

MRes Psychology 2026/27

Description



The University of Manchester

MRes Psychology

Student Handbook

Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

School of Health Sciences, Division of Psychology, Communication and Human Neuroscience

2026/27

General Information

School of Health Sciences Student Handbook

[Click here to access.](#)

You will need your University of Manchester login.

The student handbook has been developed as a resource for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students completing degree programmes within the School of Health Sciences (SHS).

This resource should be used as the first point of reference for questions concerning your programme, support and advice, or academic policies and procedures.

The University of Manchester is a large and complex organisation, and we want to ensure that you know how to access the information, support, and guidance you need to succeed in your studies. It is therefore designed to guide you through many aspects of your time as a student and provides useful links to information available through the University's website, as well as summarising the facilities and support services that are available across the University and how you can access them. It also outlines what you should expect of the School and what they can expect from you, and clarifies the policies and procedures relevant to your area of study.

Academic Structure

The overarching aim is to offer students a broad and balanced thorough education in Psychology, Human Neuroscience, Human Communication, Speech/Language Therapy, Deaf Education or Audiology within an institutional culture of high-quality research and scholarship. Specific aims are to:

Deliver a range of specialist degrees, informed by current research, which equip students for careers within psychology, neuroscience, speech/language therapy, audiology, deaf education, teaching, and related areas, or which enhance their existing careers and the service they provide.

Maintain and develop high standards of teaching, research and scholarship in an environment which encourages the exchange of knowledge and ideas across professions.

Develop in partnership with students their subject-specific knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, practical, clinical and professional skills, and transferable skills, accessed from an integrated curriculum.

Develop a variety of teaching methods and assessment strategies to meet programme objectives, student and/or employer needs.

Provide students with effective induction information, academic and pastoral support, in order to enhance their academic and personal development and to encourage the acquisition of qualifications, knowledge, skills and understanding appropriate to their abilities.

Provide appropriate laboratory, clinical, library, and other facilities to ensure a high-quality learning environment.

Promote a commitment to professional development, independent study and lifelong learning.

Develop collaborative working practice in teaching, clinical work, and research with other academic colleagues, and with external services.

The External Examiner for this programme is: Dr Christoph Scheepers
Name of Institution: University of Glasgow

Key Contact Details

Programme Directors

Dr Martyn McFarquhar: martyn.mcfarquhar@manchester.ac.uk

Dr Anna Woollams: anna.woollams@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Structure

Welcome to the School of Health Sciences at the University of Manchester. This programme handbook provides details of the University of Manchester MRes Psychology programme leading to either MRes Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuropsychology and MRes Experimental Psychology with Data Science, including information about the aims and learning outcomes, structure, content, admissions, assessment and programme management. It should be read in conjunction with related University documentation. This handbook contains details of the general course structure, together with other useful information about the School.

We hope that your time here in Manchester will be productive and enjoyable.

Introduction to MRes Psychology

This pathway has two programmes within it, which are as follows:

1. [MRes Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuropsychology](#)
2. [MRes Experimental Psychology with Data Science](#)

This course will prepare you for a successful research career in experimental psychology, cognitive neuroscience or neuropsychology. You will undertake a year-long research project, supported by

taught units for comprehensive research skills training. The major advantage of this course is that you will put the acquired research skills into practice by working with experts in the field for the entire year. Our supervisors have a wide range of expertise, and we will try to make sure your research project is tailored towards your research interest.

Through the taught units, you will receive a strong grounding in the theoretical understanding and practical experience of key research paradigms, research designs and statistical techniques used in experimental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and neuropsychology. You will also develop transferable skills training for careers outside academia, including data science skills, science communication, and patient, public and business engagement.

We have a long tradition of producing internationally renowned research and highquality research training.

Our MRes course is endorsed by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and constitutes the first year of ESRC 1+3 postgraduate PhD studentships awarded through the [ESRC Northwest Doctoral Training College](#) for full-time, part-time and CASE students.

PhD with integrated master's

If you're planning to undertake a PhD after your master's, our [Integrated PhD programme](#) will enable you to combine your postgraduate taught course with a related PhD project in biology, medicine or health.

Programme Overview: MRes Cognitive Neuroscience and Neuropsychology

The course unit details given below are subject to change, and are the latest example of the curriculum available on this course of study.

Title	Code	Credit Rating	Mandatory/Optional
Advanced Data Skills, Open Science and Reproducibility	PCHN63101	15	Mandatory
Mixed Models, Hackathon and Bayesian Statistics Workshop	PCHN63112	15	Mandatory

Contemporary Research Skills	PCHN63151 15	Mandatory
Dissertation	PCHN63160 90	Mandatory
Research in Neuropsychology and Clinical Neuroscience	PCHN63172 15	Mandatory
Cognitive and Social Neuroscience	PCHN63182 15	Mandatory
Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods	POPH63121 15	Mandatory

Programme Overview: MRes Experimental Psychology with Data Science

The course unit details given below are subject to change, and are the latest example of the curriculum available on this course of study.

Title	Code	Credit Rating	Mandatory/Optional
Advanced Data Skills, Open Science and Reproducibility	PCHN63101 15		Mandatory

Mixed Models, Hackathon and Bayesian Statistics Workshop	PCHN63112 15	Mandatory
Research Methods in Experimental Psychology	PCHN63122 15	Mandatory
Contemporary Research Skills	PCHN63151 15	Mandatory
Dissertation Scientific Programming, Computational Tools and Machine Learning	PCHN63160 90	Mandatory
Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods	POPH63121 15	Mandatory

Detailed information about all the course units covered is provided in the Syllabus Booklets.

Dissertation information for students

For information on layout and presentation of dissertations see the Guidance for the Presentation of Taught Masters Dissertations.

1. You need to stick to the format for dissertations outlined in the Faculty guidelines. If something isn't specified in the guidelines (for example, if you want to number sections), try to follow a fairly standard format, for example APA format or the format adopted in University PhD theses.

2. We do not insist on APA format, but you should consult your supervisor. Whatever format you choose, you should be consistent throughout your dissertation.

3. The word limit is between 10,000 – 15,000 words but the –norm is approx. 12,000. The dissertation module follows the University’s Policy on Marking and the Assignment Word Count Guideline which you will find on page 13 above but you cannot exceed the 15,000 word limit. We suggest as guidance a lower limit of 10,000. In practice, 12,000 words is likely to be appropriate for most people, but this may not be true for all projects. It’s best to talk to your supervisor if your word count is going to be lower to ensure you are covering all the relevant info. Students should be aware that the dissertation forms a substantial piece of work, and as such, the literature review should be thorough and will generally include more information than you might find in a journal article on the same topic. However, we recognise that different types of project have different requirements in terms of the amount of information needed in Methods sections and Results sections, and some may lend themselves to longer Discussions of results than others. You should therefore seek guidance from your supervisors who are experts in your field of research. As your supervisor will also be one of the two markers for your dissertation, they are the best people to consult.

The reason we have strict word limits is to encourage students to write concisely. It should be entirely possible to write both quantitative and qualitative dissertations in 15,000 words. We use the length of a journal article in the field as a gauge here, and it is uncommon to have standard articles of longer than 15,000 words accepted for publication. Consider placing some text (where appropriate) in Appendices.

4. There are no guidelines for the number of words allocated to each section of the dissertation as projects differ widely. However, bear in mind that your Introduction and Discussion are usually related. So if you discuss a wide range of background literature to motivate your study, the reader will expect to see reference to this literature in your Discussion. It would be unusual to introduce a large body of research in your discussion that had not previously been mentioned in your Introduction, or analyses that were not in your Results. Method sections should be succinct but contain sufficient information for someone to replicate your study.

5. You can use footnotes but these will be included in your word count.

6. Your dissertation will be marked by your supervisor and one other person. They will then agree a mark. A selection of dissertations will be sent to our external examiners. Their role is to check that marking is consistent, and to advise us if they think any marks are inappropriate. They always see borderline dissertations (those on the borderline between degree classifications), fails, distinctions, and any where two markers disagree substantially on the mark to be awarded (this rarely happens in practice), plus a handful of others.

7. You do not need to include all of your data in the Appendices, although it might be helpful to include sample data, especially if you have an elaborate coding scheme. It is generally good practice to include (a sample of) your materials, for example if you have designed questionnaires, used a series of sentences or visual stimuli for your task and so on. You do not need to include all your ethics application, but you may wish to include advertisements for participants if you think it is relevant to your project, for example if the advert is likely to have attracted a particular kind of participant that may have influenced your results in some way.
8. You do not have to use Endnote for your references, although of course you may do so if you wish.
9. You must put your ethical approval form in your appendix. If approval was sought by your supervisor prior to working on the project, you will need to ask them for a copy.
10. Finally, the best person to consult for guidance is your supervisor. But if anyone has any other questions, please feel free to email the Programme Directors and they will do their best to advise.

Marking

Always check with your supervisor what they are looking for when marking the work. Supervisors will be provided with the guidelines below (subject to change â?? up to date guidance will be provided during the course of the year):

15% Context / Background / Introduction

15% Literature Review / Case for the Study 20% Design of Study or Methods
20% Results

20% Discussion

10% Presentation and Referencing

Supervisory Arrangements

All Graduate Research Students are allocated a Supervisor. Supervision is governed by the University Manual of Academic Procedures, which outlines in more detail the responsibilities of the Supervisor and the Student. Briefly, the responsibilities of the Supervisor include: giving guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected; the planning of the research programme; and pointing the Student towards relevant literature and other sources of information.

The relationship between the Student and his/her Supervisor is of central importance. Both the Student and the Supervisor have a responsibility to ensure that the dissertation

is completed within the prescribed period of the programme. Supervisors and students should establish at their initial meeting clear and explicit expectations of each other in order to minimise the risks and problems of misunderstanding, personality clashes, inadequate supervision and unsatisfactory work. Timetables for Progress Monitoring meetings must be closely observed. It should be noted that in some instances students may be jointly supervised by staff, and be assigned a principal and second supervisor.

During induction, you will be asked to identify areas of interest or research ideas. The Dissertation Unit Lead will then allocate a supervisor with expertise in your chosen areas. Whilst it is not always possible to allocate students to the supervisor of choice, every attempt will be made to match students to a research area of their choice.

Supervisor Availability

It is the responsibility of the student to liaise with their research project supervisor to arrange supervision meetings, and to agree on deadlines around reading drafts. We recommend discussing availability and other practical aspects of meeting (when, where, how supervision will take place) in the first supervisory meeting, and booking in supervision meeting dates in advance.

Supervisors sometimes become unavailable unexpectedly, for example due to illness. Where a supervisor is unavailable and you have an urgent issue that needs resolution, you can contact your academic advisor for further advice or support. If they are also unavailable you can also contact the programme directors, or the dissertation lead for further advice or support.

Distressing Material

This programme will inevitably contain information that is potentially distressing for a number of reasons.

First, the topics of clinical and health psychology entail distress, in that the people who see clinical and health psychologists are often in distress, sometimes at a severe and urgent level. Whilst it is not necessary to reproduce this level of distress in the teaching materials, it is necessary to refer to it and describe the topics and concerns that clients experience.

Second, it is often critical to know the experiences of people who have mental or physical health problems in order to understand why they have the symptoms that they experience; as we shall see, very few psychiatric symptoms are ‘inexplicable’ from a psychological perspective, and the explanation can provide support for the theory,

research and forms of practice involved.

Third, learning about the distress experienced by other people can bring about empathy and a willingness to try to provide the most appropriate help.

Fourth, this programme involves some involvement by people with lived experience of mental health problems. We have made sure to select people with substantial experience speaking to groups, and have who have experienced a substantial recovery since the most distressing periods of their lives. Nonetheless, they may describe personal experiences or have personal opinions that could be distressing.

We regard this as a necessary minimal risk to weigh against the huge potential benefits of their involvement, but we do value your feedback on this.

Despite the above reasons for providing potentially distressing material in the teaching, it is also essential that, as a student, you feel in control and fully informed about what you are going to be informed about. For this reason, we have made great efforts not to include material that might be distressing unless it is directly relevant to the learning aims of the session. Also, the introduction to each lecture will include information about potentially distressing material. I would also like to advise the following:

1. Please contact your academic advisor if you have been significantly distressed by any material in the They can help to address any issues for yourself or any other students who might be affected.
2. If you wish to miss a specific session because of the potentially distressing material in that session, you may do so without having to give any more details. However, you will need to contact the lecturer or unit lead at least 48 hours in advance to inform them that you will not be attending for this reason.
3. If you are attending a session and you feel that you need to leave owing to your level of distress, you can leave immediately without giving any reason or explanation. It is not uncommon for students to leave a session early for a wide range of reasons and lectures are informed not to draw attention to or comment on this.

To summarise, all teaching staff have attempted to balance the requirement for clinically relevant material and accounts of lived experience against the potential for producing distress, by providing the necessary information in advance and the option for you, as students, to make your own decisions about how and whether to engage with the material.

Chatham House Rule

We recognise that students may have lived experience and/or work experience of issues that are covered in the MSc. Students may choose to share their experiences in classes although they should not feel compelled to if they do not want to. We ask students to follow the Chatham House Rule – “When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.”•

This is to encourage inclusive and open dialogue but protect the identity of those who are speaking.