



University of Southern Queensland - APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

Higher education provider	University of Southern Queensland
Name of the Psychology AOU	School of Psychology and Counselling
Standards version	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
Purpose of assessment	5 Year Cycle Accreditation Site Visit
Programs and level of study assessed	Bachelor of Science (Psychology) (Level 1) Bachelor of Science (Psychology Extended) (Level 1) Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (Psychology) (Level 1) Bachelor of Business and Commerce and Bachelor of Science (Level 1) Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) (packaged Level 1 and 2) Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Psychology) (Level 2) Master of Science (Research) (Psychology Research) (Level 2) Master of Professional Psychology (Level 3) Master of Psychology (Clinical) (packaged Level 3 and 4) Master of Psychology/PhD (Clinical Psychology) (packaged Level 3 and 4)
Campus	Ipswich and Toowoomba
Date of site visit	11 - 14 June 2019
Date of APAC Board determination	28 October 2019
Accreditation end date	31 December 2024



Background and overview

An accreditation assessment site visit was undertaken between 11 and 14 June as part of the regular five-yearly cycle of visits to the University of Southern Queensland. The visit included two days at the Ipswich campus and one and a half days at the Toowoomba campus to meet with staff, students, external supervisors, and to inspect the Psychology clinics and other facilities. The psychology programs are offered by the School of Psychology and Counselling which is situated within the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Sciences. The Head of the School is Professor Lorelle Burton, who reports to the Executive Dean of the Faculty. The School offers a range of undergraduate programs that include a major in psychology and these are offered on both campuses as well as externally. The majority of the undergraduate student cohort studies externally. The School offers a four-year psychology sequence as well as a stand-alone Honours year. At the postgraduate level, the School offers a Master of Professional Psychology based at the Ipswich campus and a Master of Clinical Psychology based at the Toowoomba campus. The School has experienced a decline in student numbers over the past few years and as a result is reviewing both undergraduate and postgraduate programs with the aim of increasing the number of enrolled students and enhancing students' learning experiences. The School commissioned a significant external review of the two Master of Psychology programs in 2018 and results of this are informing a major revision to these programs for 2020 onwards. The School is well regarded for its provision of psychology education and training for regional and remote students. Psychology was awarded a five-star rating in the 2019 Good Universities Guide, with particularly strong ratings (90%+) for Teaching Quality, Learning Resources, and Overall Experience. The School also has outstanding research achievements, with the Psychology Field of Research achieving a five-star rating in the 2018 Excellence in Research Australia round. The School is also experiencing a period of planning for rejuvenation of their staffing after having experienced many staff losses recently in both planned and unplanned circumstances. The significantly reduced staff numbers appear to be having a predictably negative effect on the workloads and wellbeing of remaining staff, and the results of the USQ 2018 Employee Voice Engagement Survey have shown a decline compared to the previous year, although the School results remain higher than the University average.



APAC Board determination

The APAC Board has determined that the following programs are accredited for a period of five years without conditions until **31 December 2024**:

- **Master of Psychology (Clinical)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Toowoomba)
- **Master of Psychology/PhD (Clinical Psychology)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Toowoomba)

It was also determined that the following programs are accredited for a period of five years until **31 December 2024**:

- **Bachelor of Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Science (Psychology Extended)** (Level 1) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Business and Commerce and Bachelor of Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)** (packaged Level 1 and 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Online)
- **Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Psychology)** (Level 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Master of Science (Research) (Psychology Research)** (Level 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Online)
- **Master of Professional Psychology** (Level 3) (Campus: Ipswich)

Subject to the following conditions:

For the following programs:

- **Bachelor of Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Science (Psychology Extended)** (Level 1) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Business and Commerce and Bachelor of Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Toowoomba, Online)
- **Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)** (Level 1 and 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Online)

By **31 December 2020**:

1. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.2 is met, the provider must provide evidence of external benchmarking activities for the undergraduate programs.



2. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.2 is met, the provider must provide evidence that the program learning outcomes for the program incorporate all of the Level 1 and 2 graduate competencies.
3. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.4 is met, the provider must provide evidence of appropriate staffing of the undergraduate programs to support student achievement of graduate competencies.
4. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.6 is met, the provider must provide evidence that the learning opportunities and support offered to online students enables them to achieve the program learning outcomes.
5. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.8 is met, the provider must provide evidence of cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures being articulated as a required learning outcome and assessed within the Honours programs.
6. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.2, is met, the provider must provide evidence that all students are assured to have met competence 1.3 (oral communication of analysis and critique of theory and research) and 1.5 (interpersonal skills and teamwork) also evidence of systematic processes to assure academic integrity of student assessments in order to ensure that students have met all graduate competencies.
7. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.4, is met, the provider must provide evidence of the application of appropriate moderation process to all assessments in all units.

For the following programs:

- **Bachelor of Science (Honours) (Psychology)** (Level 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Toowoomba, Online)
- **Master of Science (Research) (Psychology Research)** (Level 2) (Campus: Ipswich, Online)

By **31 December 2020**:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.2 is met, the provider must provide evidence that the program learning outcomes for the program incorporate all of the Level 2 graduate competencies.
2. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.6 is met, the provider must provide evidence that the design of the residential schools supports student learning both in terms of the on-campus learning activities and preparation for the subsequent assessment tasks.
3. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.8 is met, the provider must provide evidence of cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures being articulated as a required learning outcome and assessed within the Honours programs.



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4. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.4, is met, the provider must provide evidence of the application of appropriate moderation process to all coursework assessments in all units.
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For the **Master of Professional Psychology** (Level 3) (Campus: Ipswich) program:

1. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criterion 1.6 is met, the provider must provide evidence that students receive some skills-based training related to conducting interventions with children and adults before they commence seeing clients on their first placement by **31 March 2020**.
 2. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.2 is met, the provider must provide evidence of external benchmarking activities for this program by **31 December 2020**.
 3. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.2, is met, the provider must provide evidence of how students are deemed to have met graduate competency 3.17 by **31 December 2019**.
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Table 1: Summary of findings regarding each criterion for each Standard

Domain 1: Public safety	Standard Statement 1: Public safety is assured			
	Level 1 Standard is met	Level 2 Standard is met	Level 3 Standard is substantially met	Level 3 and 4 Clinical Standard is substantially met
Domain 2: Academic governance and quality assurance	Standard Statement 2: Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective			
	Level 1 Standard is substantially met	Level 2 Standard is met	Level 3 Standard is substantially met	Level 3 and 4 Clinical 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			
	Level 1 Standard is substantially met	Level 2 Standard is substantially met	Level 3 Standard is met	Level 3 and 4 Clinical Standard is met
Domain 4: The student experience	Standard Statement 4: Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support			
	Level 1 Standard is met	Level 2 Standard is met	Level 3 Standard is met	Level 3 and 4 Clinical Standard is met
Domain 5: Assessment	Standard Statement 5: Assessment is fair, reliable and valid			
	Level 1 Standard is substantially met	Level 2 Standard is substantially met	Level 3 Standard is substantially met	Level 3 and 4 Clinical Standard is met



Commendations

The Assessment Team have made the subsequent commendations following the evaluation of the University of Southern Queensland's psychology programs.

The University of Southern Queensland is commended for:

- Commitment and collegiality of staff, particularly in the challenging current staffing circumstances
- Evidence of benchmarking and/or external review in the Honours and Master's programs



Suggestions

The assessment team recommends the following suggestions to the University of Southern Queensland's psychology programs:

- Remove reference to superseded APAC Standards, such as disallowance of Conceded passes in course specifications, and attributing compulsory attendance at residential schools for Honours students to APAC requirements.
- The online handbook for the Master of Clinical Psychology be corrected to remove reference to the need for supervisors to be a member of the APS College of Clinical Psychologists