

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

MSc in Child Development

Awarding Institution:

Institute of Education, University of London

Teaching Institution:

Institute of Education, University of London

Accreditation

The British Psychological Society recognises this programme (when it includes the Atypical Development module) in combination with the Graduate Certificate in Psychology as giving eligibility for the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (previously known as Graduate Basis for Registration)

Name of final award

Master of Science (MSc)

Postgraduate Diploma

Postgraduate Certificate

Programme title

Child Development

Language of study

The Institute of Education teaches and assesses participants through the medium of the English Language. Competence in English is required of all applicants.

Programme regulations may indicate the level of competence required for each applicant and may make its achievement a condition of admission.

Participants

Psychology graduates who want to progress to research careers or professional training, or people with the Graduate Certificate in Psychology who wish to become eligible for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership from the British Psychological Society.

Educational Aims of the Programme

- To enable independent learning and an approach to developmental psychology that is both informed and critical.
- To provide a high-quality education in the main theories, methods, and findings of psychological research relating to child development.
- To prepare participants for progression to higher research degrees, employment as researchers or professional training to work with children and young people applying psychological knowledge.

Learning Outcomes

Successful students demonstrate the abilities to

- develop critical and informed arguments about significant issues in developmental psychology

- analyse research papers in terms of their theoretical and empirical contributions (both from the viewpoint of adequacy and novelty of methods and significance of results)
- understand the role of statistical tests and modelling in the testing and development of hypotheses and theories
- conduct a study which offers a contribution to the literature within the framework of postgraduate research.

These abilities are developed through the core modules of the programme: *Developmental Psychology and Psychobiology, Social Development, Methodology and Statistics*, and a *Report or Dissertation*.

Criteria for admission

Applicants not seeking GBC are eligible for admission if they have a good honours degree or graduate equivalent qualification with at least 33% psychology and satisfactory academic references. Applicants who do not fulfil this prerequisite may be required to pass qualifying assessments or take the Graduate Certificate in Psychology prior to joining the programme. The Graduate Certificate in Psychology may be waived for graduates seeking Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership (GBC) with the British Psychological Society who have studied sufficient psychology (50 percent) at a UK university that matches the coverage, content, and assessment specified in the IOE Graduate Certificate in Psychology.

Applicants whose language is a language other than English may be required to provide evidence of their English language proficiency.

The Institute of Education is committed to admitting and supporting participants with disabilities and welcome applications from them. Participants do not need to be “registered disabled” to draw on the Disability Support services, although in order to provide services in the long-term, we will need to ask for medical or other evidence, as appropriate. Disabilities Support can also support people who have a temporary mobility / dexterity impairment / other difficulty as a result of an accident, injury, illness or surgery. We aim to treat every person as an individual, with needs which may differ from those of other people with a superficially similar disability. We do not therefore have standard procedures for participants with dyslexia; nor standard procedures for visually impaired participants: each person’s needs are considered individually

Mode of study

The programme is studied over one year full time or two years part time.

All students start in the Autumn term. Part-time students attend on Thursdays in their first year and Mondays in their second year. Students who choose to take the report module rather than the dissertation will be required to choose an additional option module.

	<i>Code</i>	<i>Module</i>	<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Credits</i>
<i>Autumn</i>	<i>MMACDV_01</i>	<i>Developmental Psychology and Psychobiology</i>	<i>Thursdays 1400 – 1700 (10 weeks)</i>	<i>Coursework</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>MMACDV_06</i>	<i>Social Development</i>	<i>Mondays 1000 – 1300 (10 weeks)</i>	<i>Coursework</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Autumn and Spring</i>	<i>MMAPSY_23</i>	<i>Methodology and Statistics</i>	<i>Thursdays 1000-1300 or 1730-2030 (10 weeks – in the autumn term)+ Thursdays 1000-1100 or 1730-1830 (5 weeks in the spring term)</i>	<i>Coursework</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>MMACDV_08</i>	<i>Atypical Development</i>	<i>Thursdays 1400 – 1700 (10 weeks)</i>	<i>Coursework</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>MMASEN_08</i>	<i>Language Development</i>	<i>Tuesdays 1730-2030 (10 weeks)</i>	<i>Coursework</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Autumn, Spring, and Summer</i>	<i>MMACDV_98</i>	<i>Report</i>	<i>Individual tutorials by arrangement</i>	<i>Report</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Autumn, Spring, and Summer</i>	<i>MMACDV_99</i>	<i>Dissertation</i>	<i>Individual tutorials by arrangement</i>	<i>Dissertation</i>	<i>60</i>

Programme structures and requirements, levels, modules, credits and awards

The Institute of Education uses the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), as a guide to support periods of study undertaken abroad and to assist student mobility. Currently it is assumed that two UK credits equate to one ECTS. Therefore a module of 30 credits would typically equate to 15 ECTS credits.

The programme comprises the following core modules: *Developmental Psychology and Psychobiology*, *Social Development*, *Methodology and Statistics*, and a *Report* or *Dissertation*. Each of these counts for 30 credits of the 180 credit award apart from the dissertation, which counts for 60 credits.

To complete the Master's programme and be eligible for the GBC, the remaining credits can be obtained by taking *MMACDV_08 Atypical Development* or *MMASEN_08 Language Development* and/or other Master's level modules. Each taught module involves 30 contact hours (except *Methodology and Statistics* which also offers 2 extra hour-long optional sessions and 8 hours of statistics support sessions) with additional time for independent study and tutorial support.

Participants who complete 180 credits are awarded an MSc in Child Development. Participants who complete modules, excluding a report or dissertation, to the value of 120 credits, are able to exit with a postgraduate diploma, and participants who complete modules, excluding a report or dissertation, to the value of 60 credits are able to exit with a postgraduate certificate.

Teaching, learning and assessment strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated

Below is a detailed description of these for each core module.

Developmental Psychology and Psychobiology This module provides an advanced analysis of children's perceptual, emotional, cognitive, linguistic and behavioural development throughout the period from conception to late adolescence. Biological contributions to development, and to individual differences in development, are considered in relation to other contributions. Teaching strategies include lectures and small group discussions.

The module aims to develop knowledge and understanding of

- the conceptual basis for a developmental approach to infant, child and adolescent psychology
- evidence and theory about the interplay between genetic, prenatal and postnatal factors in regulating normal and abnormal child development
- recent research into children's perceptual, emotional, cognitive, linguistic and behavioural development

Social Development

This module considers psychological research on social aspects of development in childhood and adolescence and how families, schools and other social institutions may influence these developments. It aims to encourage reflection on the origins and validity of commonly held beliefs about children and their development. The module uses a variety of methods including lectures and small group discussions.

At the end of the module students will:

- understand views about the relation between psychology and culture that have motivated research and theory in developmental and cognitive psychology
- know the range of influences on parents' behaviour towards their children and how these may determine differences between and within families
- be familiar with research on social and emotional aspects of development in childhood and adolescence

Methodology and Statistics

This module considers methods of research and data analysis. It evaluates the strengths and limitations of the various methods to study children, adolescents, and their behaviour. An important aim of the module is to convey the fact that research design and data analysis cannot be reduced to a set of rules. At the end of the module students will have:

- developed their grasp of methodology and their understanding of data analysis,

- enhanced their ability to analyse research papers and formulate research projects, and
- increased their expertise in running statistical analyses using SPSS.

Report or dissertation

This module involves planning, conducting, and writing up an empirical project in developmental psychology. The teaching strategy involves small group tutorials, and individual supervision provided a member of the programme team, sometimes in collaboration with distinguished psychologists from neighbouring institutions. Assessment is by the submitted write up of the study.

The module aims to develop knowledge and understanding of

- the research process including identifying a topic, conducting bibliographic research, identifying a significant question, formulating a project, obtaining ethical approval, negotiating a sample, conducting and analysing a study, debriefing participants, and writing up the results using current academic conventions

It provides opportunities to develop, under supervision, skills of

- bibliographic research using electronic databases
- critical analysis and synthesis of research
- negotiation with members of the public
- conducting research with children
- data analysis
- academic writing

Information about assessment regulations

Participants must successfully complete all elements of the programme, to achieve the minimum credits required for the award. All coursework, is assessed according to the grade-related criteria for the programme level, found in the programme handbook.

All assignments are independently marked by two staff members, who meet to discuss and reconcile the marks and comments for each individual.

Assignments are graded from A to D, with D being a failing grade. Participants are permitted to represent a failed assignment on one further occasion, within 12 months of the original submission.

An external examiner is appointed by Senate and plays an important role in monitoring the quality of the programme and evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching and support provided for the programme participants and the reliability of the judgements made in assessing them.

Further details about assessment regulations can be found at

http://www.ioe.ac.uk/studentInformation/documents/Study_Home/Regulations_f_or_the_Assessment_of_Students.pdf

Support for learning

The programme team is conscious of the characteristics of the student body, which is dominated by recent psychology graduates and includes students with diverse

linguistic backgrounds and experiences of higher education. The support provided includes:

- Induction sessions
- Student handbook
- Programme handbook
- Academic literacy and oracy sessions, if required
- Information Services induction and other programmes
- Extensive library and other learning resources and facilities
- Personal tutor for each student
- Academic counselling and advisory service
- Access to Student Welfare Service
- Introduction and access to the University Careers Service

Methods for evaluating and improving the programme

Internal mechanisms and committees are as follows.

Mechanisms for review and evaluation of teaching, learning, assessment, the curriculum and outcome standards

- Module evaluation by students
- Annual programme review prepared by programme team and considered by Faculty of Children and Health Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
- Periodic programme review and revalidation involving external panel member
- Programme accreditation by British Psychological Society
- Staff appraisal
- Peer observation of teaching
- Visiting (external) examiner reports

Committees with responsibility for monitoring and evaluating quality and standards

- Programme committee
- Faculty Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Committee
- Institute Learning and Teaching Committee
- Institute Equal Opportunities Committee
- Senate
- Board of Examiners

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback on the quality of teaching and their learning experience

- Student representation on programme committee
- Student representation on Faculty Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Committee, on Academic Board, on the Learning and Teaching Committee and on the Equal Opportunities Committee
- Programme and module evaluation
- Annual student satisfaction survey
- Encouragement of informal approaches by individual or groups of students to the programme leader and other tutors and/or to the programme administrator

Indicators of quality and standards

- Career development. Former programme participants have progressed to training as primary teachers, Clinical and Educational Psychologists, research degrees, university teaching and research posts
- Research. Several dissertations have been presented at national and international conferences, and published in academic journals. Participants have also used them as the basis for PhD research
- Evaluation. The report of the last Periodic Review commented very favourably on the curriculum, the accessibility and expertise of the staff, and the motivation and commitment of the students. Visiting Examiner reports compare the programme very favourably with other postgraduate psychology programmes.

Relevant benchmark statements and other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes

In 2007 the Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee of the British Psychological Society (BPS), approved the programme for the Graduate Basis of Chartered Membership with the BPS.

Date of completion/amendment of specification

November 2011