

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Master of Social Sciences in the field of Psychology
Credit Unit Statement

The Master of Social Sciences in the field of Psychology curriculum consists of three types of courses: research methods courses, core psychology courses and a dissertation.

The research methods and core psychology courses are semester courses each carrying 6 credits, representing 2-3 hours of instruction each week for 13 weeks. Students are required to participate in the problem-based inquiry in each course. For each 6-credit course, the contact hours and study load are 26-39 hours and 120 hours respectively. The dissertation is a full-year 12-credit course. The contact hours and study load for dissertation are 27 hours and 240 hours respectively.

The total contact hours and total study load for the programme are 235-339 hours and 1,200 hours respectively. Students are required to complete 2 research methods courses, 6 core psychology courses, and an empirical research dissertation (total: 60 credits).

The postgraduate seminar courses are replacement courses for exempted courses only. Students are required to take one of the postgraduate seminar courses in lieu of each exempted course. They are semester courses each carrying 6 credits, representing 1.5-2 hours of instruction per week. The contact hours and study load are 19.5-26 hours and 120 hours respectively.

1. *Research methods courses (semester course, 6 credits each)*

Students are required to complete two research methods courses, to gain mastery of the quantitative skills necessary for conducting and understanding research in the field of Psychology. Assessment stresses regular homework to ensure that statistical procedures have been well-learned, along with a written proposal/report of a research project (about 1,000 words) and/or test(s). (100% coursework)

2. *Core psychology courses (semester course, 6 credits each)*

Students are required to complete six courses, each covering a core area of Psychology (i.e. Biological, Cognitive, Developmental, Personality, Social, and Abnormal Psychology). Studies in each course cover a mixture of historically significant findings along with cutting-edge research reports. Assessment includes laboratory reports and essays (1,000-4,000 words), performance in class discussion, projects, and/or test(s). (100% coursework)

3. *Dissertation (full-year course, 12 credits) (capstone experience)*

Each student should conduct an independent empirical investigation of a psychological problem under the supervision of a faculty member. Students will work on the dissertation

for 10 months (from September to end of June), for a total of 12 credits, receiving about 27 contact hours of individual supervision from a supervisor. A successful dissertation should represent the result of the candidate's research which displays some originality and demonstrates a sound understanding of the field of study and the appropriate research methods. The dissertation should not exceed 15,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices). (100% coursework)

4. Postgraduate seminar courses (semester course, 6 credits each)

The postgraduate seminar courses are replacement courses for exempted courses only. Students are required to take one of the following postgraduate seminar courses in lieu of each exempted course:

PSYC7021 Postgraduate seminar in cognitive psychology /
PSYC7022 Postgraduate seminar in social psychology /
PSYC7023 Postgraduate seminar in developmental psychology

- These seminar courses cover recent developments in the field of Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, or Developmental Psychology, concentrating particularly on theoretical debates and empirical results that are likely to have considerable impact on the field. Theoretical and empirical articles will be read each week, and discussed in class. Discussions will be led by both the instructor and students in the class. Assessment includes presentation, in-class discussion and writing assignments (1,000-2,000 words). (100% coursework)

PSYC6025 Postgraduate seminar in scientific writing for psychology

- This seminar course addresses writing skills in relation to Psychological research. Students will engage in a series of assignments designed to improve the fluency and quality of their writing. Particular efforts will be focused on improving the conceptual clarity of writing. Regular feedback will help students improve upon their writing skills. The assessment is mainly based on writing assignments (2,000-4,000 words). (100% coursework)