advanced units are core or elective. This is somewhat problematic in that students may complete the program with minimal core discipline content in abnormal psychology and cognition. In addition, the coverage of intercultural and indigenous psychology appears not to be sufficiently represented in the course materials. Graduate Attribute 5 is therefore not met, and Standard 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 are not met.

A tutorial and/or laboratory program is offered in most units and students are exposed to a range of experimental methods and theoretical approaches across units within the three-year program. Practical work is conducted at all levels and the content is up to date.

Examination of written work by APAC generally confirmed an appropriate match between the quality of students' work and assigned grades. Appropriate quality assurance and student progress processes are in place at FUA.

A fourth year is offered through the Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) (Honours) program and from January 2014, a Graduate Diploma in Psychology.

Both fourth year programs are equivalent to one year full-time in length, and comprise 100% psychology satisfying program length and structure Standards. Entry requirements Standards are also met.

The research project in the Honours stream comprises 50% of the credit points for the year. In addition, students complete 2 units in Psychological Assessment units, 2 units in Psychological Research, 1 unit Psychological Practice Unit, and 1 unit Scientist Practitioner. The research project in the Graduate Diploma stream comprises 42% of the overall credit points for the year. These students also complete the same 2 units as the Honours students in Psychological Assessment units, 2 units in Psychological Research, and the unit Psychological Practice 1. The Graduate Diploma students complete a 2nd Psychological Practice unit rather than the Scientist Practitioner unit that the Honours students take.

The Psychological Practice units are very well received by the students. These units allow the student to demonstrate interpersonal counselling and interviewing skills within a cognitive behavioural approach.

The research thesis for the Graduate Diploma is between 10,000 and 12,000 words and for the Honours program between 12,000 and 15,000 words. Students are engaged in all aspects of the research process and all students complete an individual project. All theses are examined by two examiners, and theses examined by APAC were deemed to be of good standard and scope.

The AOU should be commended for its innovative and exceptional effort to observe and attain evidence that core capabilities in basic micro-skills are achieved at this fourth year level. For both programs, all 4th year Standards are met.

Federation University offers a postgraduate specialist professional coursework program, Master of Psychology (Clinical).

The Master of Psychology (Clinical) program aims to provide professional and research training in clinical psychology leading to registration as a psychologist with graduates from the post graduate degree programs being eligible for applying for registrar programs leading to endorsement in clinical psychology.

The Standards relating to staffing are met. Staff members responsible for practical placement supervision associated with the course are reported as being appropriately qualified.

APAC noted that the constitution of this advisor/liaison committee was not adequate. The committee requires two additional representatives from community agencies. Therefore Standard 5.1.4 is not met.

The FUA's Psychology Clinic is located in refurbished building in the city providing easy access to potential clients. The Clinic functions three days a week. No administrative support is provided to the Clinic. Students are rostered to manage Clinic referrals. The Clinic Director is on site three days a week and plays a significant role in supervising up to 7 students at any one time. Students gain one hour of individual supervision per seven hours of client work as well as up to three hours of group consultation in the Clinic each week. All students have computers and all client files are stored in locked filing cabinets. There is a small designated test library in the Clinic, with an additional more substantial test library located on the University campus. At the time of the accreditation assessment recording equipment in the clinic was yet to be installed. Therefore Standard 5.1.5 is not met.

The professional collections in the University library holdings and databases are extensive. Students have access to up – to –date computer hardware and software for their course work and research purposes.

A review of the Postgraduate Handbooks, unit outlines, and marked assessments across a selection of units indicated a comprehensive and progressive curriculum which provides good coverage of the core capabilities and attributes. The units represent the particular practice and clinical specialties of the postgraduate staff and sessional appointments, almost all of whom are engaged in clinical practice. There was evidence of integration and progression of unit study with the level of practicum experience.

APAC commends the staff on their diligent and comprehensive examination of core capability skills through the use of live role play under examination conditions in several units of study. APAC was impressed with the range of assessment processes aimed at ensuring that students demonstrate capabilities on completion of each component of the program.

A review of the structure of the Masters program confirmed that all of the coursework is psychology and is taught by psychologists, the majority of whom are registered and teaching in their professional area of expertise. There are three main components in the degree: Coursework: 50%, Research: 25% and Practical placement: 25%. Students are required to pass all three components. The three placement units require a total of 1000 hours.

The research requirement includes research coursework and a thesis in the form of a journal article of 6000 words. Samples of student theses and a list of titles indicated a range of topic areas and contexts for investigation. The quality of the research and the theses at the Masters level was very good.

The organisation and management for Clinical student placement is the responsibility of the Placement co-ordinator. The first practicum is typically undertaken in the Mt Helen Psychology Clinic. A variety of externship sites enable experience across the lifespan and across diagnostic groups. Each student is allocated a child specific placement and an adult placement experience. Field supervisors are registered with Clinical endorsement, and are given Honorary Associate recognition in the University.

External supervisors maintained that systematic procedures for placement contracts, goals for training, mid placement reviews and final assessments were carried out in a timely manner and with opportunity for their comments and concerns to be heard. Several logbooks were assessed for students at different points in their placements. The format included all categories of placement activities, the time accumulated, the face-to-face component and the supervision received. The logs indicated the required individual: group: face-to-face supervision hour ratios.

The accreditation outcomes are summarised in the attached Accreditation Summary Checklist.



APAC Accreditation Summary Checklist

for use with APAC Standards June 2010 Version 10

Name of Higher Education Provider: Federation University Australia

Date of Site Visit: 28 April – 1 May 2014

Accreditation of the AOU

Rules	Rule Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Section 5 – Accreditation Status	5.1-5.6		✓	

General Accreditation Standards	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
The Psychology AOU	2.1.1-10		✓	
Multi-Campus Institutions	2.2.1-2		✓	
Degree Nomenclature	2.3.1-13		✓	
Academic Staffing	2.4.1-11		✓	
Resources	2.5.1-12		✓	
Teaching and Materials: Managing the Learning Process	2.6.1-14	✓		
Special Arrangements for Offshore Teaching	2.6.15	✓		

Undergraduate 3-Year Sequence Program of Study	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Length	3.1.1	✓		
Program of Study Structure	3.1.2-5	✓		
Program of Study Content	3.1.6-10		✓	
Assessment	3.1.11-16	✓		
Awarding of Credit or Advance Standing	3.1.17-19	✓		

Undergraduate Fourth Year Program of Study	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Entry Requirements	4.1.1	✓		
Length	4.1.2	✓		
Program of Study Structure	4.1.3	✓		
Program of Study Content	4.1.4-7	✓		
Research Methods and Professional and Research Ethics	4.1.8	✓		
Research Project	4.1.9-15	✓		
Assessment	4.1.16-22	✓		
Awarding of Credit or Advance Standing	4.1.23-25	✓		



Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Staffing	5.1.1-3	✓		
Advisory/Liaison and Quality Review Committee	5.1.4		✓	
Resources	5.1.5-8		✓	
Credit for Previous Study	5.1.9-11	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Knowledge of the Discipline	5.1.12(a)	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Ethical, Legal and Professional Matters	5.1.12(b)	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Psychological Assessment & Measurement	5.1.12(c)	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Intervention Strategies	5.1.12(d)	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Research and Evaluation	5.1.12(e)	✓		
Core Capabilities and Attributes – Communication and Interpersonal Relationships	5.1.12(f)	✓		
Core Capabilities Assessment	5.1.13-16	✓		
Log Book	5.1.17	✓		
Assessment	5.1.18-19	✓		
Entry Requirements	5.3.1-2	✓		
Length	5.3.3-4	✓		
Program of Study Structure	5.3.5-8	✓		
Coursework	5.3.9-10	✓		
Research	5.3.11-16	✓		
Practical Placements	5.3.17-30	✓		

Authorised:

Professor John Dunn

Chair, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

Date: 28 July 2014