	PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION	Newcastle University

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MSc
4	**Programme Title**	MSc Forensic Psychology
5	**Programme Codes**	5270F & 5270P (Accredited) and 5285F & 5285P (Non-Accredited)
6	**Programme Accreditation**	British Psychological Society (only for 5270F & 5270P)
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	
8	**FHEQ Level**	Level 7
9	**Last updated**	May 2024

10	**Programme Aims**

The overall aim of the programme is to provide students with an advanced and up-to-date understanding of the theoretical and applied issues in the field of forensic psychology. It will provide an in-depth experience, using a scientist-practitioner approach, of the different parts of the offending and victim pathways and of the investigative process, from pre-trial/pre-conviction, to through-care/after-care and restorative justice. The more specific aims of the programme are as follows:

- Provide a thorough and comprehensive professional training in the knowledge base of forensic psychology;
- Provide a structured framework to study theory and conduct research relating to forensic psychology practice;
- Enable students to develop a postgraduate level of ability to critically evaluate the processes, methods and analytical techniques used in research in forensic psychology;
- Enable students to demonstrate the ability to use an evidence-based approach to the practice of forensic psychology;
- To facilitate appreciation of organisational, interpersonal and contextual factors to enable students to work ethically within forensic psychology;
- Provide students with the necessary skills to enable them to be reflective, responsible and independent forensic psychology scientist-practitioners.

11	**Learning Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, skills and other attributes in the area of forensic psychology as follows.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should be able to:

A1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge and critical understanding of the theories, research methods, history, culture and professional issues of forensic psychology;
A2. Demonstrate a systematic and critical understanding of knowledge in forensic psychology together with a critical awareness of current problems and new insights as they relate to professional practice;
A3. Understand how to access and synthesise information and formulate subsequent arguments;

A4. Understand forensic psychology in a multi-disciplinary and professional context (e.g., HMPPS, the NHS, other contexts, and the legislation under which forensic psychologists work);
A5. Demonstrate a knowledge of the application of psychology and the role of psychology within the legal system (civil and criminal);
A6. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues in accordance with the British Psychological Society (BPS) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) Codes of Practice.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students' learning will primarily be facilitated by workshops (lectures) and small group work (A1, A3, A4, A5, **A6),** problem-based learning (PBL) exercises (A1, A3, A6), presentations, student led discussions and debates (A2, **A6),** and a mini *viva voca* (A1, A2, A3, A4, A6). Students will be required to read material (pre-lectures) and also supplement taught material with independent and guided reading (post-lectures). Knowledge and understanding will be further supported by individual supervision of the dissertation.

Assessment Strategy

There will be a range of different assessments reflecting the range of expertise, knowledge and skills required of students, including an essay, risk assessment report, investigative interview, report on linking practice to the theoretical (psychological) development-base, a mini *viva voca* (research proposal/ethics), a research reports (proposal and analysis) project, and research project. Feedback on form and content will be used to encourage reflection and improvement in students' communication skills.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

B1. Integrate and synthesise diverse knowledge, evidence, concepts theories and practice in forensic psychology to promote understanding and good practice;
B2. Evaluate and interpret theoretical, historical and cultural concepts of the principal areas in forensic psychology and articulate the arguments around them;
B3. Use a variety of appropriate evidence to demonstrate the implications for theory and practice in case formulation and interventions in forensic psychology;
B4. Identify legal, ethical and contextual issues in the evaluation of research and practice in forensic psychology.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students will be introduced to the wide range of evidence and opinion by the programme team (B2). Cognitive and critical skills (B1, B2, B3, B4) will be nurtured through workshops, PBL exercises, essays, research reports, the research proposal, and the research project. Some coursework and teaching sessions will actively facilitate the development of critical thinking in terms of legal and ethical issues (B4).

Assessment Strategy

Intellectual skills (B1 - B4) will be assessed by various in-course assessments (ICAs) and end-course assessments (ECAs). Additionally, the risk assessment report will assess B3 and the mini *viva voca* will assess B1, B4.

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1. Identify, locate and retrieve forensic psychology source material;
C2. Plan and carry out a substantial piece of research and use statistical analytic methods;
C3. Communicate complex academic and professional forensic psychology issues in a variety of styles and formats;
C4. Apply knowledge gained to solve problems related to forensic psychology;
C5. Manage the implications of ethical dilemmas in forensic settings to manage solutions;
C6. Demonstrate awareness of the workings of a professional team and have knowledge of the ability to integrate and synthesise information from various perspectives;

C7. Demonstrate the ability to act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level.

Teaching and Learning Methods
Students are supported in the development of these skills through five main methods: (i) modelling the practice as demonstrated by teaching and teaching support staff (C1); (ii) individual supervision (C2, C4, C5); (iii) through collaborative working with peers (C4, C6, C7); (iv); the preparation and writing of academic and professional reports, and investigative interview (C1, C3, C7), and; (v) an examination, via a mini *viva voca* (C1, C2, C3, C7).

Assessment Strategy
Summative assessment is conducted via written coursework (C1 – C7), including essays, professional (risk and consultancy report) and research reports. C3 and C6 will also be assessed through the investigative interview, with C2 and C7 being assessed through the research project. C1, C2, C3 and C7 will be further assessed via the mini *viva voca*.

Transferable/Key Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: D1. Display advanced competency in the numeric, statistical and analytic skills required for professional practice; D2. Act autonomously in planning and implementing independent tasks at a professional level; D3. Formulate hypotheses and apply research skills in order to create new knowledge. D4. Communicate effectively in writing and orally; D5. Work autonomously and also collaborate effectively with others in ways appropriate to professional and academic practice.

Teaching and Learning Methods
The use of advanced competency in analytical skills (D1) will be developed in research report writing, PBL and dissertation work (D2, D3). Communication skills (D4) will be developed in workshops, small group work and presentations. Autonomous working, time management and teamwork (D5) will be developed by engagement in the research proposal, the research project, investigative interview and also in group work for presentations.

Assessment Strategy
Skills D1 - D5 will be assessed by essays, presentation and writing of a risk report, consultancy report, mini *viva voca*, and research project work and preparation and completion of the investigative interview (and subsequent evaluative report). D1 and D3 will also be assessed by research reports and the mini *viva voca*.

12   Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features
Basic structure of the programme
This is a one-year full time, and two-year part-time programme. It consists of a body of six taught modules, and a supervised research project. To be awarded an MSc, students must successfully complete 180 credits: taught modules account for 120 credits, while the research project accounts for 60 credits. The taught modules are studied in semesters one and two, and the research project in semester two and three. The taught material in semesters one and two builds on existing knowledge and feed forward into the research project. Students start preparing for their research project in semester 1. To be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma, students must successfully complete 120 credits of the taught programme of study.

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Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)
The programme is available as an accredited and non-accredited award. Students graduating on the 5207F/P programmes will be accredited by the BPS. Students graduating on the 5285F/P programmes will <u>not</u> be accredited by the BPS. The programme is located in the School of Psychology, which has a strong background in clinically related applied psychology training and houses a Clinical Psychology Doctoral training course. The academic content of the programme is coherent with the central themes relating to forensic psychology and is provided by members of staff, honorary and guest lecturers with teaching and specialist research interests in these areas. The research component of the degree will also be rooted in forensic psychological methodology. This programme will provide a unique opportunity to promote teaching and research collaboration between Newcastle University and stakeholders with whom there are already strong links, including local forensic psychology practitioners in HMPPS, local NHS units, law enforcement agencies, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the courts. Such exposure to a wide variety of practitioners and forensic services will enable students to forge professional links, thereby increasing the prospects of a career in forensic psychology. Graduates will be able to use this programme to establish a successful career in whichever area of forensic practice suits their individual needs and professional interests. We operate an integrative, scientist-practitioner approach whereby the study of ethics, practice and professional skills is embedded throughout the programme.
Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
R5270F, 5270F, 5285F, 5285P_2425_vFinal.pdf

13   Support for Student Learning
qsh_progspec_generic_info.docx

14   Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and   learning
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15   Regulation of assessment
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In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in: The University Prospectus: https://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/ Degree Programme and University Regulations: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided. n.

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
PSY8054: Forensic Mental Health and Criminal Behaviour	Core	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.	1, 2, 4.	1, 4, 6, 7.	2, 4, 5.
PSY8056: Forensic Assessment and Case Formulation	Core	1, 2, 6.	1, 2, 3.	1, 4, 5, 6, 7.	2, 4.
PSY8055: Investigative Psychology and Forensic Interviewing	Core	1, 2, 3, 5, 6.	1, 2, 4.	1, 3, 4, 5, 7.	1, 2, 4.
PSY8057: Professional Practice in Forensic Psychology	Core	1, 2, 3, 4, 6.	1, 3, 4.	1, 3, 5, 6, 7.	2, 3, 4, 5.
PSY8046: Legal Psychology and The Criminal Justice System	Core	1, 2, 4, 5, 6.	1, 2, 4.	1, 4, 6, 7.	1, 2, 4, 5.
PSY8061, PSY8062: Advanced Research Methods for Applied Psychology (A and B respectively)	Core	1, 3, 6.	2, 4.	1, 2, 4, 7.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
PSY8059: Forensic Psychology Project	Core	1, 2, 3, 6.	1, 2, 3, 4.	1, 2, 4, 7.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5.