



APAC Accreditation Assessment Summary Report

<b>Higher Education Provider</b>	<b>University of Tasmania (TAS), Hobart and Launceston campuses</b>	
<b>Date of determination</b>	<b>5 December 2016</b>	
<b>Standards version</b>	<b>June 2010 ver 10</b>	
<b>Programs of Study Assessed for Accreditation</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>Campus</b>
	<p><b>Three year:</b>            Bachelor of Arts            Bachelor of Psychological Science            (previously Bachelor of Behavioural Science)            Bachelor of Science            Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Business            Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws            Bachelor of Psychological Science/Bachelor of Laws            Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science</p> <p><b>4<sup>th</sup> year:</b>            Bachelor of Arts with Honours            Bachelor of Science with Honours            Bachelor of Psychological Science with Honours (previously Bachelor of Behavioural Science with Honours)</p> <p><b>Four year:</b>            Bachelor of Psychology with Honours</p> <p><b>5<sup>th</sup> year:</b>            Master of Professional Psychology</p> <p><b>5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> years:</b>            Master of Psychology (Clinical)            Master of Psychology /Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical)</p>	<p>Hobart, Launceston            Hobart, Launceston</p> <p>Hobart, Launceston            Hobart, Launceston            Hobart            Hobart, Launceston            Hobart, Launceston</p> <p>Hobart, Launceston            Hobart, Launceston            Hobart, Launceston</p> <p>Hobart, Launceston</p> <p>Hobart</p> <p>Hobart            Hobart</p>

This is a summary of the outcomes of an APAC accreditation assessment of the Division of Psychology in the School of Medicine at the University of Tasmania (Hobart and Launceston campuses) 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.

In 2012, there was a restructuring of Schools within existing Faculties at the University of Tasmania, and the then School of Psychology transferred from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology to the Faculty of Health Science. In 2013, the Faculty of Health Science was reconstituted into the Faculty of Health, with two large schools: School of Medicine in Hobart and the School of Health Sciences in Launceston. In 2014, the existing School of Psychology became the Division of Psychology such that the recognised Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) is located in the School of Medicine and has maintained an identifiable core with a recognised Head of Psychology.

The Psychology AOU conducts a range of research in general and specialist areas of psychological inquiry. Staff at both campuses reported that they would like to be more actively involved in conducting and publishing their research work, however, the current staffing situation (some academic appointments are yet to be filled) and the lack of senior leadership roles are putting a great deal of strain on the current staff at both campuses. Interviews with the academic staff indicated that the research milieu was near absent for most, with many commenting on the lack of time and support to pursue their research agendas. Despite this, Standard 2.1.3 was deemed met as there has been a long history of research which has been achieved by psychology staff at UTAS and this was reflected in the staffing profile presented by the AOU.

The Head of the AOU has sufficient influential academic and administrative control over the function of the Division. The Division of Psychology's budget is managed by the Head of the AOU, in collaboration with the Head of the School of Medicine. Administrative resources do not seem to be provided for ongoing and regular support for teaching and research activities of the AOU. Currently there is no administrative support for the academic staff in Launceston but a 0.5 FTE position is planned for that campus sometime this year.

The Division of Psychology is a multi-campus AOU, with undergraduate, including fourth year, courses offered in both Launceston and Hobart and the postgraduate courses offered only in Hobart. The Launceston and Hobart campuses are separated by an approximately two hour car trip and so students are enrolled in either the Launceston or Hobart campuses. There is a total of 20 academic psychology staff across both campuses with 15 based in Hobart and five academic staff in Launceston (a new staff member commenced the day after the team conducted the site visit to that campus).

The AOU offers a stand-alone fifth year program of study. The nomenclature of this program (Master of Professional Psychology) does not meet the nomenclature Standard of 2.3.8 and will not do so until the *APAC Standards* come into line with the AQF requirements. Standard 2.3.8 is not met for this program only.

The structure of the courses that the students are enrolled in is equivalent across campuses, with most sharing the same course outline and assessment. In third year and Honours, lectures are delivered by videoconference, and all practical classes are in face-to-face mode.

With regard to the staffing requirements needed for a multi-campus institution, Standard 2.4.11 states that eight FTE academic staff be located at the Launceston campus or courses should be supported by technology and/or other modes to assist with the distance education component of the courses. There are five staff at Launceston. This is in breach of the Standard as the team was not confident that the technology available to students and staff at Launceston could not be deemed equivalent to the eight staff FTE requirement. There were many comments made by staff and students about the inadequacy of the videoconference, with students in Launceston reporting that it is not unusual for the video link to be severed five or 10 minutes before the end of the lecture/seminar. The shared IT support available to staff and students seems to be overstretched at times with staff commenting on the amount of time taken to rectify a technical problem if it occurs.

Furthermore, this same Standard requires a Level D appointment at Launceston, which is not the case, and at least two Level C appointments, when there is only one Level C appointment. This Standard is thus not met at present and the AOU has accreditation with this condition.

All the other general accreditation *Standards* for the AOU, including degree nomenclature, staffing, resources and the management of the learning process, were met.

The three year sequence is offered in three courses plus four double degrees containing the sequence. All the relevant *Standards* for the structure and content of three year courses are met except for Standard 3.1.14. Although University documentation provided evidence of rigorous policies regarding benchmarking processes, it will be important for the Division of Psychology to undergo regular benchmarking activities to ensure external independent moderation practices are followed and acted upon. The Division of Psychology intends to begin the implementation of an external benchmarking process in 2017.

The 4<sup>th</sup> year course is offered in three different degrees but the sequence is identical in all of them. All of the *Standards* are met in relation to structure, content, research and assessment with the exception of parts of Standard 4.2.1 as follows:

Dot point 1: advanced theoretical and empirical knowledge in some of the core research areas of the discipline. It could not be ascertained if this was covered adequately. Staff and the application pointed primarily to the unit Advanced Topics in Psychology, but this unit lasts for only 10 weeks (instead of the 13 weeks for the other coursework units) and was reportedly changed every year. No actual syllabus was sighted.

Dot point 3: knowledge of the theoretical basis underpinning evidence based approaches to psychological intervention. The site team formed the impression that this was done insufficiently but it was suggested that the new clinical appointment should be able to expand this focus.

Dot point 4: understanding and explaining how the science and practice of psychology is influenced by social, historical, professional and cultural contexts. This requirement appeared to be covered insufficiently and should be developed further.

There is a single four year course that is identical to the three sequence plus the fourth year. Progression to the 4<sup>th</sup> year within the Bachelor of Psychology with Honours occurs only for students who have attained an average of 75% in Years 2 and 3 of the eight units in the major sequence. Students who do not attain this standard exit with a Bachelor of Psychological Science degree or can apply for entry to the Bachelor of Psychological Science with Honours. Also, students who complete Years 1 and 2

of the accredited three year sequences with academic merit can apply to transfer to the Bachelor of Psychology with Honours degree to enter at Year 3.

The *Standard* is met for the four year sequence, noting those Standards that are not met for the AOU and for the three year and 4th year sequences.

In the postgraduate professional courses, the overall staffing requirements are met. The ratio of staff to students is 8:1 for the Master of Psychology (Clinical) and 4.2:1 for the Master of Professional Psychology.

The CVs of external supervisors were provided and checked against the current AHPRA database. The AOU has provided board-accredited supervisor training for 67 local psychologists, many of whom act as practicum supervisors. It was noted that external supervisors are used for both the internal clinic practicum and the external practicum components, and that faculty staff do not contribute to the clinical supervision of the students.

A quality review committee comprising course staff, the UTAS clinic director and representatives of external supervisors meets annually. Student representatives are also invited, although the interviews with the students indicated that there was a lack of awareness as to who the current representatives were.

The test library, UTAS psychology clinic rooms, main library, computer lab facilities and psychology lab were visited, and both staff and students were interviewed to ascertain their quality and availability. Broad facilities were available to students, with adequate access to suitably equipped computers, lab space and test equipment. The UTAS psychology clinic is in a stand-alone building on the Hobart campus, and whilst space is clearly at a premium, it is well organised and contains sufficient equipment for observation of students work.

Whilst the content of the courses sufficiently addresses the required capabilities and attributes in most aspects, some parts of the required ethical, legal and professional matters (advertising and billing practices) did not appear to be covered. Standard 5.1.12 (b) is not met

Examples of anonymised student log books were inspected. The format employed (a continuous and contiguous record across both years of training) adequately allows for the differentiation between individual and group supervision, and clearly records the appropriate information regarding the total amount of supervision received and in what setting the supervision was delivered. Similarly, the log books provide an adequate summary of the clinical work undertaken, its length and location. All entries were appropriately countersigned.

The learning undertaken by the students is assessed using a variety of appropriate formats, including written exams, case reports, role plays, videoed examples of therapy and assessment technique, oral examinations and direct observation.

The Master of Professional Psychology comprises an appropriate mixture of coursework and practical skills (both simulated and real-life) training. Students are prepared for their subsequent practical placements (a commendable feature of the course) and a subsequent sixth year of supervised practice using a mixture of theoretical and practical approaches. As well as the expected preparation in the theoretical components of psychological practice, students are provided with a simulated learning

experience that was broadly praised by the students who had attended it. This provides students with an innovative simulated clinical learning experience, and is assessed through the use of role plays and critical reflection. As the students had not yet been on placement, and no external supervisors for the practicum component of the course were available to interview, the supervision arrangements could not be adequately assessed.

Note that until the APAC *Accreditation Standards* align with the AQF, the Master of Professional Psychology, the nomenclature of which does not meet Standard 2.3.8, can only receive accreditation with conditions. Otherwise, the *Standards* are met except for Standard 5.1.12 (b).

All of the units that comprise the fifth and sixth years of the Master of Psychology (Clinical) (and the Master of Psychology/Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical)) cover the expected core theoretical topics as well as the important components of skills teaching and research methodology. The log books provided indicated that the students are receiving an adequate amount of placement experience and that their hours exceed the minimum. The work of each student is checked twice per year for overall progress to ensure that they are passing each aspect (coursework, practical work and research) of the course.

Despite the broad and well integrated coverage of clinical theory, practice and research offered by the majority of the material in the units, there was limited evidence of the provision of teaching designed to develop practice management skills. It was clear from interviewing the students that subjects such as billing and the National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce were absent. Standard 5.3.9 is not met.

The practical placements are organised by an appropriately qualified clinical psychologist employed by the AOU. Ongoing learning, critical reflection and skills testing are provided throughout the remainder of the curriculum. All students commence their practical skills training in the UTAS clinic, which is supervised by appropriately qualified psychologists drawn from the local community. Students complete the required amount of practical. A discussion with the UTAS Psychology Clinic Director (who also acts as the placement coordinator) indicated that the clients seen in the UTAS psychology clinic are an appropriately varied mix of adult and child clients, with opportunities for students to develop both their therapy and psychological testing skills. The placement coordinator, and the individual external supervisor who met with the assessment team, indicated that a broad range of external placements are available. Clinical work and supervision is appropriately logged and countersigned, and contains the permissible mixture of individual and group formats. No distance supervision was noted as being undertaken. Both mid placement and end of placement reviews are undertaken, and example paperwork was provided.

All the *Standards* for the fifth and sixth Masters courses of professional education are met with the exception of Standard 5.3.9 (coursework content)

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 Tasmania

Date of Site Visit: 5-7 July 2016

### 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>Four Year Sequence Program of Study</b>	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 <sup>th</sup> Year Research Project	4.1.18-20	✓		
Awarding of Credit or Advance Standing	3.1.17-19	✓		
<b>Master of Professional Psychology (5<sup>th</sup> Year) 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 Studies	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	5.2.1-2	✓		
Length	5.2.3	✓		
Program of Study Structure	5.2.4-6	✓		
Coursework	5.2.7	✓		
Practica and Skills Training	5.2.8-18	✓		



<b>Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Program of Study - Clinical</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	✓		

**Comments:**

**Master of Professional Psychology – 5<sup>th</sup> year program**

Until APAC Standard 2.3.8 (June 2010) aligns with the current AQF specifications, this program of study can only obtain a grade of ACCREDITATION WITH CONDITIONS.

**Authorised:**

Professor Simon Crowe  
**Chair, Australian Psychology Accreditation Council**

**Date:** 5 December 2016