



APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

Higher Education Provider	University of Newcastle, School of Psychology
Date of Determination	3 December 2015
Date of site visit	18-20 August 2015
Programs Assessed for Accreditation	Bachelor of Psychological Science Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Bachelor of Science (Honours) Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) Graduate Diploma in Psychology Master of Clinical Psychology Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology)

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the University of Newcastle, School of Psychology 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.

This report is based on information received in the application for accreditation in addition to information obtained during meetings with the Senior University staff, psychology academic staff, administrative staff and students on the two campuses which offer Psychology programs. The two campuses visited were the main Callaghan campus and the smaller Ourimbah campus. Only the undergraduate degree and fourth year courses are presented at the Ourimbah campus.

The School is one of four in the Faculty of Science and Information Technology with a well-established research and scholarship milieu in four recognised research groups. An extensive University and Faculty based quality review system underlies the School's own stringent evaluation and review processes.

The two campuses share resources, include intercampus travel by most staff in the conduct of their duties, both teaching and research. Students have a choice as to which campus they attend for all required activities, and each unit is coordinated by staff from both campuses. The conclusion made from the site visit is that the School should not be regarded as operating with two separate campuses, but as one School operating on two close locations.

Staffing Standards are fully met.

The student to staff ratio for the School is very likely to be less than 18:1, thus easily meeting the relevant Standard set at 22:1.

Although there are some disadvantages in using the facilities and staff offices of the School, since they are spread across 3 buildings of the main campus at Callaghan, the total space allocated to it appears good. A similar circumstance can be said to be evident at Ourimbah campus where research and staff office space appears also to be distributed amongst various locations. There are 8 dedicated research laboratories with modern equipment throughout the School to support staff and Honours and Higher degree students. APAC suggested the School staff and research spaces at the Callaghan campus be consolidated to a single building.

There is an excellent Test Library available at the Callaghan campus within the School with modern and up to date Tests. Good (security and financial) procedures are in place for lending and Test acquisition.

Blackboard provides the platform for program and teaching management, in addition to lectures and practical classes for undergraduate units. Students interviewed at both campuses were very complimentary regarding their experiences with the course materials, assessments and lecturers.

A number of unit outlines were inspected and all are thorough and comprehensive and specify the content of the unit, the nature of assessments, details of up-to-date textbooks and readings and the learning outcomes. There is lab training offered in a number of units, consistent with the emphasis on research in the School.

The School of Psychology (Psychology AOU) at the University of Newcastle received the grade of Accreditation Without Conditions.

A three year sequence in a three year degree is no longer being offered in any degree, except as an exit point 3 years into the 4 year Bachelor of Psychology (Honours). Hence the Bachelor of Psychological Science is an exit degree only and has no intake. However, the sequence constitutes the first 3 years within the 4th year Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) degree.

Teaching focuses on the core discipline of psychology and students are continuously introduced to the scientific study of psychology, undertake laboratory and practical work and acquire a range of writing skills through, for example, essays, lab reports, critiques and short answer questions. Assessors noted *intercultural diversity and indigenous psychology* component of Graduate Attribute 1 was “a bit thin”. Subsequent to the site visit, detailed information was forwarded to APAC about significant plans for addressing this condition. Standard 3.1.7 is therefore not met. When plans are approved and documented, this should amply satisfy the condition.

Various forms of assessment are used and sample work was inspected by the assessors. The core units are assessed in accordance with the unit learning outcomes. Feedback is provided within three weeks of submission of work. Appeals processes and rules for granting credit or advance standing meet the Standards.

The Bachelor of Psychological Science received the grade of Accreditation With Conditions as Standard 3.1.7 is not fully met.

There are currently four 4th year programs of study, including a Graduate Diploma and a four year sequence program, Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) (Graded and Ungraded).

There will be very few of the end-on degree students in honour programs from 2016 since the 3 year sequence in these 3 year degrees is no longer being offered.

Entry for all 4th year programs is via an APAC accredited sequence completed in the last 10 years. Programs are 100% psychology.

Coursework units are Advanced Methodology, Critical Issues and Controversies in Psychology and Pre-Professional Psychology, and research units are the Advanced Psychology Project A and B or Psychology Research Project A and B.

The three ('end-on') degrees are identical to the fourth year of the 4 year Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) (Graded). A number of finished projects and reports together with examiners' comments of a range of marks were inspected and appear to be of an appropriate standard. The format of the research project is via a separate literature review and full report. Standards for the research project are met.

A range of assessment procedures is used, with a described detailed policy for marking of research projects, examinations, assignments, feedback and moderation, all of which are thorough and detailed. A suitable appeals process is outlined in the handbook to all students. There is an adequate procedure for resolution of marking differences for the research project.

The Bachelor of Arts (Honours), Bachelor of Science (Honours), Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) and Graduate Diploma in Psychology received a grade of Accreditation Without Conditions.

There are two 4 year sequence programs of study. Both are given an identical name: Bachelor of Psychology (Honours). One is called colloquially 'Graded stream' and the other 'Ungraded stream', though students from both streams graduate with the same nomenclature degree. They meet all Standards for the first 3 years, except for Standard 3.1.7, and 4th year programs separately.

The AOU is commended for the design of core Pre-Professional Units from Years 1 to 4 to introduce skills to all students to aspects of professional psychology, including the use of psychometric tests.

The AOU currently offers a Master of Clinical Psychology and a Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology) at the postgraduate level. These postgraduate programs are offered at the Callaghan campus. There are no postgraduate programs taught at the Ourimbah campus, although an outreach of the Psychology Clinic is scheduled to commence there next year. In 2016 APAC will inspect the suitability of facilities and operation of the new Clinic at the Ourimbah campus (Standard 5.3.20).

The postgraduate clinical programs meet the staffing and student to staff ratio requirements as set out in the Standard. All staff members listed as responsible for practical placement supervision associated with the Clinical programs are registered psychologists and satisfy the qualification requirements of the Standard.

The School of Psychology has a clinic located at the Callaghan campus with 4 interview rooms that are equipped with the necessary observational and recording equipment and are appropriately furnished. There is a large student work room with 5 workstations. In 2016, the School has plans to commence a further psychology clinic service in Ourimbah, where the plan is to offer psychological services to the central coast community one day a week initially and then build it up from there.

The test library is located on the Callaghan campus and holds a wide number of tests. The test library can be accessed by fourth year students and Masters students, and seems to be working well in meeting the needs of both cohorts of students. When the new clinic opens in Ourimbah in 2016, there will be a separate test library for that location. APAC will inspect the new clinic.

Standard University policy and procedures, and APAC accreditation Standards are followed with regard to credit for previous study and/or experience. The entry requirements Standards for the Master of Clinical Psychology are met. The Advisory/Liaison and Quality Review Committee meets twice a year and has the required membership to meet the Standard.

Assessors met with the staff, inspected teaching materials, assessment information, completed assignments, theses, log books excerpts and supervisors' reports. They also met with students and field supervisors. In relation to assessment, the forms of assessment used in the Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) are varied (e.g., essays, clinical vivas, exams, role plays, case studies and presentations,) and many have an applied focus appropriate to professional training. Documented evidence was presented with regard to assessment procedures used to assess the core capabilities and the passing grade for students was set at 50%. The Standard for Core Capabilities and Attributes is met. However Standards for Core Capabilities Assessment are not met. (Standards 5.1.14-15 and 5.1.18)

The logbooks were available for inspection on site and each student's logbook sighted was comprehensive and signed by the supervisor. The Standard for log books is met.

The Master of Clinical Psychology is a two-year FTE course. It is not offered in accelerated mode. The Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology) program requires four years FTE.

There are three main components in the course which are integrated: coursework, research and practical placement. The students are required to pass each of the three components in order to successfully complete the degree.

In addition to the specialist content, and the attention to the core capabilities outlined in Standard 5.1.12, the content specified in Standard 5.3.9 is not covered. The content related to the National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce is absent from the program. Standards 5.3.9 - 5.3.10 are not met.

Also, there is one core coursework unit in the Masters degree, PSYC6606 Facilitating Best Practice Healthcare, which is not present in the PhD (Clinical Psychology) Course Schedule. Hence there is not equivalence between the Masters Coursework and Placements components and the Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology). Standard 2.3.11 is not met.

The research training that the students receive in the Master of Clinical Psychology is appropriate and the research project must be relevant to the focus of the program. At least one member of the AOU staff with a doctorate is the principal supervisor and at least one of two examiners is external to the University of Newcastle. Master of Clinical Psychology students are able to apply for a position in the Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology) program after the first year of study.

Prior to their first placement experience, all students receive training in professional and ethical practice, including interviewing, testing and assessment. The students complete a total of four placements, and at least one of these takes place in the internal psychology clinic. Students do complete the requisite number of hours of placement, face-to-face work and supervision. There is a variety of placement opportunities available for students and their placement experiences were reported as being very positive and often lead to employment. The external supervisors with whom the accreditation assessors met spoke highly of the students they had supervised to-date.

Not all of the reports written by students on placements sighted had been signed by the responsible supervisor and on further discussion with the field supervisors, many commented that they do not see these case reports at all. Standard 5.3.22 is not met.

An appropriately qualified staff member is responsible for the placements and appropriate procedures are in place for monitoring the student's performance. Supervisory contracts are drawn up and are signed at the beginning of each placement. There is a mid-placement and end of placement review in place between the placement supervisor and the student and completed, signed evaluations are forwarded to the placement coordinator.

Standards for Practical Placements with the exception of Standard 5.3.22 are met. The Master of Clinical Psychology and the Inspection of the suitability of facilities and operation of the new Clinic at Ourimbah campus received the grade of Accreditation With Conditions.

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: University of Newcastle

Date of Site Visit: 18 – 20 August 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	✓		



Four Year Sequence Program of Study	Standard Number	Satisfied	Not Yet Satisfied	N/A
Program of Study Structure	3.1.2-5 /4.1.3	✓		
Program of Study Content (Years 1 - 4)	3.1.6-7 /4.1.4-7		✓	
Research Methods and Professional and Research Ethics	4.1.8	✓		
Research Project	4.1.9-15	✓		
Assessment	3.1.11-16 /4.1.16-17	✓		
Assessment of 4 th Year Research Project	4.1.18-20	✓		
Awarding of Credit or Advance Standing	3.1.17-19	✓		

Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study within the Master of Clinical Psychology	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 within the Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology)	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:

Professor John Dunn
Chair, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council

Date: 3 December 2015