



## APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

<b>Higher Education Provider</b>	<b>University of the Sunshine Coast , Discipline of Psychology</b>
<b>Date of determination</b>	<b>30 September 2013</b>
<b>Standards version</b>	<b>June 2010 ver 10</b>
<b>Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation</b>	<b>Bachelor of Arts Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business (Psychology &amp; Human Resource Management) Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (Psychology &amp; Exercise Science) Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) (Honours) Master of Psychology (Clinical)</b>

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Discipline of Psychology at the University of the Sunshine Coast 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.

The Psychology Discipline at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) has developed steadily over the last few years under the strong academic leadership and guidance of the Foundation Professor of Psychology. The University should be commended for the support it has provided to the Discipline throughout its establishment, and its continued investment in, and support for, Psychology. The Sunshine Coast community will benefit from this investment in the years to come.

The Discipline meets all Standards for the Psychology Academic Organisational Unit, Degree Nomenclature and Academic Staffing, though any increase in student load should be met with a proportionate increase in staffing levels to ensure the student to staff ratio Standard continues to be met.

Facilities appear to be adequate. Office accommodation is of a high standard. There is one research room for staff, Honours and postgraduate students, audio-visual equipment in the Clinic, and supportive administrative staff. The Discipline has access to modern lecture facilities, dedicated teaching space for labs and some tutorials, and students and staff have electronic access to the many of the latest journals and databases.

There is no distance teaching at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Across all programs of study there is an appropriate mix of laboratory and other teaching, and a variety of assessment methods including lab reports, essays, case studies, short answer questions, oral presentations, and multiple choice exams. Students are provided with updated course outlines and marked assignments are returned promptly and with sufficient comments to aid the learning process. Thus Teaching Materials and Methods Standards are met. All General Accreditation Standards are also met.

The 3-year accredited sequences programs of study meet the Standards with respect to length, course structure, course content with respect to the core of the discipline, as well as meeting the various graduate attributes. There is comprehensive coverage of core topics in the discipline, teaching is based on up-to-date materials and texts, and practical work is undertaken in a number of courses. The three year sequence Bachelors degrees meet all the relevant Standards.

The fourth year program is a stand-alone Honours program comprising 100% Psychology. The dissertation comprises 50% of the final Honours mark. There is a range of research topics covered in the Discipline, and students are given much freedom in developing their own research question from basic science to a wide range of applied studies. The graduate attributes are mapped onto the coursework and there is sufficient coverage of advanced theory, research methods and professional and research ethics, the construction, implementation, and interpretation of assessments, and evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention. The theses reviewed were psychological in their content and appeared to be of a high standard. All Standards for the 4<sup>th</sup> year program of study are met.

The Master of Psychology (Clinical) program of study is two years full-time and entry requirements meet the APAC Standards and involve a determination of the academic qualifications of applicants and an interview by an expert panel. All of the material is taught by the Discipline staff except for guest lectures by external experts to cover such areas as psychopharmacology. It is clear that considerable attention has been given to curriculum design and the coherent manner in which learning outcomes are planned and assessed. There is also a relatively systematic approach to assess relevant clinical psychology competencies. The program comprises 50% coursework, and 25% each of practica placements and research project. There is adequate coverage of the core capabilities, national practice standards for the mental health workforce, and other requisite areas. Thus Course Structure and Coursework Standards are met.

Assessors sighted formal documented evidence that indicated the levels of proficiency and competence required to meet the core attributes; it was satisfied that processes are in place to either fail a student or to assist students reach suitable levels of proficiency and professionalism before being allowed to graduate. All core capabilities and attributes Standards are being met. Assessors were satisfied that log books are kept up-to-date, are signed, and accurately reflect the practica experiences of students and that all forms of assessment are appropriate. Assessor reviewed several theses. The research topics were appropriate for the program of study and follow standard APA guidelines for presentation.

The Psychology Clinic is located in modern facilities and shares a reception area with other University health clinics. The student's initial placement is in the internal Clinic. Students complete the requisite number of placement hours and the externships offer an opportunity with specialist training in a number of other areas, for example oncology. The program of collaboration with field placements also appears to be consistent with the University's strategic vision of fostering close, meaningful, and productive engagement with the community. The supervisors interviewed were very positive and

appeared to be well integrated into the training and learning experiences provided to the students. All relevant Standards for the Master of Psychology (Clinical) are met.

The development of a quality Psychology program is a major task that typically takes several years to accomplish. The staff and the University should be commended for designing good quality programs and for their enthusiasm and dedication.

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: University of the Sunshine Coast, Discipline of Psychology**

**Date of Site Visit: 13-15 May 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 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	✓		



<b>Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study</b>	<b>Standard Number</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Not Yet Satisfied</b>	<b>N/A</b>
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 Trevor Waring AM FAPS  
**Chair, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council**

**Date:** 30 September 2013