

Bond University - APAC Accreditation assessment summary report

Higher education provider	Bond University
Name of the Psychology AOU	School of Psychology, Faculty of Society and Design
Standards version	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
Purpose of assessment	Initial and Re-accreditation (5 yearly cycle)
Programs and level of study assessed	Bachelor of Psychological Science (Level 1) Bachelor of Psychological Science/Bachelor of Laws (Level 1) Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Bridging) (Level 1) Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) (Level 2) Graduate Diploma of Psychological Science (Level 2) Master of Professional Psychology (Level 3) Master of Psychology (Clinical) (packaged Level 3 and 4)
Campus	Gold Coast
Date of site visit	24 - 26 August 2021
Date of APAC Board Determination	29 November 2021
Accreditation start date	1 January 2022
Accreditation end date	31 December 2026

Background and overview

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) last reviewed Bond University's (Bond) undergraduate Level 1, fourth year Level 2 Honours and Graduate Diploma and postgraduate packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical and Forensic psychology programs for the purpose of re-accreditation in 2016. At the time of the 2016 review, the undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered on campus were accredited without conditions.

In 2017, the School of Psychology (School) placed the packaged Level 3 and 4 Forensic program in teach out, and in 2020, the program was discontinued. Further, in 2018, the School submitted an application for accreditation of the Level 3 Master of Professional Psychology program at the Gold Coast campus. At the time of the review, the program was accredited subject to conditions as a small number of shortfalls were identified against the *Accreditation Standards*. Subsequent to the initial review, a monitoring site visit was conducted in October 2019, after which all outstanding conditions were satisfied, and the program has since been accredited without conditions.

The Assessment Team considered the School's 76 page self-review and attached appendices against the *Accreditation Standards*. Following the Assessment Team Zoom conference held on 6 July 2021, additional information was requested and received from the School, including:

- comprehensive mapping for each program of study (including the cognate and non-cognate streams), which specifies the core units for each program sequence, how the core units map to the program learning outcomes, relevant graduate competencies and assessments at each level
- de-identified examples of the application of grievance and appeals procedures and student support programs
- examples of how Bond holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional practice, including in relation to the applicable code(s) of conduct for the psychology profession and evidence of implementation
- terms of reference for the Psychology Advisory Committee
- a variety of samples of de-identified self-reflective statements and supervisor feedback for student placements

Prior to the virtual site visit, the Assessment Team was provided with a pre-recorded guided tour of a range of facilities, including the Psychology Clinic, test library and experimental laboratories.

The APAC Assessment Team conducted a virtual site visit on 24 - 26 August 2021. During the visit, the Assessment Team interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Head of School
- Executive Dean, Faculty of Society and Design
- Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Society and Design

- Level 1, Level 2 and, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 Program Coordinators
- Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 Unit Coordinators
- Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 academic staff
- Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 current students
- Level 1, Level 2, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 recent graduates
- Professional staff
- Internal Placement Supervisors
- External Placement Supervisors
- Clinic Manager, Placement Coordinator and Business Development Specialist

During the virtual site visit, the Assessment Team was provided with additional information, including:

- a copy of the academic governance structure
- sample marking rubrics for all units across the suite of programs
- clarification on a quota of student enrolments into the Level 2 programs
- clarification on where professional ethics is taught and assessed within the Level 2 programs
- a table detailing de-identified data of the placement sites attended by all postgraduate students over the last three years
- a list of all external supervisors and their credentials, including any area of practice endorsements (AoPE)
- samples of de-identified logbook evidence demonstrating the breakdown of the hours for both individual and group supervision for placements in both the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs

The findings in this report are based on the Assessment Team's evaluation of the material outlined above and interview evidence at the time of the virtual site visit, as well as information provided in the rejoinder to the draft report.

Key findings

The School is embedded within a group of Schools under the Faculty of Society and Design. The School focuses on providing scientific, evidence-based and innovative psychology education to equip students with the knowledge and skills to practise as registered psychologists and researchers. The School utilises a range of techniques and approaches to provide excellence in student experience, ensuring that students are well supported throughout their studies. The academic teaching and professional staff are well supported under the guidance and strategic direction of the Head of School and senior leadership team at both a School and Faculty level.

The Assessment Team heard feedback indicating that the School is deeply committed to ensuring students experience success in their studies, that students are satisfied with the support and responsiveness of the academic staff, and that the proactive approach of the School and academic teaching team is appreciated. The evidence gathered indicates that the Level 1 and Level 2 programs provide students with foundational and pre-professional knowledge in psychology education. However, while this was generally the case, the Assessment Team noted that it was unclear whether the compressed format of the cognate stream within the recently reintroduced Level 1 Graduate Diploma in Psychology (Bridging) program enables adequate development and assessment of cultural responsiveness beyond matters relating to appropriate psychological assessment and measurement techniques.

Additionally, during the virtual site visit, the Assessment Team noted the recent significant increase in student enrolments in the Level 2 Honours and Graduate Diploma programs and the University's decision to temporarily pause the teaching-free semester in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Assessment Team heard that this has placed added pressure on the workloads for the academic teaching team, leaving staff maintaining unrelentingly high research supervision workloads to support the Level 2 students across all trimester intakes. While the Assessment Team heard that both academic and professional staff continue to feel well supported by the School's leadership team and work closely as a team, it was evident that the academic staff look forward to the University upholding its stated intention to reinstate the teaching-free semester as soon as possible in 2022.

For the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs, students and supervisors spoke highly of the quality of education and training received and that students were equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills to undertake psychological services as provisional psychologists. The Assessment Team heard a range of views indicating that the recent appointments of three permanent supervisors in the Psychology Clinic have added a level of stability to support the student cohorts to achieve the graduate competencies.

The Assessment Team identified areas of potential risk to public safety, the development of student competencies related to internal and external placement supervision practices, and the management of allocations to external placements. Within the coursework component of the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs, while students are taught to use both traditional hard copy and electronic test kits within their coursework, they only have access to hard copy test kits to use and practise their skills during their internal placement in the Psychology Clinic. In relation to the curriculum, the Assessment Team found a need to further develop the learning experiences and assessments that support students to acquire and apply the principles of inter-professional learning and practice. The Assessment Team also requires further evidence to demonstrate that psychopharmacology is included in the core coursework within the packaged Level 3 and 4 program.

The Assessment Team heard a range of views that the online learning environments and training facilities, including the Psychology Clinic, are fit for purpose. However, it was noted that paper based record management systems are used to track and manage students' progress on placements and clients progress in the Psychology Clinic. It is, therefore, recommended that the School explores options to transition its record management systems to an electronic platform.

The Assessment Team identified several commendable aspects of the programs. The School is commended for the collegiality, commitment, approachability, responsiveness and proactiveness displayed amongst academic staff and the level of support for one-another. The Assessment Team also commends the School for the impressive learning experience, specifically at the undergraduate level, the School's commitment to providing students with authentic and applied learning and training experiences to prepare students well to progress in the pathway to postgraduate studies.

APAC Board determination

That the following programs at Bond University are accredited with conditions from **1 January 2022** until **31 December 2026**:

- **Bachelor of Psychological Science/Bachelor of Laws** (Level 1) (Campus: Gold Coast)
- **Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Bridging)** (Level 1) (Campus: Gold Coast)

That the following programs at Bond University are re-accredited until **31 December 2026**:

- **Bachelor of Psychological Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Gold Coast)
- **Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours)** (Level 2) (Campus: Gold Coast)
- **Graduate Diploma of Psychological Science** (Level 2) (Campus: Gold Coast)
- **Master of Professional Psychology** (Level 3) (Campus: Gold Coast)
- **Master of Psychology (Clinical)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Gold Coast)

Subject to the following conditions:

For the cognate stream of the Level 1 Graduate Diploma program

By **31 January 2022**:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.8 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, is integrated, clearly articulated as a learning outcome, taught and assessed throughout the core units of the program.

For the Level 2 programs

By **31 January 2022**:

1. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.5 is met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that academic teaching staff are sufficiently supported in research and teaching with the increase of student enrolments.

For the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs

By 31 January 2022:

1. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criterion 1.3 is met, the School is required to provide evidence demonstrating that adequate management processes are in place to ensure that students undertaking internal and external placements have the ability to practise competently and safely.
2. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criterion 1.4 is met, the School is required to provide evidence demonstrating that effective processes are in place to ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation of direct client activities during supervision to enable students to practise safely.
3. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criteria 1.7 and 1.10 and Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.7 are met, the School is required to provide evidence demonstrating that
 - i. the administrative staff responsible for coordinating the sourcing and allocation of external placements have the appropriate qualifications and training to ensure that placements provide students with experiences relevant to the competencies for providing clinical psychological services for the packaged Level 3 and 4 program (criteria 1.7 and 3.7),
 - ii. students receive sufficient supervision during their internal and external placements for the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs (criterion 1.10), and
 - iii. there is sufficient oversight to track and monitor student progress throughout placements to ensure there is a breadth of experience across a broad and diverse range of placement settings appropriate for the Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 programs (criterion 3.7), as well as demonstrating the competencies for practising Clinical Psychology for the packaged Level 3 and 4 program (criteria 1.10 and 3.7).
4. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that the application of the principles of inter-professional learning and practice is sufficiently integrated and appropriately assessed throughout the programs.

For the packaged Level 3 and 4 program

By 31 January 2022:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.2 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating a coherent body of learning is used to apply the advanced psychological knowledge and skills for students to develop and acquire the *Level 4 Professional Competencies for specialised areas of practice (Clinical) 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.*

For all programs

By **30 June 2022**:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.1 is met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that a coherent and progressive pedagogy can be articulated and that it informs the design and delivery of programs.
2. To ensure Standard 4 The student experience, criterion 4.2 is met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating equitable formal admission policies and procedures to support members of equity groups to gain admission into the range of psychology programs.
3. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.2 is met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that criterion-based marking rubrics are used consistently within and across all programs to assess students' achievement of the relevant graduate competencies.

As a monitoring requirement for all programs, the School is to provide an update on the progress and outcomes of the external benchmarking exercises as part of the 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025 annual reports.

Table 1: Summary of findings regarding each criterion for each Standard

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 3 and 4 Clinical
Domain 1: Public safety	Standard Statement 1: Public safety is assured			
	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met
Domain 2: Academic governance and quality assurance	Standard Statement 2: Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective			
	Standard is met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is met	Standard is met
Domain 3: Program of study	Standard Statement 3: Program of study, design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required graduate competencies			
	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met
Domain 4: The student experience	Standard Statement 4: Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support			
	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met
Domain 5: Assessment	Standard Statement 5: Assessment is fair, reliable and valid			
	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met

Quality improvement suggestions

A quality improvement suggestion refers to an action or a course of actions that should be considered by the education provider to improve the delivery and/or outcomes of the program.

The suggestions are as follows. It is recommended that the School of Psychology at Bond University:

1. explore options using online record management systems to track placement information and client records in the Psychology Clinic.
2. consider contemporary approaches to teaching and training to ensure that students have the opportunity to conduct online psychological assessments during their internal placements

Commendations

A commendation refers to a particularly significant achievement by the education provider with regard to the program.

The Assessment Team have made the subsequent commendations following the evaluation of the program. The School of Psychology at Bond University is commended for:

1. the collegiality, commitment, approachability, responsiveness and proactiveness displayed amongst academic staff, particularly for its demonstrated excellence in maintaining high quality student experience and sense of care for student wellbeing and success.
2. its commitment to providing students with authentic assessments and applied learning and training experiences with real world application, including at the undergraduate level of study.