



Subject benchmark statement

Psychology

Draft for consultation June 2007

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Preface

Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of programmes in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about the standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.

This subject benchmark statement, together with others published concurrently, refers to the **bachelor's degree with honours**¹, although reference is included to both joint and combined honours degrees.

Subject benchmark statements are used for a variety of purposes. Primarily, they are an important source of reference for higher education institutions (HEIs) when new programmes are being designed and developed in a subject area. They provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with the programme but are not a specification of a detailed curriculum in the subject.

Subject benchmark statements also provide support to HEIs in pursuit of internal quality assurance. They enable the learning outcomes specified for a particular programme to be reviewed and evaluated against agreed general expectations about standards. Subject benchmark statements allow for flexibility and innovation in programme design and can stimulate academic discussion and debate upon the content of new and existing programmes within an overall agreed framework. Their use in supporting programme design, delivery and review within HEIs is supportive of moves towards an emphasis on institutional responsibility for standards and quality.

Subject benchmark statements may also be of interest to prospective students and employers, seeking information about the nature and standards of awards in a given subject or subject area.

The relationship between the standards set out in this document and those produced by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies will be a matter for individual HEIs to consider in detail.

This subject benchmark statement represents a revised version of the original published in 2002. The review process was overseen by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) as part of a periodic review of all subject benchmark statements published in this year. The review and subsequent revision of the subject benchmark statement was undertaken by a group of subject specialists drawn from and acting on behalf of the subject community. The revised subject benchmark statement went through a full consultation with the wider academic community and stakeholder groups.

QAA publishes and distributes this subject benchmark statement and other subject benchmark statements developed by similar subject-specific groups.

¹ This is equivalent to the honours degree in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (level 10) and in the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (level 6).

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) came into force on 4 December 2006². The DED requires public authorities, including HEIs, to act proactively on disability equality issues. The Duty complements the individual rights focus of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and is aimed at improving public services and outcomes for disabled people as a whole. Responsibility for making sure that such duty is met lies with HEIs.

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC)³ has published guidance to help HEIs prepare for the implementation of the Duty and provided illustrative examples on how to take the duty forward. HEIs are encouraged to read this guidance when considering their approach to engaging with components of the Academic Infrastructure⁴, of which subject benchmark statements are a part.

Additional information that may assist HEIs when engaging with subject benchmark statements can be found in the DRC revised Code of Practice: Post-16 Education⁵, and also through the Equality Challenge Unit⁶ which was established to promote equality and diversity in higher education.

² In England, Scotland and Wales

³ Copies of the guidance *Further and higher education institutions and the Disability Equality Duty*, guidance for principals, vice-chancellors, governing boards and senior managers working in further education colleges and HEIs in England, Scotland and Wales, may be obtained from the DRC at www.drc-gb.org/library/publications/disability_equality_duty/further_and_higher_education.aspx

⁴ An explanation of the Academic Infrastructure, and the roles of subject benchmark statements within it, is available at www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure

⁵ Copies of the DRC revised *Code of Practice: Post-16 Education* may be obtained from the DRC at www.drc-gb.org/employers_and_service_provider/education/higher_education.aspx

⁶ Equality Challenge Unit, www.ecu.ac.uk

Foreword

This document is a revision of the subject benchmark statement for psychology, first published by QAA in 2002. In 2006, QAA approached the British Psychological Society, the Association of Heads of Psychology Departments and the Higher Education Academy, Psychology Network to consider whether, and to what extent, the benchmark statement for psychology should be revised.

The review group acknowledges the contribution of the original benchmarking group for psychology in preparing the previous version of the benchmark statement and recognises the valuable contribution the subject benchmark statement has made to psychology higher education in the United Kingdom (UK) (and beyond) over the last five years.

In revising the statement, the review group seeks to maintain the original intentions and purposes while giving consideration to recent developments in the discipline, higher education and the profession. A number of minor changes, such as a revision to the reference to qualitative methods section and inclusion of 'typical' as opposed to 'modal' standards, have been made. Greater reference to the importance of the development of an awareness of ethical principles in psychological research has also been incorporated.

May 2007

1 Introduction

1.1 Psychology is one of the most popular subjects in higher education in the UK. It is the largest scientific discipline and the second largest discipline overall. The most recent statistics⁷ indicate that there were nearly 70,000 students studying psychology at all levels in UK HEIs in the academic year 2004-05. Psychology appeals to students from a wide range of backgrounds. Some 80 per cent of students are female, 47 per cent are mature students and 11 per cent have non-traditional qualifications. There are also significant numbers of ethnic minority students (14.5 per cent).

1.2 All indications show that psychology students are well taught. In its subject overview report on psychology⁸, published in 2001, QAA said that 'the quality of teaching is high' and noted the 'high progression and completion rates'. It emphasised for specific commendation 'the supportive and friendly environment created by departmental staff', and also commented on 'the high added value achieved by students with non-traditional entry qualifications in psychology'.

1.3 Psychology degrees usually last for three years (four years in Scotland). Most HEIs offer single honours degrees in psychology, although it is also common to combine psychology with another subject as a subsidiary or minor area of study, and to study psychology as one component of a joint honours degree where both subjects carry equal weight. The present document and the threshold and typical standards it contains apply to single honours psychology and joint or combined honours degrees accredited by the British Psychological Society. The choice of areas to cover in combined and joint programmes will vary, depending on factors such as the discipline with which psychology is combined and whether accreditation is being sought from the British Psychological Society.

1.4 In order to obtain employment as a professional psychologist, further postgraduate study and supervised training are required, normally lasting a further three years. At the end of this time it is possible to become a Chartered Psychologist, specialising in one of the areas of professional psychology such as clinical, educational, occupational, health, counselling, sport and exercise or forensic psychology. In order to proceed to postgraduate training in professional psychology, a student's first degree must be accredited by the British Psychological Society as conferring eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Registration. Graduates from non-accredited courses can achieve the Graduate Basis for Registration by taking the Society's Qualifying Examination or an accredited conversion course. Regular reviews are conducted by the British Psychological Society to ensure that accredited degrees continue to reach the necessary standards. Students are currently required to obtain a Lower Second class degree or better on an accredited degree in order to obtain the Graduate Basis for Registration.

1.5 Psychology students proceed into a variety of careers. A third of graduates who go into permanent employment as psychologists enter public services (such as the health service, education, the Civil Service, and the Armed Forces), and a third go into industry or commerce, eg market research, personnel management. Of the remainder, around one-tenth teach and research in schools, colleges and universities. It has been calculated that 15 to 20 per cent of psychology graduates end up working as professional psychologists. This does not mean that the majority

⁷ Statistics provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency

⁸ *Psychology subject overview report (Q05/2000)*, can be accessed at www.qaa.ac.uk/reviews/reports/subjectlevel/qo5_00.pdf

of graduates do not use the skills they have learnt. On the contrary, they are likely to use some of them whatever job they may do.

1.6 Due to the wide range of generic skills, and the rigour with which they are taught, a training in psychology is widely accepted as providing an excellent preparation for a many careers. In addition to subject skills and knowledge, graduates also develop skills in communication, numeracy, teamwork, critical thinking, computing, independent learning and many others, all of which are highly valued by employers.

2 Defining principles

2.1 There are defining principles that guide an honours degree programme in psychology. The degree should:

- aim to produce a scientific understanding of mind, brain, behaviour, and experience, and of the complex interactions between these
- present multiple perspectives in a way that fosters critical evaluation
- lead to an understanding of real-life applications of theory to the full range of experience and behaviour
- develop an understanding of the role of empirical evidence in the creation and constraint of theory and also in how theory guides the collection and interpretation of empirical data
- include the acquisition and knowledge of a range of research skills and methods for investigating experience and behaviour, culminating in an ability to conduct research independently
- develop knowledge leading to an ability to appreciate and critically evaluate theory, research findings, and applications.

3 Nature and extent of psychology

3.1 Psychology is an empirical science that aims to understand how and why people act in the ways they do and to apply that knowledge in a wide variety of settings.

3.2 The discipline spans studies ranging from the observations of basic neural mechanisms to analyses of complex human relationships. The antecedents of modern-day psychology can be found in both biology and philosophy, but its methods of enquiry have developed not only from these disciplines but also from other natural, social and mathematical sciences. Psychology is a broad subject area but whatever the particular topic of study and wherever the origins of its methods, it attempts to analyse and explain behaviour in a systematic, reproducible way. There is often a strong relationship between theory and empirical data, the results of which may find their expression in applications to education, health, industry/commerce and other situations.

3.3 Students of psychology are invariably exposed to a variety of topics and methods, ranging from how brain cells communicate with one another to the concept of the self. UK higher education courses differ in some respects and their emphases necessarily reflect the interests and expertise of their staff as well as the resources at

their disposal. Paragraphs 4.7 to 4.9, however, indicates those elements deemed to be core to the discipline, which all honours degree students are expected to study.

3.4 In covering these core topics, students will be exposed to standard information, traditional methods of scientific enquiry and sophisticated statistical analyses. In addition, they also need to be aware of the exciting new developments in the field, for example, in health and counselling psychology, behavioural genetics, computational modelling, life-span development, discourse analysis and critical theory. Discussions on issues concerning areas such as evolutionary psychology, functional brain imaging and human-computer interaction help to introduce students to the highly diverse opportunities and avenues for future exploration provided by a degree in psychology.

3.5 An honours degree in psychology should indicate that its recipient has acquired the generic skills outlined in paragraph 5.5, and possesses knowledge of the way people develop abilities to perceive, think, feel and act; what motivates people; in what ways people differ; and how people interact in groups. It should also signal the fact that graduates can demonstrate an understanding of how and why normal experience and behaviour may be affected by physical and mental illness. The respective influence of genes and environment on behaviour, and the interactions between them, is another major concern of psychology.

3.6 In addition, psychology graduates, with an understanding of the nature of human behaviour and decision-making and the relationship between attitudes and behaviour, are well-placed to contribute to sustainable development.

3.7 To summarise, psychology is a discipline concerning experience and behaviour that is of immense range and depth. It has evolved its own methodologies from those found in cognate areas. A degree in psychology implies an understanding of historical and contemporary psychological research alongside an appreciation of current and previous theoretical efforts to integrate and interpret empirical findings. To achieve this requires students to gain critical thinking skills developed within a context of rigorous empirical methodology.

4 Subject knowledge and understanding

4.1 Psychology has an established tradition of empirical enquiry linked with theoretical development, which has led to important applications in many fields and which has profoundly influenced professional practice. Thus, as has already been observed, in addition to acquiring knowledge of the main areas of the discipline, psychology students also need to have a sound knowledge of, and the proven ability to use appropriately, a variety of research methods and approaches. Knowledge of this kind, as well as its application, can best be acquired and demonstrated through extensive and progressive laboratory and field work at all levels up to and including the exit honours standard.

4.2 The acquisition and demonstration of conceptual knowledge within the core areas, together with an understanding of the empirical bases of the discipline, are necessary features of any honours degree programme. Most importantly, the ability to integrate ideas and empirical findings both within and between core areas will be expected. The ability to extrapolate and comprehend the applications of knowledge within the areas of psychology will also be a feature of each programme.

Knowledge domains

4.3 It is not the intention to be overly prescriptive in defining the subject knowledge acquired by students; nevertheless, there are certain core areas within the discipline which should each receive significant coverage. Students should also be exposed to novel developments in the discipline, including those that at present do not command consensus.

4.4 An understanding of the relations between psychology and cognate disciplines (such as biology, sociology and psychiatry) is important, together with an appreciation of the assimilation within the discipline of themes, theories, methods and findings from areas external to the discipline. An appreciation of the integration which can occur within the subject is relevant, for example, to the emergence of cognitive neuroscience from the previously separate areas of cognitive and biological psychology.

4.5 The acquisition of knowledge of psychology is progressive and therefore study of the main areas will continue across undergraduate degree levels with opportunities for more specialised, in-depth study at final honours level. It is anticipated that there may be more variation in the subject areas covered at the more advanced level reflecting areas of expertise within departments. By honours level, students will be expected to demonstrate facility and familiarity with empirical methodology through the completion of an independent extended project and its report.

4.6 The core knowledge domains within psychology include research methods, biological psychology, cognitive psychology, personality and individual differences, developmental psychology and social psychology, although students will be exposed to other areas as well. In addition to these core areas, it is expected that students will gain knowledge of conceptual and historical perspectives in psychology.

Examples of topic areas within core domains

4.7 The examples in the topics which follow are given to indicate the scope of each of the areas. They are intended to be neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, and it is recognised that the topics covered will vary from institution to institution and over time. Knowledge both of the areas and of the links between them is expected, as is an understanding of appropriate applications. Ethical, theoretical and practical research issues arise in each of the knowledge areas within psychology:

- **biological psychology**, eg biological bases of behaviour, hormones and behaviour, behavioural genetics, neuropsychology, sociobiology and evolutionary psychology
- **cognitive psychology**, eg perception, learning, memory, thinking, language, consciousness and cognitive neuropsychology
- **developmental psychology**, eg childhood, adolescence and life-span development, development of attachment, social relations, cognitive and language development, social and cultural contexts of development
- **personality and individual differences**, eg abnormal and normal personality, psychological testing, intelligence, cognitive style, emotion, motivation and mood
- **social psychology**, eg social cognition, attribution, attitudes, group processes and intergroup relations, close relationships and social constructionism.

4.8 It is expected that all the following main sub-areas will be covered:

- research methods in psychology
- research design
- the nature and appropriate statistical analysis of data
- psychometrics and measurement techniques
- quantitative and qualitative methods.

4.9 It should be noted that qualitative methods are understood broadly here, and might include consideration of procedures of data gathering, such as interviewing and participant observation, as well as associated methods of analysis, for example, discourse analysis, grounded theory and conversation analysis.

5 Skills

5.1 Psychology is distinctive in the rich and diverse range of attributes it develops, drawing, as it does, on skills that are associated both with studying the humanities (eg critical thinking, essay writing) and the sciences (eg hypothesis-testing, numeracy).

5.2 In addition, the nature of the discipline, and the kinds of learning opportunities that it provides, allow students to develop a special blend of generic skills which can be underpinned by their own formal knowledge of psychological processes. For example, communication skills can be enhanced by knowledge of theories of communication, critical thinking can be underpinned by knowledge of cognitive biases, and group work can be supported by knowledge of group processes.

5.3 Studying for an honours degree in psychology provides graduates with a diversity of skills that prepares them not only to pursue postgraduate studies in psychology (thus becoming professional or academic psychologists) but also to enter a variety of employment areas. For convenience, these skills have been divided into subject and generic skills. Subject skills are those that relate closely to the subject knowledge and/or are an integral part of any psychology degree; these skills are described in paragraph 5.4. Generic skills are transferable skills which are not so closely tied to the subject matter of psychology; these are covered in paragraph 5.5. However, it is important to bear in mind that this distinction is a fairly artificial one since the distinction between subject-specific and generic skills is not clear-cut. In addition, many of the subject-specific skills, research design, methods and measurement, and statistics, have direct application in professions outside psychology, and many of the generic skills are essential in the work of a professional psychologist.

Subject-specific skills

5.4 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should be able to:

- apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues, recognising that psychology involves a range of research methods, theories, evidence and applications
- integrate ideas and findings across the multiple perspectives in psychology and recognise distinctive psychological approaches to relevant issues

- identify and evaluate general patterns in behaviour, psychological functioning and experience
- generate and explore hypotheses and research questions
- carry out empirical studies involving a variety of methods of data collection, including experiments, observation, psychometric tests, questionnaires, interviews and field studies
- analyse data using both quantitative and qualitative methods
- present and evaluate research findings
- employ evidence-based reasoning and examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with the use of different methodologies, paradigms and methods of analysis in psychology
- use a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software, laboratory equipment and psychometric instruments
- carry out an extensive piece of independent empirical research, including defining a research problem; formulating testable hypotheses/research questions; choosing appropriate methodologies; planning and carrying out a study efficiently; demonstrating awareness of ethical issues and current codes of ethics and conduct; obtaining the appropriate ethical approval for their research; demonstrating ability to reason about the data and present the findings effectively; discussing findings in terms of previous research; evaluating methodologies and analyses employed and implications for ethics; and, where appropriate, collaborating effectively with colleagues, participants and outside agencies.

Generic skills

5.5 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should be able to:

- communicate effectively. Effective communication involves developing a cogent argument supported by relevant evidence and being sensitive to the needs and expectations of an audience. This is accomplished through specific demands to write both essays and scientific-style reports, and through experience in making oral presentations to groups. The standard of written language should be at an acceptable standard with respect to grammar, punctuation and spelling
- comprehend and use data effectively. This is accomplished through the significant core of research training in a psychology degree that acquaints graduates with understanding, analysing and presenting complex data sets
- be computer literate. Psychology students are introduced to, and become familiar with, computers early in their training and will display, at the very least, skill in the use of word processing, databases and statistical software packages
- retrieve and organise information effectively. Psychology graduates will be familiar with collecting and organising stored information found in library book and journal collections, and in computer and internet sources
- handle primary source material critically
- engage in effective teamwork
- problem solve and reason scientifically. The research process which is at the centre of studying psychology enables graduates to identify and pose research questions, to consider alternative approaches to their solutions and to evaluate outcomes
- make critical judgements and evaluations. The need to take different perspectives on issues and problems, to evaluate them in a critical, sceptical

- manner to arrive at supported conclusions, is emphasised and taught throughout a psychology degree. The importance of looking for similarities and general principles to increase the power of the analysis is also stressed
- be sensitive to contextual and interpersonal factors. The complexity of the factors that shape behaviour and social interaction will be familiar to psychology graduates and will make them more aware of the basis of problems and interpersonal conflict. They should also be more sensitive to the importance of enhancing cooperation to maximise the effectiveness of individual skills as shown in group work and team building
 - become more independent and pragmatic as learners. Taking responsibility for one's own learning and skill development is increasingly expected throughout a psychology degree where an emphasis on learning to learn is stressed. In particular, psychology degrees normally culminate in the completion of an independent, empirical inquiry where a pragmatic approach to a time-limited project is required.

6 Teaching, learning and assessment

6.1 It is evident from the above that an honours degree in psychology covers specific subject knowledge (including core areas of the discipline), subject-specific skills and generic skills, with a particular emphasis on independently conducting and reporting empirical research.

6.2 Programmes must be designed so as to ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge as outlined above, and need to demonstrate that the learning, teaching and assessment methods are fit for that purpose.

6.3 Psychology has always paid considerable attention to methods in teaching, learning and assessment, and it is recognised that there are a great variety of ways in which material can be presented and skills developed. These are not static but continually evolve and change with technological as well as pedagogical developments, including developments in the use of information technology and other media.

6.4 It is impossible, however, for students to develop an understanding of psychology without carrying out a significant amount of practical based (including statistical analysis) learning and associated assessment, and completing a substantial piece of original individual research in psychology as part of their programme. Practical work in the discipline should cover a wide variety of methodologies, and must include both quantitative and qualitative methods.

6.5 Students should show an awareness of the ethical concerns within the discipline, especially in the conduct of empirical studies. This will include knowledge of the guidelines published by the British Psychological Society and the local institutional procedures for obtaining ethical approval.

Teaching and learning

6.6 There are general principles which should shape any provision, including the notion of progression through the various levels of the programme in terms of increasing academic content, understanding and complexity. Not only will the development of knowledge occur, but graduates will be able to take a more critical stance to the theories, findings and approaches of the discipline. In terms of teaching

and learning, this will typically involve a change from initially supported and guided study to more independent and self-directed study. Throughout, there should be emphasis given to active learning and the acquisition of both generic and subject-specific skills and abilities.

6.7 There are many different forms of teaching and learning, including laboratory classes, workshops, lectures, seminars, individual tutorials, guided reading, independent study, email discussion groups, student groups, distance learning, individual project supervision, dissertation.

6.8 It is recognised that these categories are not mutually exclusive; lectures may, for instance, involve student activities and opportunities for dialogue. As well as developing familiarity with literature and published research, the use of other media should be encouraged.

Assessment

6.9 The choice of assessment methods should be clearly related to the learning objectives. Assessment methods may include formal examinations (which can be seen, unseen, open-book), multiple choice tests, assessed essays, practical reports, other reports, information technology use, case studies, portfolios, dissertations, and formal assessment of performance in oral presentations and debates, including seminar and individual presentation. To ensure that the full range of skills being developed by a programme can be demonstrated, a diversity of assessment methods is encouraged. Assessment criteria need to be clearly spelled out, and should contain the expectation that critical thinking skills will develop progressively.

6.10 The assessment schedule must be clearly specified and linked to objectives, with suitable safeguards to ensure the authenticity of learning and to define clearly the limits of cooperative learning.

6.11 Students must be able to demonstrate that they are conversant with the core aspects of the discipline, which should normally be covered in the assessment schedule. A student of psychology must successfully complete a series of practical reports throughout their programme. These will culminate in an independent, empirical project reporting on a substantial piece of research (or a piece of work which delivers the same learning outcomes of equal quality). The project will normally involve the collection of original empirical data from participants. In exceptional circumstances, other types of work (for instance computational modelling or the carrying out of a meta-analysis) may be acceptable, provided that the rigorous application of high-level research skills can be demonstrated. In addition, statistical competence must be an integral part of each programme.

6.12 Assessment procedures should not disadvantage disabled students and should have regard for the good practice guidelines published by QAA. They should also be sensitive to equal opportunities requirements, as outlined in the preface at the beginning of this document.

7 Benchmark standards

7.1 The following benchmark standards are divided into two categories.

Threshold standards are the minimal standards necessary for a student to graduate with an honours degree in psychology. **Typical standards** are those which a psychology student would be expected to attain. The standards are phrased in terms of what knowledge or skills a graduate at that level (threshold or typical) would be expected to be able to demonstrate.

7.2 These threshold standards apply to students on single honours psychology degree programmes and those students undertaking joint or combined honours degrees accredited by the British Psychological Society. Students on non-accredited combined or joint honours programmes will be expected to achieve an appropriate subset of these standards and of those for their other discipline(s).

Subject knowledge

Threshold standard

7.3 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should be able to:

- understand the scientific underpinnings of psychology as a discipline
- recognise the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning
- demonstrate a good knowledge and critical understanding of a range of influences on psychological functioning and how they are conceptualised across the core areas as outlined in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.9
- be knowledgeable about a number of specialised areas and/or applications
- demonstrate knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques, including statistical analysis.

Typical standard

7.4 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should typically be able to:

- understand the scientific underpinnings of psychology as a discipline, its historical origins, development and limitations
- recognise the inherent variability and diversity of psychological functioning and its significance
- demonstrate systematic knowledge and critical understanding of a range of influences on psychological functioning, how they are conceptualised across the core areas as outlined in paragraphs 4.7 to 4.9, and how they interrelate
- demonstrate detailed knowledge of several specialised areas and/or applications, some of which are at the cutting edge of research in the discipline
- demonstrate a systematic knowledge of a range of research paradigms, research methods and measurement techniques, including statistical analysis, and be aware of their limitations.

Subject-specific skills

Threshold standard

7.5 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should be able to:

- reason scientifically and demonstrate the relationship between theory and evidence
- adopt multiple perspectives
- detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience
- pose and operationalise research questions
- demonstrate competence in research skills through practical activities
- reason statistically and demonstrate competence in a range of statistical methods
- initiate, design, conduct and report an empirically based research project under appropriate supervision
- be aware of ethical principles and approval procedures and demonstrate these in relation to personal study, particularly with regard to the research project.

Typical standard

7.6 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should typically be able to:

- reason scientifically, understand the role of evidence and make critical judgements about arguments in psychology
- adopt multiple perspectives and systematically analyse the relationships between them
- detect meaningful patterns in behaviour and experience and evaluate their significance
- pose, operationalise and critique research questions
- demonstrate substantial competence in research skills through practical activities
- reason statistically and use a range of statistical methods with confidence
- competently initiate, design, conduct and report an empirically based research project under appropriate supervision, and can recognise its theoretical, practical and methodological implications and limitations
- be aware of ethical principles and approval procedures and can demonstrate these in relation to personal study, particularly with regard to the research project, and is aware of the ethical context of psychology as a discipline.

Generic skills

Threshold standard

7.7 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should be able to:

- communicate ideas and research findings by written, oral and visual means
- interpret and use numerical, statistical and other forms of data
- be computer literate, for the purposes of furthering their own learning and in the analysis and presentation of ideas and research findings

- approach problem solving in a systematic way
- be aware of contextual and interpersonal factors in groups and teams
- undertake self-directed study and project management in a supportive environment
- recognise the need to assess their own skills and to harness them for future learning.

Typical standard

7.8 On graduating with an honours degree in psychology, students should typically be able to:

- communicate ideas and research findings both effectively and fluently by written, oral and visual means
- comprehend and use numerical, statistical and other forms of data, particularly in the context of presenting and analysing complex data sets
- be computer literate and confident in using word processing, database and statistical software
- solve problems by clarifying questions, considering alternative solutions and evaluating outcomes
- be sensitive to and react appropriately to contextual and interpersonal factors in groups and teams
- undertake self-directed study and project management in order to meet desired objectives
- take charge of their own learning, and reflect and evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses for the purposes of future learning.

Appendix A: Membership of the review group for the subject benchmark statement for psychology

Professor Peter Banister	Manchester Metropolitan University
Professor Stephen Newstead	University of Plymouth
Professor Dominic Abrams (Chair)	University of Kent
Dr Peter Wright	University of Edinburgh
Annie Trapp	Higher Education Academy, Psychology Network
Professor Dominic Upton	University of Worcester
Dr Richard Latta	University of Liverpool
Professor Uta Frith	University College London
Lisa Morrison Coulthard (Advisor)	British Psychological Society

Appendix B: Membership of the original benchmarking group for psychology

Details provided below are as published in the original subject benchmark statement for psychology (2000).

Professor Peter Banister	Manchester Metropolitan University
Professor Diane Berry	University of Reading
Professor Martin Conway	University of Bristol
Professor Steven Cooper	University of Liverpool
Professor Hadyn Ellis	Cardiff University
Dr Pamela Maras	University of Greenwich
Dr Carol McGuinness	The Queen's University of Belfast
Professor Peter Morris	University of Lancaster
Professor Stephen Newstead (Chair)	University of Plymouth
Professor Denis Parker	Glasgow Caledonian University
Professor Anne Woollett	University of East London
Lisa Morrison (Secretary)	British Psychological Society