



APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

Higher Education Provider	Macquarie University, Department of Psychology
Date of determination	2 December 2013
Standards version	June 2010 ver 10
Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts -Psychology • Bachelor of Science – Psychology • Bachelor of Arts – Psychology with the degree of Bachelor of Education (Primary) • Bachelor of Arts - Psychology with the degree of Bachelor of Laws • Bachelor of Arts - Psychology with the degree of Bachelor of Health • Bachelor of Business Administration with the degree of Bachelor of Arts - Psychology • Bachelor of Commerce with the degree of Bachelor of Arts - Psychology • Honours degree of Bachelor of Psychology • Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) with the degree of Bachelor of Law • Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) with the degree of Bachelor of Health • Bachelor of Business Administration with the degree of Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) • Bachelor of Commerce with the degree of Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) • Honours degree of Bachelor of Arts - Psychology • Honours degree of Bachelor of Science – Psychology • Postgraduate Diploma of Professional Psychology • Master of Clinical Psychology • Doctor of Clinical Psychology • Master of Clinical Neuropsychology • PhD/Master of Clinical Psychology • Doctor of Clinical Neuropsychology • PhD/Master of Clinical Neuropsychology • Master of Organisational Psychology • Doctor of Organisational Psychology • PhD/Master of Organisational Psychology

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Department of Psychology at Macquarie University 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.

Psychology at Macquarie University is a separate Department within the Faculty of Human Sciences, with a large staff of well qualified psychologists. The Department of Psychology meets all the Standards for staffing, academic, financial and administrative control, student: staff ratios, compliance with codes of conduct, grades of assessment, and the conduct of regular quality review of its programs of study.

The Department is adequately resourced. There is good administrative and technical support, with well supported teaching and research facilities, and good computing facilities. It is noteworthy that the University has a new library with the very latest in library access and facilities. The general test library and the clinical test library are also well provided with test materials. There is a new clinic also with state of the art facilities.

The Department of Psychology has a strong research culture and this is reflected in their teaching. The Department is to be commended on its development, use, and benchmarking of Multiple Choice examinations.

All three-year sequence programs of study meet the course structure, core content areas, graduate attributes 1 to 6, assessment processes and awarding of credit Standards. There are some noteworthy developments in the undergraduate program. These include a “Capstone unit” on which students and staff reported extremely favourably and peer assisted learning groups.

The Department of Psychology offers two fourth year degrees, the Honours Degree of Bachelor of Arts - Psychology and Honours Degree of Bachelor of Science - Psychology. The last offering of these 4th year courses will be 2015, and thereafter, honours will be offered as an integrated part of a four year undergraduate structure.

The fourth year program of study is 100% psychology. All students are required to complete a minimum of 24 credit points including a thesis, two core units and two additional electives from a list of a possible 14 courses. The two core units meet the advanced education and training requirements for Graduate Attributes related to core research areas of the discipline assessment and social, historical, professional and cultural contexts of the science, and the profession and research methods and research ethics. However students’ engagement in coursework related to theoretical and empirical bases underpinning intervention is dependent on the elective courses they choose. Therefore all of Standard 4.1.4 is not met.

Students conduct an individual research project and are involved in all aspects of the research process. They are supervised by staff experienced in the relevant psychological area. The project is written up in APA format resulting in a traditional thesis manuscript of between 9000 and 15000 words. Students commented on the diversity of assessments throughout their fourth year of study, including essays requiring critical analyses and self-reflection, exams and the beginning of professional-related knowledge and skills. Feedback is timely and informative.

Macquarie University offers a four year sequence in psychology within the Bachelor of Psychology Effective 2014 this sequence will also be available in the combined /double degree undergraduate sequences inclusive of the Bachelor of Psychology;

- Bachelor of Business Administration with the degree of Bachelor of Psychology Honours
- Bachelor of Commerce with the degree of Bachelor of Psychology Honours
- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) with the degree of Bachelor of Health
- Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) with the degree of Bachelor of Laws

The four year psychology program structure of these degrees comprises the identical psychology units from the three year sequence and the stand alone fourth year programs. As is with the Honours program, Standard 4.1.4 is not met in the fourth year of the Bachelor of Psychology.

Macquarie University offers postgraduate specialist professional coursework programs across four areas: the fifth year Postgraduate Diploma of Professional Psychology, and Masters and Doctoral level programs in Organisational Psychology, Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology. The Department of Psychology introduced a Postgraduate Diploma of Professional Psychology in 2011/2012. The primary purpose of the fifth year Postgraduate Diploma of Professional Psychology is defined as providing a general education in the professional practice of psychology which will result in a graduate obtaining the basic skills needed to prepare for a final year of supervised practice and lead to full registration.

The skills-building component of the Macquarie University program is well structured and has appropriate aims which involve providing provisionally registered psychologists with structured learning in the practice of the profession. The program provides formal teaching across intervention modalities comprising Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, Interpersonal Therapy, and Narrative Therapy. These approaches address the requirement that the program be evidence-based, broad in nature and generalist. Staff perceived the program as being practical in nature and allowing students to practice the profession under supervision. Unit outlines and assessment processes confirm the applied nature of the program.

The program of study comprises both coursework and practica. The coursework was described as covering Standards 5.1.12(a-f). However, it was not clear how the coursework covered Standard 5.1.12(c) as students appeared to have limited access to assessment experience and indicated that they were not provided access to the Macquarie University Psychology Clinic. Standards 5.1.12 is not met.

The practica and skills training were described as covering a range of areas and as involving role playing, skills training, and simulation of interventions. Standard 5.2.18 requires that the supervisor “must complete a final assessment of the student’s performance. The results of this assessment will be used to assess whether the student has acquired the professional skills and knowledge required to assess the student”. The form which is currently used to assess students is inadequate to arrive at such an assessment. Standard 5.2.18 is not met.

Further, the assessors were of the view that there was insufficient documentation and demonstration of students competence in each of the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12 (a-f) to meet the Standards 5.1.13-5.1.15, or availability of log books to demonstrate the meeting of Standard 5.1.17.

The Department of Psychology has made significant progress since commencing the 5th year program including the establishment of an advisory/liaison and quality review committee which meets twice a year. They have also responded to the previous APAC Accreditation Assessment Report in 2012 and addressed the need to include course materials covering cross-cultural context and working with clients across the lifespan.

Macquarie University offers Masters, Masters/PhD and professional Doctorate programs of study in Clinical Psychology, Clinical Neuropsychology and Organisational Psychology.

The Macquarie University Psychology Clinic is located in a purpose built clinical practice and research building, the Australian Hearing Hub, alongside the research and training clinic the Emotional Health Clinic, as well as other multidisciplinary health clinics. It is a state-of-the-art suite of 15 individual interview rooms and several group rooms appointed for adult and child clients. All rooms have audio-visual recording capabilities and several interview rooms have one-way mirrors for direct observation. The Clinic Director/Placement Coordinators and two supervisors are on site for each stream. There is a test library and resource library specifically for clinic use. There is a full time receptionist and the client waiting room is spacious with private cubicles for completing electronic intake assessments. All interview rooms have computers and all client files are stored electronically. Students from all three streams are training there for their first practicum. However fifth year PDPP students do not have access. The assessment team was impressed with the wealth of resources offered by the facilities in the Australian Hearing Hub, and the opportunities afforded students in cross disciplinary clinical-research exposure.

A review of the Postgraduate Handbooks, core 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. A series of electives offers advanced skills in specific assessment and intervention approaches. The units represent the particular practice and research specialties of the postgraduate staff. There was evidence of integration and progression of unit study with the level of practicum experience.

A review of the structure of the Clinical 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 program: Coursework, Research, and Practical placement. Students are required to complete 10 core plus 2 elective theoretical/practical units which cover the required core capabilities. There is good progression and integration between coursework and practicum experience, all of which is presented within an evidence-focussed framework. Students indicated they experienced a good balance of assessment including critical self-reflective reports and recorded skills practice.

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, Doctoral and PhD levels was very good. The staff indicated their satisfaction with the commitment of the students to their research projects and their levels of research skills upon completion.

Students indicated their satisfaction with most aspects of the placement arrangements. They 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.

Students enter the Doctor of Clinical Psychology after successful completion of the first year of Masters with acceptable progress in the research project. The doctorate is comprised of the coursework from the Masters program with an additional 500 hour practicum, an advanced

Professional Applications unit in the coursework, and a more extensive dissertation of 40,000 words or in the form of three or more journal article style chapters with introductory and concluding chapters. There is evidence of advanced theoretical and practical skills development in the additional coursework and practicum experiences. As the first cohort of students is yet to graduate from the Doctor of Clinical Psychology the program of study has received a grade of Accreditation With Conditions.

The Clinical Neuropsychology program meets staffing, resources, core capabilities, log book and assessment Standards. The course structure of the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology comprises research, coursework and placements and students are required to pass all three components of the course to successfully complete the degree. In addition the entry requirements Standards for, length of the degrees, course structure, coursework, research and placements are also met. All professional aspects of the combined PhD/Master of Clinical Neuropsychology degree are the same as for the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology and all relevant Standards are thus met.

Applicants for the Doctor of Clinical Neuropsychology must be enrolled in the Master of Clinical Neuropsychology, or have already completed a Master of Clinical Neuropsychology within the last 10 years. For this degree all Standards for Professional Doctorates are met including Standards that relate to entry requirements, length, course structure, advanced coursework, assessment requirements, additional 500 hours of practicum and research. As the first cohort of students is yet to graduate from the Doctor of Clinical Neuropsychology the program of study has received a grade of Accreditation With Conditions.

Entry into the three Organisational Psychology programs is highly selective considering academic record, previous experience, and staged process of interviewing and ranking which assesses the potential student's suitability for the course. For the Doctor of Organisational Psychology, students accepted into the course are either currently enrolled in a Masters of Organisational Psychology, or have completed an APAC accredited Masters of Organisational Psychology, within the last 10 years. The three course structure components of the Organisational Psychology programs are coursework, research and placement. The professional doctorate having an additional placement and research requirements. The combined PhD/Master of Organisational Psychology has the same coursework and placement requirements as the Master of Organisational Psychology. For each of these three programs of study entry requirements, length, course structure, course content research and placement all meet the Standards. As the first cohort of students is yet to graduate from the Doctor of Organisational Psychology the program of study has received a grade of Accreditation With Conditions.

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