



Australian Psychology
Accreditation Council

APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

Higher Education Provider	University of Melbourne
Name of the Psychology Academic Organisational Unit (AOU)	Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences
Date of Determination	8 December 2014
Standards Version	June 2010 (Version 10)
Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation	Three Year Undergraduate Programs
	Bachelor of Arts
	Bachelor of Commerce
	Bachelor of Science
	Graduate Diploma in Psychology
	Fourth year Programs
	Bachelor of Arts (Honours)
Bachelor of Science (Honours)	
Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology	
Postgraduate Professional Programs	
Master of Educational Psychology	
Master of Psychology (Clinical)	
Master of Psychology (Clinical Neuropsychology)	
Master of Educational Psychology/PhD	
Master of Psychology (Clinical)/PhD	
Master of Psychology (Clinical Neuropsychology)/PhD	

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences (MSPS) at the University of Melbourne 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.

Since the previous full accreditation assessment in 2009, the most notable change is an increase in student numbers, with growth in the undergraduate units being more than 40%. During the same period the staff has grown from approximately 28.5 EFT to 32.7, a growth of about 14.7%.

In the application the name of the AOU is given as Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences. However, after reading the application documentation it is apparent that there are two entirely separate AOU's involved in the teaching of the accredited psychology programs in Melbourne. The accredited postgraduate professional programs in Educational Psychology are not taught out of MSPS and the teaching staff for those programs are not part of MSPS. Instead those Educational Psychology programs are offered by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and the relevant teaching staff are situated in that School. Given that the AOU has not demonstrated that it has sufficient academic, financial and administrative control to ensure provision of a high standard of education and training in the Master of Educational Psychology and Master of Educational Psychology/PhD programs, Standard 2.1.4 (ii) is not met.

The Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences is situated in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health and has a very strong research culture and was ranked in the top three psychology schools in the 2013 ERA exercise.

With regard Standard 2.1.10 which relates to policy regarding quality of teaching, the MSPS has an excellent Teaching and Learning plan for which they are to be commended.

The MSPS at the University of Melbourne meets all the Standards relating to the AOU (2.1.1 to 2.1.10) with the exception of Standard 2.1.4(ii).

All the programs are offered on the Parkville campus of the University of Melbourne. A version of the Master of Psychology (Clinical) is offered in Singapore via a joint arrangement with the National University of Singapore. That program is covered in a separate report.

All the degrees for which accreditation is sought conform with the relevant Standards relating to degree nomenclature. The University is addressing issues of nomenclature in relation to the AQF requirements.

According to the application, the MSPS has a total permanent teaching and research staff of 32.7 EFT and an additional 11.2 on fixed term contracts. These figures excluded the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and NUS staff. Ten of the positions are at Level E, seven at Level D with the remainder being mainly a mix of Level C and B. All but one have a PhD in Psychology or a related discipline.

The overall student:staff ratio is within the ratio specified in Standard 2.4.3. The staffing profile and student: staff ratios are met for the clinical, clinical neuropsychology and educational psychology programs.

The School has excellent laboratory facilities with 23 laboratories/research groups covering a wide range of areas. Office accommodation for both staff and postgraduate students is appropriate as are the teaching and computing facilities for both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The Psychological Tests Resources Centre (PTRC) has appropriate operating procedures and is well stocked. Overall, the AOU is well resourced and Standards relating to resources are clearly met. The University's learning management system is Blackboard and at an undergraduate level, every unit has a unit website. Using the system, students can access learning materials, recordings of lectures and other relevant material, and communicate with teaching staff and other students. For each unit, a comprehensive and up to date unit outline is provided. A range of assessment strategies is used and students are provided with a portal to Turnitin for submission of assignments. Assignments are marked electronically and students are provided with appropriate feedback. In addition to the information on the unit sites, the School also has some excellent general web resources for students including a statistics module and newsletters.

As indicated above, the School has a very strong research culture and this permeates the teaching. There is an admirable emphasis on the scientific basis of psychology and on the scientist-practitioner model, which is emphasised in the third year capstone unit entitled Psychological Science: Theory and Practice. The School provides appropriate training for tutors and their performance is monitored by senior tutors. The quality of teaching and the students' learning experience is monitored by means of a Student Experience Survey which is completed for each unit at the end of the semester. Since the last accreditation assessment, there has been an improvement in these scores at both the under- and postgraduate level with the 2013 rating being 4.2 and 4.1 respectively on a 5 point scale.

The School of Psychology meets all the relevant Standards relating to Teaching materials and methods (Standard 2.6).

Three-year programs are offered in the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Science and the Bachelor of Commerce as well as in the Graduate Diploma of Psychology. In the BA, BSc and Graduate Diploma, students are required to complete eight core units – two in first year, four in second year and two in third year. In addition, they have to complete two third year psychology electives that can be chosen from nine options. Standards 3.1.1 to 3.1.4 are met for these degrees.

Students in the BCom degree follow a similar structure to that outlined above but with one notable difference. They are permitted to substitute two Commerce units, i.e. non-psychology units, for one core and one elective third year psychology unit. Consequently, Standard 3.1.4 which states that the third year must include a minimum of 50% psychology is not met for the Bachelor of Commerce

In terms of content, the psychology sequences provides good training in the scientific study of psychology, with appropriate up-to-date references being used and practical work being undertaken in most units. However, in relation to Graduate Attribute 4, other than research ethics, there appears to be no coverage of ethics and with regard to Graduate Attribute 6, little or no coverage of legislative frameworks. Consequently Standards 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 are not met.

A variety of assessment methods are used, including laboratory reports, essays, in-class tests, presentations and examinations. A benchmarking exercise for two units with the University of Queensland indicated confirmed that the marking was appropriate.

Three fourth year programs are offered at the University of Melbourne – the Bachelor of Arts (Hons), the Bachelor of Science (Hons) and the Postgraduate Diploma of Psychology. The structure and content of these programs are identical.

The fourth year program is one year in length, is 100% psychology and has appropriate entry requirements. Students are required to complete a research project with a weighting of .5, two core units – Theories and Ethics in Psychology, and Advanced Design and Data Analysis, and two of five electives. In terms of content, there is advanced coverage of some of the core areas and contextualisation of the science and practice of psychology. However, while there is some theoretical coverage of psychological assessment, this is not sufficient to meet the requirement that students must be provided with advanced education and training in the 'knowledge of the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning the construction, implementation, and interpretation of some of the most widely used cognitive and personality assessments' (Standard 4.1.4). Similarly there is insufficient advanced education in the 'knowledge of the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention' (Standard 4.1.4). The ethics covered in the Theories and Ethics in Psychology unit appears to be almost entirely research orientated. Consequently, Standard 4.1.8 is not met.

Students produce an individual research project and participate in all the steps involved in the research. The project has two components – a literature review of 4,000 words and a research report in the form of an article of up to 6,000 words. Students are required to present a paper based on their research at a mini-conference in September of each year. The literature review and the research report are marked independently by two members of staff who have not been involved in the supervision and there are appropriate procedures in place to address discrepancies in marks.

A very thorough bench marking exercise in relation to the Honours theses was undertaken with the Australian National University in 2014 and this confirmed the quality of the research and the validity of the marking process.

In Australia, the Melbourne School of Psychological Science offers professional programs in Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology. For each of these streams there is a 5th and 6th Year Masters program which can be combined with a PhD. The structure of these programs is the same.

The Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs have the same structure consisting of 13 coursework units, a research proposal unit, a thesis and three placements. Seven of the coursework units are common to both programs as are the research proposal and thesis units.

All relevant Standards relating to staffing of the The Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs are met.

While both programs have Advisory/Liaison Committees, the composition of these does not satisfy the requirements of Standard 5.1.4.

The School has a modern and well resourced clinic off-campus. The Clinic is used for the first placement of the Clinical Psychology students, while the Clinical Neuropsychology students' first placements are in either the Austin Hospital or Saint Vincent's Hospital.

A review of the Postgraduate Handbooks, unit outlines, and marked assessments across a selection of units indicated a comprehensive curriculum which appears to cover the core capabilities and attributes in the programs. While there is no assessment of competence utilising an OSCE type assessment, a range of assessment tasks are utilised including written case reports, videoed role-plays, essays, oral presentations, and exams.

The format of the logbooks is appropriate and shows the date, activity undertaken, and number of hours of client contact face-to-face, client related activities, one-to-one supervision and group supervision. Some of the inspected log books appeared to be only endorsed by the supervisor at the end of the placement, rather than being checked and endorsed regularly. Thus Standard 5.1.17 is not met.

The structure of the 5th and 6th year Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs is the same, consisting of 43.75% coursework, 31.25% research and 25% practicum. All the coursework content of the programs is taught by psychologists, other than the Biological Psychology and Pharmacotherapy unit in the Clinical Psychology program which is taught by a Psychiatrist.

The Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs each have 13 coursework units, of which seven are common to both programs. Some of the shared units include workshops, the foci of which tend to be more on skills training. The attendance at these workshops is compulsory and is a hurdle requirement for passing the unit. Despite being enrolled in the unit, it appears that Clinical Neuropsychology students are not permitted to attend some of the workshops. Not only does that mean that they are missing out on skills training, it also means that technically they have not satisfied the requirements for the unit and hence cannot be awarded a passing grade. Thus for the Clinical Neuropsychology program, Standard 5.1.16 is not met.

The Ethics and Professional Issues unit is taught only in the first semester of the second year. Consequently, the Clinical Psychology students do not take this unit until after they have completed their first placement. (This is less of a problem for the Clinical Neuropsychology students as their first placement is essentially an observational placement.) As there does not appear to be any strong rationale for having the unit in the second year, it would seem more appropriate for the students to have completed the unit prior to the first placement or at least concurrently with it. Given the placement of this unit, the assessment team were not satisfied that the Clinical Psychology students were receiving adequate education and training in professional skills and knowledge prior to undertaking their first placement and Standard 5.3.17 is not met for the Clinical Psychology program.

The research training that the students receive in the professional programs is excellent and much of the research produced by students is of a publishable standard.

In the Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology programs there are three placements during which the students complete in excess of 1000 hours of supervised appropriate practical placement experience in a range of settings.

The first placement is an internal one occurring in the first year. In the Clinical program, the placement is in the University Clinic and the student is actively involved in diagnostic assessment,

history taking, case formulation and report writing. In the Clinical Neuropsychology program the first placement consists of attending the weekly case conference, attending hospital based group supervision meetings throughout the year and a direct observational placement of at least five days during which students observe a clinical neuropsychologist working with patients. While both programs have two external placement units in the second year, in the Clinical Neuropsychology program each of those units contains two placements.

The AOU has developed a number of suitable placements in the field for the external placements, and has a large number of registered external supervisors with appropriate endorsement.

In the Clinical Psychology program, the placements are coordinated by two staff members – one a Level D and the other a Level A academic. Both are registered and have a Clinical Psychology endorsement. The placement coordinator for the Clinical Neuropsychology program is a level B academic who completed a MPsych/PhD in Clinical Neuropsychology in 2010. However, she is not yet endorsed and only holds Associate Member of the College of Clinical Neuropsychologists. This does not meet Standard 5.3.26

The School has very good procedures and forms relating to supervision contracts, mid-placement reviews and final placement assessment. All copies of these forms seen by the site visit team had been signed off appropriately. There are also good manuals for students, although they do need to be updated to remove out of date information relating to registration. Similarly, the other documentation relating to the practicums needs to be updated to reflect the fact that every placement relates to a specific number of hours rather than a definite number of days.

The University of Melbourne offers a Master of Educational Psychology which can be taken jointly with a PhD. The program is situated in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education where the teaching staff are also located. The program and Educational Psychology staff are completely separate from the AOU and the other accredited psychology accredited programs and the AOU has no involvement in, or oversight of, this program. Consequently, Standard 2.1.4 (ii) is not met.

All relevant Standards relating to staffing of the The The Educational Psychology program is met.

While there is an Advisory/Liaison Committee for the Educational Psychology programs which meets at least once a year, it does not meet the requirements of Standard 5.1.4 with regard to the composition of the Committee.

The facilities for teaching the coursework are appropriate, as are the University library facilities and holdings, and the computer resources. There is a test library which holds appropriate tests for the program.

A review of the Postgraduate Handbooks, unit outlines, and marked assessments across a selection of units indicated a comprehensive curriculum which provides coverage of the core capabilities and attributes in the programs. The coursework also links research and practical application. The positive feedback from the three field supervisors with whom the team met, confirmed the impression that students cover all the core capabilities.

A range of assessments are utilised including written case reports, essays, designing and implementing a psychological intervention, administering a psychological test to a staff member, and oral presentations. While testing knowledge, there is also a strong emphasis on assessing the ability

to apply that knowledge and professional skills. Where a student fails a unit, he/she is required to resubmit work or repeat the unit.

The format of the logbooks is appropriate and shows the date, activity undertaken, and number of hours of client contact face-to-face, client related activities, one-to-one supervision and group supervision. The entries were detailed and demonstrated that the students had engaged in some reflection.

The program consists of 50% coursework, 25% research and 25% practicum. All the coursework content of the programs is taught by staff with psychology qualifications. Students are required to pass all the components in order to graduate.

There are nine coursework units in the program, none of which are shared with the other two professional psychology programs offered by the University of Melbourne. These units appear to cover the core capabilities and the appropriate material on the administrative procedures associated with working as a psychologist. The coursework units are spread across the two years and linked to the practicum placements.

The research project involves an individual project resulting in a final report in the form of an article manuscript of about 10,000 words. The research project is done in the second year of study. In the first year, there is a research methods unit in which students develop a proposal. The topics of the samples of theses that were viewed were appropriate and the quality of the research was satisfactory. The thesis marking procedures and criteria meet the Standards.

In the program, there are four practicum placements. The first two placements occur in the first year and are 'structured experiences' in which students visit a number of different educational settings in order to gain an understanding of the nature of the work undertaken by an Educational Psychologist. They have a large observational component, but students may also do some assessment and interviewing. In the second year of training the two placements are larger (300 hours each) and students are required to work more independently with clients. Unlike the other two professional psychology programs, there is no separate ethics and professional issues coursework unit. Instead that material is embedded into other units and the practicums. Material relevant to the practical placements is covered in two practicum lectures and the first session unit Counselling Skills for Educational Psychologists.

There is a range of suitable field placements with registered supervisors who have appropriate endorsement. The placements are coordinated by two staff members both of whom have Educational and Developmental Psychology area of practice endorsement and are registered supervisors.

The procedures and forms relating to supervision contracts, mid-placement reviews and final placement assessment are appropriate. All copies of these forms and other documentation seen by the site visit team had been signed off appropriately.



APAC Accreditation Summary Checklist

for use with APAC Standards June 2010 Version 10

Name of the Higher Education Provider: University of Melbourne

Date of Site Visit: 18-20 August 2014

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 Programs 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 Programs 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	✓		



Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study – Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)/PhD	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		✓	

Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study – Master of Psychology (Clinical Neuropsychology) Master of Psychology (Clinical Neuropsychology)/PhD	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	5.1.12(e)	✓		



Evaluation				
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		✓	

Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study – Master of Educational Psychology Master of Educational Psychology/PhD	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	✓		

Authorised:



Australian Psychology
Accreditation Council

Professor John Dunn

Chair

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

Date: 8 December 2014