



## APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

<b>Higher Education Provider</b>	<b>James Cook University Singapore</b>
<b>Date of determination</b>	<b>3 December 2015</b>
<b>Standards version</b>	<b>June 2010 ver 10</b>
<b>Programs of study submitted for accreditation</b>	<b>Programs</b>  <b>Three year:</b> Bachelor of Psychological Science – AQF Level 7  <b>4<sup>th</sup> year:</b> Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) – AQF Level 8  Graduate Diploma of Psychology – AQF Level 8  <b>5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years:</b> Master of Psychology (Clinical) – AQF Level 9 (Extended)  Master of Psychology (Clinical)/PhD  <b>Professional doctorate:</b> Doctor of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) – AQF Level 10

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Psychology Academic Group in James Cook University Singapore 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.

JCU Singapore is wholly owned by JCU Australia and the Head of the AOU is directly responsible for Psychology in Singapore. There is a DVC (Singapore), a Dean of the Campus and an Associate Dean of Psychology. The AOU operates as a single entity across all campuses although the College structure in Australian does not impact on Singapore. There is a separate budget for Psychology in Singapore, overseen by the Head of the AOU.

In Singapore, the University moved premises in early 2015 to a new campus. Teaching spaces have increased and the latest technology installed. There are more research labs available for training and

research in psychology and there is a new on-campus Psychology Clinic. Staff accommodation is still open-plan and quite cramped. The space for psychology academic staff is shared with other disciplines with only senior staff having offices.

The Psychology AOU includes the Singapore campus and it meets all of the Standards for the Psychology AOU; however it cannot meet Standard 2.1.4 as on the Townsville campus there is not an appropriate level of staffing.

The Psychology AOU thus operates across three campuses. In Singapore, there are appropriate levels of staffing (even though the student:staff ratio is a little high) and there are plans for an increase in staffing. Each staff member who leaves is replaced with another one. Although non-Singaporeans can only be appointed on limited-term contracts, all staff reported that there was never any difficulty with contracts being renewed. The Singapore campus operates independently from the Australian campuses but relevant Standards are all met through identical resources for students (staff levels, access, and equivalent standards of teaching and academic performance and assessment). While Singapore staff can make up to 20% modification of subject content (to suit local conditions, for example), the learning outcomes and the assessments are identical.

The Singapore campus is wholly owned by JCU Australia and operates in accordance with standards, policies and procedures that are exactly the same as those in Australia. Some local tutors are employed but they are subject to the same educational standards as those in Australia. Thus there are no special arrangements for teaching in Singapore.

The three year sequence is available in the Bachelor of Psychological Science (AQF Level 7). The structure of the course is very confusing as there is not a specified accredited sequence of subjects. The only core subjects are two in 1st year (comprising 25% of the year), two subjects at 2nd year (also comprising 25% of the year) and one subject at 3rd year. In addition, students complete a minimum of a further two electives at 2nd year (psychology total thus comprising 50% of the year) and a further four electives at 3rd year (psychology total thus comprising 62.5% of the year). The 1st year core units are introductory while those at 2nd and 3rd year are research methods, design and analysis.

Because the University abolished pre-requisites some years ago, students can complete the various electives in any order. This means that some core topics in Standard 3.1.7 are not adequately covered by some students, some topics can be avoided and students often complete 3rd year subjects in 2nd year. Staff and students all agreed the sequence was complex and the choice of subjects difficult and confusing. Taking subjects in a recommended sequence would ensure students complete a range and variety of assessments of increasing complexity and obtain a solid foundation through appropriate scaffolding of learning in the core psychology Graduate Attributes contained in the Standards.

It is difficult to see how Standards 3.1.3 and 3.1.5 can be met currently without there being a clear sequence of subjects, of increasing difficulty. A clearer pathway for the three year sequence must be established.

Standard 3.1.6 is not met by the current arrangement. Evidence was provided in relation to achievement of the core Graduate Attributes and unit outlines and assignments inspected. However, some of the Graduate Attributes specified are only available in elective units and hence not necessarily achieved by all students. A specific sequence must be recognised as the accredited sequence. Many of the subjects had out-of-date reference and reading lists (excluding classic psychology papers which are important historically). Standard 3.1.9 is not met. Various forms of assessment are used through the course and examples of student work were inspected during the site visit in both Townsville and Cairns.

There are two fourth year courses – the Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) and the Graduate Diploma of Psychology – the only difference is that the latter involves a group project. The year-long course involves two compulsory units – Ethics and Professional Practice and attendance at and critique of the presentations in the Jo Wale Seminar series. Half of the year comprises the research project and the rest of the year comprises a further three modules in two units – Advanced Topics in Psychology 1 and Advanced Topics in Psychology 2 (in which the two compulsory modules are also to be found). The additional modules vary from year to year and also across campuses and most modules are run in intensive, block mode, with at least 16 hours face-to-face in each.

From the material provided and the discussion with staff and students, Standard 4.1 (preamble) is not met by the current arrangement of modules. There is no education in the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning the construction, implementation and interpretation of some of the more widely used cognitive and personality assessments and evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention.

The non-compulsory modules cover a range of topics in psychology that vary annually and across campuses. It is difficult to see from the current arrangements how Standard 4.1.4 can be fully met. Assessment is only covered briefly in the current modules and intervention likewise seems to be covered to a very limited extent.

All other Standards for 4<sup>th</sup> year are met.

**The Conditions recommended for the three year and 4th year programs have a 12 month time-line attached to them. However, given the fundamental aim of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act (2009), is “to provide for the protection of the public by ensuring that only health practitioners who are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner are registered”, it is essential that these courses be restructured to provide a good pedagogical basis for student learning so that they would not pose a risk to the public should they become practitioners. Under Section 50 of the National Law, APAC is required to monitor the programs to ensure the relevant courses and the AOU meet APAC’s accreditation Standards.**

The postgraduate professional courses are not typical on-campus programs. Instead they are offered in what the University terms ‘limited attendance’ mode, which combines distance education with short on-campus workshops for each subject. There is a Professional Programmes Advisory Committee that had met and is appropriately constituted.

Practical placements are supervised by staff who are suitably qualified and experienced clinical psychologists, who are registered in Australia or the UK and with qualifications from Australia, the UK, the USA and JCU Singapore, including those on staff at JCU. However, as discussed below, Standard 5.3.23 is not currently met as most supervisors are not registered in Australia and do not hold approved requirements for higher degree student supervision.

There is a Professional Programmes Advisory Committee. It is appropriately constituted. Minutes from recent meetings were sighted and it was noted that the issues discussed were aimed at auditing and improving the standards of training in the course.

The Psychology Clinic is located in a new building on campus. It has six consultation rooms including a group room and a room suitable for working with children. The rooms are well-equipped and spacious, with recording facilities and one-way mirrors. They are appropriately furnished. There is an adequately stocked test library in the Clinic.

Students typically complete their first placement in the Psychology Clinic. Some students start with an external placement (once their suitability has been ascertained) and then complete a second placement in the Clinic. The Placement Coordinator is well connected locally and is generally able to ensure students have a range of suitable clinical experiences during their training. Hours of supervised placement are met. Placements in the Psychology Clinic are supervised by suitably qualified academic staff as well as the Clinic Director. Log books are maintained and were sighted as were portfolios demonstrating competence in the core capabilities across the placements.

A feature of the site visit to Singapore was the opportunity to meet field supervisors *in situ*. There was a visit to the Psychology Service for Children in a large hospital and to a psychologist in private practice in downtown Singapore. Field supervisors are recognised by the University with library access but they indicated that providing a contribution to the development of the profession was sufficient. There are plans for future collaborations between the Clinic and external supervisors which may enable Adjunct appointments, plus the University's commitment to the provision of supervisor training for eligible supervisors. Supervisors spoke highly of the students on placement as having a good foundational assessment and intervention skill set. CVs of field supervisors were on file and sighted.

The AOU is aware that the PsyBA requirements for supervisors supersede the Standards. Advice from the PsyBA has indicated that students currently enrolled in the postgraduate programs will be considered to have completed an approved program of study. PsyBA requirements for supervision will apply from 2016. A comprehensive plan has been drawn up to ensure all supervisors meet PsyBA requirements from this date.

JCU Singapore has indicated it will support costs for recognition of qualifications (by the APS), the costs of registration and endorsement and the provision of supervisor training to those who require it, including external supervisors.

All the issues raised in relation to the Masters programs are also issues for the Professional Doctorate, which has recently been reconfigured to be a four year degree, compliant with the AQF. In addition to those issues, there is no evidence that the additional 500 hours involve supervision that emphasises a higher level of autonomy and responsibility, and a higher level integration of theory and practice (Standard 5.4.4).

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: James Cook University (Singapore)

Date of Site Visit: 3 September 2015

### 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>	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
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	✓		

  

<b>Professional Doctorate Programs of Study</b>	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Staffing	5.1.1-3	✓		
Advisory/Liaison and Quality Review Committee	5.1.4	✓		
Resources	5.1.5-8	✓		
Credit for Previous Study	5.1.9-12	✓		
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	5.4.1	✓		
Program of Study Structure	5.4.2-5		✓	
Coursework	5.3.9-10		✓	
Research	5.4.6-11	✓		
Practical Placements	5.3.17-30	✓		

**Comment:**

As the Psychology AOU includes the Singapore campus, while the Singapore campus meets all conditions for the Psychology AOU it remains Accredited With Conditions until all AOU conditions are met at the Australian campuses.

**Authorised:**

Professor John Dunn

**Chair,** Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

**Date:** 3 December 2015