



**APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report**

<b>Higher Education Provider</b>	<b>Swinburne University of Technology, Psychological Sciences and Statistics (PSS)</b>
<b>Date of determination</b>	<b>11 April 2014</b>
<b>Standards version</b>	<b>June 2010 ver 10</b>
<b>Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation</b>	<p><b>Undergraduate 3-year programs offered on campus at Hawthorn</b></p> <p>Bachelor of Arts          Bachelor of Arts (Psychology)          Bachelor of Arts (Psychology and Psychophysiology)          Bachelor of Arts (Psychology and Forensic Science)          Bachelor of Arts (Psychology and Sport Science)          Bachelor of Health Science          Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology)          Bachelor of Business / Bachelor of Social Science          Bachelor of Science          Bachelor of Science (Psychology)          Bachelor of Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)          Bachelor of Science (Psychology and Biochemistry) (being taught out)          Bachelor of Social Science          Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)          Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)          Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology and Sport Science)          Graduate Diploma of Psychology (last intake in 2014).</p> <p><b>Undergraduate 3-year program offered in the distance mode through Open Universities Australia</b></p> <p>Bachelor of Behavioural Studies (Psychology)</p> <p><b>Undergraduate 3-year program offered in the distance mode via Swinburne Online (SOL)</b></p> <p>Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)</p> <p><b>Undergraduate 4<sup>th</sup> Year programs offered on</b></p>

	<p><b>campus at Hawthorn</b></p> <p>Bachelor of Arts (Honours)  Bachelor of Science (Honours)  Postgraduate Diploma of Psychology</p> <p><b>Postgraduate professional programs</b></p> <p>Master of Psychology (Counselling Psychology)  Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)  Doctor of Psychology (Counselling Psychology)  Doctor of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)  Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology)</p>
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This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Psychological Sciences and Statistics at Swinburne University of Technology 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.

Psychological Sciences and Statistics (PSS) is located in the Faculty of Life and Social Science and is one of the largest and most successful academic disciplines in the University. It has the highest number of postgraduate students in the University and in terms of research, it obtained a rating of 4 (Above World Class) in the 2012 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) assessment. In addition to the excellent research performance, PSS also has a strong focus on learning and teaching.

The AOU offers accredited three year and fourth year undergraduate programs in psychology, and professional training programs in the areas of Clinical and Counselling Psychology. It also offers research higher degrees and teaches a number of units in non-accredited courses. PSS appears also offers two distance education offerings of the three year undergraduate program. The first of these two distance education programs is offered via the Open University of Australia (OUA). The second distance education program, which is in competition with the OUA, is offered via Swinburne Online (SOL). While SOL uses Swinburne University of Technology’s learning platform and seamlessly blends into Swinburne University of Technology’s website, it is in fact an independent company in which Swinburne University of Technology has a 50% share.

Psychological Sciences and Statistics meet all the Standards relating to the psychology academic organisational unit.

Despite the fact that the student:staff ratio is satisfactory, APAC is concerned about the teaching workloads which appeared to be heavy. This situation is exacerbated by the rapid growth of the distance/online sequences. The OUA program has proved to be extremely popular and its enrolments far exceed the estimated figures provided in the original accreditation application for this program. This issue of student numbers is one that APAC will need to monitor very closely each year.

The School has excellent laboratory facilities which are well utilised. There are also good computing facilities for both staff and students, and a well-stocked library. PSS also has excellent clinic facilities and a well-stocked test library that has appropriate operating procedures. Standards for resources are met.

While the current arrangements are adequate to meet the requirements of Standard 2.5.1, it is strongly suggested that more dedicated administrative support posts are created in the PSS.

The learning management system, Blackboard, is used to support all the accredited programs offered by the PSS. At the undergraduate level, there are separate sites for the units for each of the modes of delivery (on-campus, distance, online) with these being tailored to fit the philosophy and approach of the mode. The content and objectives of the units is essentially the same in all the modes of delivery as shown in the excellent booklet *Alternate forms of Swinburne's on campus and online first – third year psychology units: Producing matching outcomes*. There are no residential schools in either the distance or online modes of delivery, but it is clearly documented in the booklet how students studying in those modes receive an equivalent learning experience.

Assessment across modes is very similar but the fact that the sessions for the different modes are not synchronised, means that identical assessments cannot be used. To ensure equivalence of standards across the modes of delivery, some assessments are cross-marked and mark distributions for the modes are monitored.

Overall the accreditation assessors were impressed by the quality, enthusiasm and collegiality of the academic staff. Those involved in teaching appear to be dedicated to providing quality education and the students interviewed certainly spoke highly of them. The assessors were also impressed by the research milieu and the quality of research produced.

The psychology sequence in the accredited on-campus courses consists of 12 units, of which eleven are compulsory and one is a psychology elective. In the distance education courses, and the Graduate Diploma of Psychology, the psychology sequence consists of 11 compulsory units which are similar to the compulsory on campus units. In terms of content, the psychology sequences provide training in the scientific study of psychology, with appropriate up-to-date references being used and practical work appears to be undertaken in some units. Standards for program structure and content are met.

A range of assessments including essays, laboratory reports, in-class tests, presentations and examinations is used. Inspection of assessed work indicated that it was of an appropriate standard and that the feedback given was appropriate. The procedures relating to ensuring standards, student appeals and student academic misconduct are all appropriate. Assessment and awarding of credit Standards are met.

Psychological Sciences and Statistics at Swinburne University of Technology is commended on the comprehensive process that has been undertaken to ensure the equivalence of the material in three different modes by which the undergraduate psychology sequence is offered.

Swinburne University of Technology offers two 4<sup>th</sup> year courses – an Honours course which can be taken either in a BA or BSc, or a Postgraduate Diploma (Psychology). The Honours course and the Postgraduate Diploma are identical other than there are slightly different entry requirements.

The fourth year course is one year in length, is 100% psychology and has appropriate entry requirements. It consists of a research project with a weighting of .375 and five coursework units, two of which are compulsory. The compulsory units focus on advanced statistical methods, ethics and professional issues, and psychological assessment. The two electives are chosen from five possible electives – contemporary psychology, neuroscience methods, and current issues in social psychology, counselling psychology and neuropsychology methods. A range of appropriate assessments is used in the units.

In addition to the unit on ethics and professional issues, students attend a 3 hour seminar on ethics as part of the first thesis unit. While Honours students are sometimes part of a larger research group, they do produce an individual research project and participate in the various steps involved in the research. All Standards relevant to the 4<sup>th</sup> year program have been met.

Swinburne University of Technology offers postgraduate 5th and 6th year specialist professional coursework programs in Clinical Psychology and in Counselling Psychology. Students may enrol in the Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology), or Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology), or in the Master of Psychology (Counselling Psychology). The university also offers Professional Doctorates in both Clinical Psychology and Counselling Psychology and these are RTS degrees.

The Masters' programs are offered only in part time mode and are of four years duration (2 years FT equivalent). The Professional Doctorates are offered in full time mode, and are of four years, as is the Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology.

PSS has two Advisory Liaison and Quality Review Committees - one for the Clinical psychology programs and one for the Counselling psychology programs. These meet twice a year. The committees consist of members of the staff, senior psychologists from the community, and external academic members. No student representatives are included in either the clinical or the counselling program committees as required by Standard 5.1.4. Standard 5.1.4 is not met.

The Clinic is located in a purpose built clinical practice building. It is a state-of-the-art suite including individual interview room, several group rooms appointed for adult and child clients. Almost all of the rooms have audio-visual recording capabilities and there is also an interview room with one-way mirrors for direct observation. The clinic spaces also includes workspaces for students, an office for the clinic managers, a waiting room for clients, and access to group computer and teaching rooms. There is also a test library and resource library specifically for clinic use.

The application document outlined in detail how the core capabilities are developed and how these are assessed in the professional programs. 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 in the programs. The coursework clearly links research and practical application. A review of all assessment protocols and processes for grading practices maintains consistency and quality of determining students' knowledge and competency.

Several logbooks were assessed, and assessors found not all logbooks had been completed correctly, supervision procedures for signing off of logbooks were not consistent and there were no policies for handling confidential client reports. Standards 5.1.17, 5.3.20, 5.3.22 and 2.1.7 were therefore not met.

The coursework in the professional programs is all psychology and is taught by psychologists, the majority of whom are registered and teaching in their professional area of expertise. All programs consist of coursework, research and practical placement and these components are integrated.

In the Masters degrees, the weighting of the three main components are coursework 50%, research 25% and practical placement 25%. For the PhD (Clinical Psychology) the weighting of the research component is 66.72%, the amount of time spent on coursework and practica are identical to that in the Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology). Students are required to pass all three components.

As the two professional doctorates, Doctor of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) and Doctor of Psychology (Counselling Psychology) are RTS degrees, the research component has a weighting of 66.72% and meets the requirement of Standard 5.4.4 in relation to research. In terms of the practicum, the total placement is 1500 hours.

The clinical programs and the counselling programs share five units (Counselling Theory and Skills, Advanced Psychological Assessment, Cognitive Behaviour Interventions, Systemic Family Counselling, and Professional ethics training) with the remaining three being specialisation specific.

The coursework appears to meet the core capabilities Standards. The coursework clearly links research and practical application.

The research project for the Masters programs involves a project designed to be consistent with Standard 5.3.13, resulting in a final written report of up to 10,000 words. The research project may take one of several forms, such as a program evaluation report, a single case report, a critical review and metal analysis, an empirical study or presented as a full journal manuscript.

For the PhD(Clinical Psychology) the research project is equivalent to a standard PhD dissertation and involved 66% research component. It is completed under supervision, and the research reported is in the form of a thesis of 70,000 – 100,000 words. In the professional doctorate programs students are required to undertake a substantial research resulting in a thesis of project is completed under supervision, and the research reported in the form of a 40,000 - 60,000 word thesis.

Students reported they were very pleased with the processes and procedures established to ensure efficient progress on their theses. 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 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. The thesis marking procedures and criteria met the Standards for each level. Standards for research are met.

In all the programs, there are four placements with the only difference between the Master's and professional doctorate programmes being the number of hours allocated to them. For all programs, the first placement occurs in the PSS's Clinic. For students in the Master of Psychology (Counselling) program, the second placement is also in the internal Clinic and that is often also the case for Master of Psychology (Clinical) students. Students in the professional doctorate programs undertake the second placement in an external setting. For all students, the third and fourth placements are external to the University.

It was not clear to assessors how the advanced practicum requirement of Standard 5.4.4 relating to 'a higher level of autonomy and responsibility, and a higher level integration of theory and practice' are being addressed in the professional doctorate programs, Doctor of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) and Doctor of Psychology (Counselling Psychology). Standard 5.4.4, practicum is not met.

The clinical and counselling psychology staff should be commended for the ways in which they are offering two high quality postgraduate professional programs that retain the specific identity and philosophy of their respective disciplines, and also ensure students in each program are treated equally.

The staff showed ample evidence of a commitment to ongoing evaluation and improvement of the programs since the last accreditation visit and the field supervisors speak highly of the program. While there are a few issues relating to the programmes that need to be addressed, the PSS and the University can justifiably feel proud of the quality of these programs.

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 the Higher Education Provider: Swinburne University of Technology

Date of Site Visit: 4-6 December 2013

### 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 Programs 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 Programs 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	✓		



<b>Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study - Clinical Stream</b>	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		✓	

<b>Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study - Counselling Stream</b>	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		✓	

<b>Professional Doctorate Programs of Study – Clinical Stream</b>	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	5.1.9-12	✓		
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	5.4.1	✓		
Program of Study Structure	5.4.2-5		✓	
Coursework	5.3.9-10	✓		
Research	5.4.6-11	✓		
Practical Placements	5.3.17-30		✓	

<b>Professional Doctorate Programs of Study – Counselling Stream</b>	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	5.1.9-12	✓		
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	5.4.1	✓		
Program of Study Structure	5.4.2-5		✓	
Coursework	5.3.9-10	✓		
Research	5.4.6-11	✓		
Practical Placements	5.3.17-30		✓	

**Authorised:**

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**Chair**, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

**Date:** 11 April 2014