



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

School of Psychology

# M.Sc. Applied Psychology 2024-2025



## Welcome to the MSc in Applied Psychology course.

The aim of this handbook is to help you find your way around your psychology course details and requirements and describe the facilities and functions of the School of Psychology. It is intended to complement information found in the Graduate & Students' Union Handbook and the University Calendar. The latter includes details of university regulations and procedures and may be consulted in the School office, TCD web, or Berkeley Library.

The information provided in this handbook is accurate at the time of preparation. Any necessary revisions will be notified to students via email and amended versions will be made available to you on the School's website. Please note that, in the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the General Regulations published in the University Calendar Part III and information contained in course handbooks, the provisions of the General Regulations will prevail. **It is important that this handbook is read in conjunction with the University Of Dublin Calendar, Part III <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/>**

The course has been designed to have relevance to applied and professional psychology. This also includes relevance to the various roles that psychologists may undertake in the private, public, and voluntary sectors that may be without the normal professional designations. The range of optional modules on the course has been devised in order to provide students with suitable subject matter for study that will enhance and develop knowledge and applied practice in their chosen arenas of professional and career development. The core focus of the course as a whole is on facilitating students in developing knowledge and skills surrounding evidence-based practice under the aegis of the scientist-practitioner model.

The course is now in its seventeenth year, and all aspects of its provision and delivery have been thought through and carried out thoroughly. Nevertheless, I welcome any feedback from students that might promote or provoke development or improvement in the course. In any event, I hope that you will have both an academically fruitful and personally enriching experience here; and I also hope that it proves to be enjoyable.



**Professor Tim Trimble**

**Course Director**

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## 1. Course Overview

The M.Sc. Applied Psychology (Level 9) is designed to provide students with a general awareness of the problems of applying psychology, a knowledge of skills required to apply it effectively and a detailed understanding of their chosen focus of application. The themes of analysis, intervention and evaluation are central to the structure and philosophy of the course. The core modules provide training in research methods and professional issues.

Optional modules enable the further development of these competencies and knowledge while enabling students to consider their application in specified content areas. Applicants are required to hold at least an upper second-class honours degree in psychology or its equivalent from a recognised university course, which confers eligibility for graduate registration with the Psychological Society of Ireland or an equivalent professional body in the case of overseas applicants.

The course lasts for one year in the full-time mode.

The following two core modules are **compulsory** and will be offered every year:

- Philosophical and Professional Issues in Applied Psychology, and
- Research Methodology and Statistics.

A range of applied optional modules will be offered each year and students must take four of these modules. The following is a list of currently available modules\*:

- Theory of Psychotherapy
- Applied Psychology
- Applied Forensic Psychology
- Psychology Applied to Lifespan Behavioural and Emotional Problems
- Issues in Clinical Psychology and Intellectual Disability
- Issues in Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology
- Counselling Skills

*(\*Not all modules are offered in every year)*

## 1.1 Assessment and Appeal

Candidates shall be assessed throughout the course by:

- Written examination
- Coursework
- A combination of examination and coursework
- A dissertation based on an empirical project

In order to be awarded the degree of Master of Science in Applied Psychology, candidates must satisfy the Court of Examiners by passing all six of the taught modules of the course and by obtaining a pass on the dissertation. Each taught module will contribute 11% of the overall assessment and the dissertation will contribute 34%. The pass mark for each module and for the dissertation is 50%.

Where a module involves more than one assessment all items of assessment must be passed. Candidates are normally expected to pass all taught modules and the dissertation. However, failure in one taught module may be permitted provided there is evidence of work of sufficient merit in other modules as determined by the Court of Examiners. Students who fail to satisfy the Court of Examiners in any module may be permitted at the discretion of the Court to represent themselves on one occasion only for supplementary written work or examination. Where a student is required to take such supplementary work or examination the original mark in the failed module will be replaced by 50% in the case of a successful outcome. Any candidate who fails any piece of supplementary coursework or repeat examination will be required to withdraw from the programme. A candidate who fails more than three modules at the first attempt will be required to withdraw from the programme.

All taught Master's degrees may be awarded a mark of Distinction. The award of a taught Master's with Distinction shall require the achievement of a distinction for the dissertation and three or more grades of distinction of the six modules completed. A distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study. Any student whose dissertation does not merit a distinction will receive an overall result of 'Pass'.

**N.B. Please note that an appeal to any examination result must be made to the Course Director strictly no later than one week from the date of publication of results.** Grounds for appeal are laid out in the **College Calendar, III,**

**1.30.** Inter alia, they state that:

*"Having received information about their examination, assessment and dissertation results and having discussed these and their performance with the appropriate academic staff members, graduate students may request that their results be reconsidered, within four weeks of their publication, if they have reason to believe:*

- a. that the grade is incorrect because of an error in calculation of results*
- b. that the examination paper specific to the graduate student's course contained questions on subjects which were not part of the course prescribed for the examination or*
- c. that bias was shown by an examiner in marking the script, assessment or dissertation."*

## 1.2 Term Dates & Module Outlines

The following two modules are compulsory and are considered core modules.

These will be taught every academic year.

- PS7061 Research Methodology and Statistics (Michaelmas Term)
- PS7060 Philosophical and Professional Issues in Applied Psychology (Hilary Term)

Students must also take any **four** of the following modules:

### Michaelmas Term (Semester 1) from September to December 2024:

- PS7603 Applied Psychology
- PS7076 Counselling Skills\*
- PS7176 Psychology Applied to Lifespan Behavioural and Emotional Problems

### Hilary Term (Semester 2) from January to April 2054:

- PS7064 Applied Forensic Psychology
- PS7069 Issues in Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology
- PS7071 Issues in Clinical Psychology and Intellectual Disability
- PS7076 Counselling Skills\*
- PS7150 Theory of Psychotherapy

*\*Students choosing PS7076 attend in one term only (the course executive officer will assign groups at the start of the academic year).*

### Assessments

- Exams are scheduled over one week in Michaelmas term from **9<sup>th</sup> December 2024** and over one week in Trinity Term **21<sup>st</sup> April 2025**
- Research Dissertation due on **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

The College Academic Calendar 2024-2025 can be found via [www.tcd.ie/calendar/academic-year-structure/academic-year-structure.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/calendar/academic-year-structure/academic-year-structure.pdf)

## MODULE DESCRIPTORS

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7061 Research Methodology &amp; Statistics (COMPULSORY) MT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	In addition to being active producers of research, applied psychologists must be informed consumers of the research literature. Thus, a critical orientation towards research appraisal is a central theme throughout the module. Training is provided in the methodological and statistical skills necessary for successful completion of a postgraduate thesis. Furthermore, these skills enable graduates make a contribution to the progression of psychological science and practice.
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	This module provides the student with an understanding of methodological issues to facilitate a critical approach to reviewing the research literature and knowledge of the principles of appropriate psychological measurement. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are introduced. In addition, fundamental principles of data analyses are covered in order to provide students with practical skills for analysing research data. Students are introduced to more advanced multivariate techniques. The research module encourages trainees to view the investigation, execution and dissemination of clinically relevant and useful research projects as an integral part of their professional training and their subsequent professional functioning in the health services.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment and Exam (MT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	Prof Tim Trimble / Dr. Madhav Bhargav
<b>Contact hours</b>	16 hours of lectures & 18 hours labs (COMPULSORY)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7176 Psychology Applied to Lifespan Behavioural and Emotional Problems (OPTION) MT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	In this module, students examine presentations of the major psychological disorders which occur across the lifespan. The module includes taught input and facilitated discussion in the following areas: stress and trauma; mood disorders; anxiety and OCD; somatic symptoms and dissociation; psychosis; eating disorders; substance abuse; personality disorders; neurodevelopmental difficulties. The module covers prevalence, causal factors, assessment, and treatment of the major categories of psychological disorder. Students are encouraged to link theory with psychological practice through case vignettes. Additionally, students will begin to critically examine some of the questions which surrounded the release of the DSM-5 and review highlights of the changes in diagnostic criteria in light of current theory and research.
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrate knowledge of the major categories of psychological disorders across the lifespan, their prevalence and factors affecting their occurrence</li> </ul>



Module Title	PS7176 Psychology Applied to Lifespan Behavioural and Emotional Problems (OPTION) MT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be able to relate theoretical perspectives of psychological disorders and develop and formulate intervention strategies and treatment plans;</li> <li>• demonstrate familiarity with the use of a range of assessment techniques</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of key theoretical approaches to practice as an applied psychologist in a selection of service delivery settings;</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of the recent research literature relevant to the practice of the applied psychologist in working with mental health issues.</li> </ul>
Assessment	Assignment and Exam (MT)
Lecturer	Dr Megan Gaffney
Contact hours	9 x 2 hour lectures (MT)

Module Title	PS7076 Counselling Skills (OPTION) MT & HT
Aims and Overview	<p>A series of five 3.5 hour workshops are conducted providing training in interviewing techniques, listening skills, establishing empathy, immediacy, identifying feelings, reflecting feeling and content, paraphrasing, summarising, reframing, dealing with 'resistance', and action planning. Carl Rogers' person-centred theory will be the basis for this module.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to provide students with a good overview of basic therapeutic counselling skills;</li> <li>• to stimulate the students' development of basic counselling skills;</li> <li>• to begin to sensitise each student to their own issues which may affect their counselling effectiveness.</li> </ul> <p>Students should be able to professionally and effectively apply core counselling skills in relevant situations.</p>
Syllabus Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core conditions.</li> <li>• The therapeutic relationship and therapeutic attitudes.</li> <li>• 'Blind spots' and personal</li> <li>• Issues.</li> <li>• The initial interview.</li> <li>• Facilitation behaviours – verbal and non-verbal.</li> <li>• Action promoting skills.</li> <li>• Integration of counselling skills.</li> </ul>
Assessment	Assignment (MT OR HT)
Lecturer	Dr Megan Gaffney
Contact hours	5 x 4 hours lectures (Group 1 in MT & Group 2 in HT)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7060 Philosophical &amp; Professional Issues in Applied Psychology (COMPULSORY) HT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	To impart an understanding of the professions of applied psychology, and their relationship with the body of empirical evidence; to promote an awareness of legislation and policy documents and how they impact on the practice of applied psychology; to provide knowledge of the current code of professional ethics and its application; to provide an awareness of personal responsibility issues, such as time management, good practice, attitudes to minority groups and self-care.  To promote effective professional communication skills.
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the professional areas of psychology.</li> <li>• Service delivery and organisational issues.</li> <li>• Professional behaviour.</li> <li>• Policy/legislation and the applied psychologist.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment (HT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	Prof Tim Trimble
<b>Contact hours</b>	9 x 2 hour lectures

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7063 Applied Psychology (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	To introduce students to the concept and role of the applied psychological scientist; to develop a critical approach to the application of psychological approaches and findings in a variety of occupational settings; to guide students in analysing and describing their current occupational role in the context of applied psychology; to provide a focus for the integration of theory, research techniques, ethics and personal skills in an applied settings
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	This module requires students to use their current occupational role as a vehicle for exploring the role of the applied psychologist. Through a series of workshops, student presentations and individual tutorials students will explore how psychological principles and methods are applied in a variety of contexts. Using their own role as an exemplar they will provide a critique of applied psychology and describe in detail a piece of applied psychological work, either via a piece of research or a case study.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment (HT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	Prof Tim Trimble
<b>Contact hours</b>	1 x 1 hour lecture (HT)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7064 Applied Forensic Psychology (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	The principal aim of the course is to provide students with a firm grounding in, and knowledge of a broad range of issues in applied forensic psychology. This will include an understanding and integration of theory, and also an awareness of the application of research evidence in the work of the forensic psychologist.

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7064 Applied Forensic Psychology (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	Social and Biological factors associated with crime, psychopathy and crime, sex offenders (theory), serial killers, police interrogation, interviewing & thought reform, management and treatment of offenders.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment (MT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	Prof Tim Trimble
<b>Contact hours</b>	9 x 2 hour lectures (HT)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7069 Issues in Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	To impart an understanding of the nature and extent of psychological disorders in childhood and adolescence; to consider the incidence and prevalence of such disorders and the implications for clinical practice and service provision; to develop an appreciation of the nature and impact of psychological disorders on young people and their families, to develop an understanding of the different theoretical perspectives that have been developed to help understand childhood and adolescent disorders; to provide students with a broad understanding of what is known about the causes of disorders of childhood and adolescence.
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	Introduction to child and adolescent clinical psychology: Historical perspective on the treatment of childhood disorders. Defining psychological disorders in childhood and adolescence. Classification: DSM, ICD 10, psychological perspectives on classification. Incidence and prevalence of childhood disorders, epidemiological studies, gender and developmental trends. Models/theories of psychological dysfunction in childhood and adolescence. Approaches to treatment. The nature, aetiology, causes and treatment strategies for selected disorders of childhood and adolescence.
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment and Exam (HT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	TBC
<b>Contact hours</b>	9 x 2 hour lectures (HT)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7071 Issues in Clinical Psychology &amp; Intellectual Disability (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Aims and Overview</b>	To impart an understanding of the nature of intellectual disabilities; to consider the incidence and prevalence of intellectual disabilities and the implications for clinical practice and service provision; to develop an appreciation of the nature of intellectual disabilities and their implications for individuals and their families across the lifespan, to develop an understanding of the different theoretical perspectives and theories of intervention in intellectual disabilities, to give students knowledge of relevant assessment and intervention strategies with common clinical conditions, to provide students with an understanding of what is known about the causes of intellectual disabilities.

<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction clinical psychology and intellectual disabilities.</li> <li>• Models/theories of intellectual disability.</li> <li>• Attitudes to intellectual disability.</li> <li>• Values and clinical practice.</li> <li>• Definitions, classification and incidence.</li> <li>• Service philosophies.</li> <li>• Approaches to treatment/intervention.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment and Exam (HT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	TBC
<b>Contact hours</b>	11 x 1 hour lectures; 3 x 3 hour lectures (HT)

<b>Module Title</b>	<b>PS7150 Theory of Psychotherapy (OPTION) HT</b>
<b>Aims and overview</b>	The principal aim of the course is to provide students with a firm grounding in and knowledge of a broad range of theories of psychotherapy across the major schools of thought. This will include an understanding and integration of theory and also an awareness of its application in clinical practice. The objectives are that students who complete the module should have acquired a thorough understanding of different theories; be able to think critically about real-life application and begin to consider their own theoretical orientation.
<b>Syllabus Guide</b>	<p>On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of theories of psychotherapy across major schools of thought (humanistic, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural)</li> <li>- Articulate the philosophical underpinnings of theories and apply relevant concepts to inform case conceptualisation</li> <li>- Critically evaluate different theories, including their strengths and weaknesses, and apply them to clinical practice to inform treatment planning</li> <li>- Integrate at least two theories to inform psychotherapy (clinical) practice</li> <li>- Articulate their own emerging theory of human development and functioning, reflecting on how this might influence their developing clinical practice</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assignment (HT)
<b>Lecturer</b>	Dr Megan Gaffney
<b>Contact hours</b>	11 x 2 hour lectures (HT)

## PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is interpreted by the University as the act of presenting the work of others as one's own work, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism is considered as academically fraudulent, and an offence against University discipline. The University considers plagiarism to be a major offence, and subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University. To ensure that you have a clear understanding of what plagiarism is, how Trinity deals with cases of plagiarism, and how to avoid it, you will find a repository of information at <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity>

### **As a student it is your responsibility to:**

- (i) Visit the online resources to inform yourself about how Trinity deals with plagiarism and how you can avoid it at <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity/misconduct>
- (ii) Familiarize yourself with the 2023-2024 Calendar entry on plagiarism, "Academic integrity - Part III, 1.50" - <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/section-I.pdf> located on this website and the sanctions which are applied;
- (iii) Contact your Course Director, or your Lecturer if you are unsure about any aspect of plagiarism.

### **Also, you must:**

- (iv) Complete the 'Ready, Steady, Write' online tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready, Steady, Write' at <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity/ready-steady-write>  
**Completing the tutorial is compulsory for all students.**
- (v) Familiarise yourself with the declaration that you will be asked to sign when submitting course work at <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity/declaration> All students **must** sign this plagiarism declaration on the cover sheet of all submitted continuous assessments.

## 2. Assignment/Dissertation Submission Guidelines

### PLEASE READ THESE CAREFULLY

1. Each copy of an assignment must be submitted with a completed cover submission sheet which will be made available to you by Course Administrator Lisa McCormack.
2. All students must **email 1 x soft copy** of the assignment to Lisa ([msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie](mailto:msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie)) saved as a **MS Word document** with the student's name and module as the title (e.g., **Mary Smith, PS7061 Research Methodology & Statistics**) by the submission deadline. Students are required to submit an electronic copy with appropriate cover sheet through the Blackboard site for the respective module.
  - This is in line with College's anti-plagiarism policy, see pages 14 and 32.
3. **Please note: Extensions may only be sought in advance of the submission deadline via email to Lisa McCormack.** Extensions can only be granted in very specific circumstances and you may be required to submit a verified medical cert to support your extension request. Failure to comply with this will result in penalties as laid out in the course student handbook.
4. For further details and very important information on **PLAGIARISM**, please see pages 14 and 32.

### Submitting Dissertation

1. All students must submit the dissertation on Blackboard and email **1 x softcopy** of the assignment to Lisa McCormack ([msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie](mailto:msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie)) saved as a MS Word document with the student name and module as the title (e.g., Mary Smith, PS7073, Dissertation) by the submission deadline.
2. A copy should also be uploaded to Blackboard.
3. **Please email a copy of the dissertation and title via email on the day of submission to Lisa McCormack ([msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie](mailto:msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie))**

***\*\*Coursework feedback may be returned by some lecturers but for a number of modules, results will not be made available until after the exam board meeting. All results are provisional until confirmed by the External Examiner at the annual exam board in September\*\****

***\*\*It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all coursework submitted for assessment\*\****

## 2.1 Late submission of coursework

Students may make a case for deferred submission of work **ahead of a deadline only**. In a case where illness prevents timely submission an acceptable medical certificate must be submitted to cover the period subsequent to the deadline to a **maximum of one week**. **Should you require an extension to submit a piece of coursework you must first seek permission**. An email and coursework extension form outlining the reason for the extension should be sent to the Course Executive Officer, Lisa McCormack ([msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie](mailto:msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie)). Extension requests may be refused if the grounds stated are not acceptable.

### **Coursework submitted after the specified deadline will be subject to the following penalties.**

For the first week, late course work submitted without medical certification or equivalent explanation will be subject to 3% deduction for every day that it is late for a period of 5 working days. If received during the next 5 working days the work will continue to be penalized at 3% per day but is eligible only for a maximum mark of 40%. Work submitted more than 10 working days after the deadline will be awarded no mark and recorded as zero per cent. However, if a reasonable attempt has been made at it, the student concerned will not be returned non-satisfactory for the term in question on foot of the delay. Staff may give feedback on submitted late work at their own discretion.

## 2.2 Criteria for award grades

Brief descriptions are provided below of the qualities of work typical of each of the various grades that can be awarded. These descriptions are not specific to any particular level of examination: they can be applied equally to students in their first and final year, or to postgraduate students. Examiners take these factors into account when evaluating work and will normally have different expectations of the absolute level of performance of different groups of students. Nevertheless, these descriptions provide a basis for making relative judgements between students within any particular group. These descriptions should be taken as indicative rather than prescriptive: assessment of award/MSc is multi-dimensional and excellence in one dimension can compensate for weakness in another.

### **FAIL (0-49)/FAIL – the PASS mark for all assessments at PG taught course level is 50.**

Work at this level may contain evidence of study of the appropriate material and displays a level of presentation at least minimally commensurate with the award of an MSc degree, but it often reflects only a limited familiarity with the standard literature and/or methods of the subject. A fail answer constitutes at least a minimal attempt to answer the question posed, but the answer may omit key points and/or contain assertions not supported by appropriate evidence. It may display superficiality in understanding and/or the use of material, an over reliance on knowledge at the expense of development or argument, analysis or discussion, and it may lack continuity, or be inadequately organised. Nonetheless, work at this level does show an ability to refer to some standard

sources, ideas, methods or techniques normally applied in the subject and to achieve some success in solving problems or marshalling an argument to reach a conclusion.

Work at this level may also possess some or all of the following <u>positive</u> characteristics:	Work at this level may also possess some or all of the following <u>negative</u> characteristics:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempts to answer the question</li> <li>• Shows modest evidence of understanding of the topic</li> <li>• Shows modest evidence of relevant reading or research</li> <li>• Includes a few relevant ideas</li> <li>• May include some relevant examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The attempt to answer the question may not be very successful</li> <li>• Does not contain a sufficiently well-structured argument</li> <li>• Does not offer sufficient evidence to justify assertions</li> <li>• Does not include sufficient relevant examples</li> <li>• Lacks lucidity</li> <li>• Contains one or more important errors</li> </ul>



**AWARD/MSc LEVEL WORK - PASS (50-69)**

Work at this level displays a sound and clear understanding of the subject and demonstrates a good grasp of a wide range of the standard literature and/or methods and techniques of the subject. An award/MSc - Pass answer constitutes a well-organised and structured answer to the question that is reasonably comprehensive, generally accurate and well informed. It will normally demonstrate a greater breadth of knowledge than would be gained merely from the lecture notes and basic required reading. It will demonstrate some ability to evaluate and integrate information and ideas, to deal with knowledge in a critical way, and to reason and argue in a logical way. Where relevant it will also demonstrate an ability to analyse information, to make sense of material, to solve problems, to generate new ideas and concepts and to apply knowledge to new situations. The presentation of information, arguments and conclusions will be clear and well written.

What differentiates an award/MSc - Pass piece of work is the greater success in answering the question, the additional understanding displayed, the greater evidence of additional reading, the improved structure and organisation, the superior quality of the argument, and the level of critical thinking displayed.

Thus an award/MSc - Pass piece of work shows <u>positive</u> characteristics such as:	Award/MSc - Pass work usually has few <u>negative</u> characteristics, but may be limited in the sense that it:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers the question clearly and fully</li> <li>• Has a good structure and organisation</li> <li>• Shows evidence of a very good understanding of the topic</li> <li>• Shows clear evidence of relevant reading and research</li> <li>• Clearly explains relevant theory and cites relevant evidence</li> <li>• Contains reasoned argument and comes to a logical conclusion</li> <li>• Includes highly relevant ideas</li> <li>• Uses relevant examples</li> <li>• Demonstrates the ability to apply learning to new situations and to solve problems</li> <li>• Is well written</li> <li>• Lacks errors of any significant kind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could demonstrate more in the way of insight, imagination, originality or creativity</li> <li>• Does not answer the question in as fully and comprehensive a manner as would be possible</li> <li>• Could demonstrate more ability to integrate information</li> <li>• Could exhibit more critical thinking</li> <li>• Could exhibit more independence of thought</li> </ul>

**AWARD/MSC LEVEL WORK - DISTINCTION (70+)**

Award/MSc - Distinction work represents an excellent to outstanding performance demonstrating a thorough understanding of the subject. In addition to a mastery of a wide to full range of the standard literature and/or methods and techniques of the subject, work at this level shows independence of judgement and evidence of attainment beyond the standard material. It will frequently demonstrate characteristics such as insight, imagination, originality and creativity. An award/MSc - Distinction answer will represent a comprehensive and accurate answer to the question that will exhibit a detailed knowledge of the relevant material as well as a broad base of knowledge. Theory and evidence will be well integrated, and the selection of sources, ideas, methods or techniques will be well judged and appropriately organised to address the relevant issue or problem. It will demonstrate a high level of ability to evaluate and integrate information and ideas, to deal with knowledge in a critical way, and to reason and argue in a logical way. Where relevant it will also demonstrate a high level of ability to analyse information, to make sense of material, to solve problems, to generate new ideas and concepts and to apply knowledge to new situations. The presentation of information, arguments and conclusions will be fluent and clearly written and may also show particular lucidity in expression appropriate to the subject.

What differentiates award/MSc - Distinction work from one awarded award/MSc - Pass is a greater lucidity, a greater independence of judgement, a greater depth of insight and degree of originality, more evidence of an ability to integrate material, and evidence of a greater breadth of reading and research in the first that is not present in the upper second.

Thus award/MSc - Distinction work shows positive characteristics such as:

- Answers the question clearly and comprehensively, in a focused way
- Has an excellent structure and organisation
- Demonstrates characteristics such as insight, imagination, originality and creativity
- Demonstrates the ability to integrate information
- Exhibits sound critical thinking
- Exhibits independence of judgement
- Clearly explains relevant theory and cites relevant evidence
- Contains reasoned argument and comes to a logical conclusion
- Gives evidence of wide relevant reading beyond the material provided
- Includes a sufficient number of appropriate examples
- Demonstrates a clear comprehension of the subject
- Demonstrates the ability to apply learning to new situations and to solve problems
- Is lucid and well written
- Lacks errors of any significant kind

All pieces of award/MSc - Distinction work may not have all of the characteristics above, but all such work will have few, if any, negative characteristics. Note quantity of material is not a sufficient characteristic for an award/MSc - Distinction to be awarded. An excessive quantity of work of award/MSc - Pass standard will not be deemed to be of award/MSc - Distinction standard.

### **AWARD OF DEGREE CLASS**

All those who pass all required elements of the course will be awarded the Masters of Science in Applied Psychology degree. All taught Masters Degrees may be awarded a mark of Distinction. The award of a taught Masters with Distinction shall require the achievement of a distinction for the dissertation and three or more grades of distinction of the six modules completed. A distinction cannot be awarded if a candidate has failed any credit during the period of study. Any student whose dissertation does not merit a distinction will receive an overall result of 'Pass'.

Only those who have Degree classification is determined on the basis of the mean mark when appropriate weightings having been applied. Final marks are rounded up to a whole number such that, for example, a mark of 69.5 will be rounded up to 70% and a first. Borderline marks just below 69.5% are assessed more qualitatively to see if the student's overall profile is that of a first-class student.

### **EXAMINATION RESULTS**

The Examination Committee agrees and approves all marks and awards. Thereafter, a detailed breakdown of your results will be available at 'My Student Record' on [www.my.tcd.ie](http://www.my.tcd.ie). Results are typically available in mid-September and a results publication date will be confirmed to the class.

### **GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT**

After the results have been published, students can contact the Academic Registry to obtain details of graduation ceremonies. Please go to <http://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/graduation/> for more information.

### 3. Postgraduate Courses at the School

The School of Psychology offers various taught postgraduate programmes:

- Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
- Doctorate in Counselling Psychology
- Master of Science/Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Supervision (Psychology)
- Master of Science in Psychology (Applied Behaviour Analysis)
- Master of Science Applied Behaviour Analysis
- MPhil in Psychoanalytic Studies
- Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behaviour Analysis
- Psychology Conversion Course
- M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees taken through research; see ***PART 2 of The Calendar – Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees.***

#### 3.1 Higher Degrees by Research

The School, as with most others, is keen to take on good Psychology graduates to pursue a higher degree by research. Requirements are a good undergraduate degree (first or upper second class honour), competence in, and motivation for, research, identifying a supervisor on the academic staff who is prepared to take you on and available resources in the School to support your research goals (this includes available space). Applications should be made online via <https://my.tcd.ie>. This process is usually undertaken by 1<sup>st</sup> May of year of entry (i.e., before you have your final degree grade) but a provisional place can be offered subject to your degree outcome. It is useful to think in terms of this timescale because of the deadlines for application for financial support under the Government of Ireland Scholarships in the Humanities and Social Sciences scheme.

#### Government of Ireland Scholarships in the Humanities and Social Sciences

This is a scheme of postgraduate scholarships in the area of humanities and social sciences, including Psychology. Applications will be assessed on the basis of their excellence and potential by expert panels. Candidates must have the qualifications to register for and complete a masters or doctoral degree by major thesis (i.e., a first- or second-class honors degree). Applicants must be registered by 31<sup>st</sup> October of the year in question at a third level institute in Ireland for a masters or doctoral degree by major thesis. Scholarships will include fees as well as a maintenance grant. **Students should apply in advance of registration (typically April/May of year of entry).** Students need a good research proposal and the support of a member of the academic staff who will supervise them. During the first year students should be engaged in full time research. During the second or third year some tutorial and demonstration work may also be undertaken.

## 4. SCHOOL & COLLEGE RESOURCES & POLICIES

Please see useful links to University regulations, policies and procedures:

<http://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-policies/>

<https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies>

<https://www.tcd.ie/equality/policy/dignity-respect-policy/>

### **Timetable**

Your timetable is accessible online at [my.tcd.ie](http://my.tcd.ie) using your College assigned username and password. This is the only accurate version of the timetable and must be checked regularly as timetables are subject to change.

### **Blackboard**

Lecture notes, schedules and assignment information for each module will be made available via Blackboard; College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at <https://tcd.blackboard.com>

### **School reading room**

The School reading room is situated on the ground floor (room 0.24). It may be used for personal study and for consulting items from the archive of undergraduate and postgraduate theses. The latter are located June Switzer's office Room 1.25. Copies of recent undergraduate theses are available on the local pages of the School's website. Journals taken by the School are held in the offices of particular staff members. A database containing this information as well as abstracts from School theses and final-year projects is available on the Psychology Workgroup Server, accessible from any computer on the college network.

### **Photocopying**

The student photocopiers are on the ground floor and outside room 1.19 on the first floor and are operated by a card system. Cards may be purchased from the card dispenser outside the Computer Lab for €3 (250 units) or €6 (520 units) each. The current charge is 3 units (4 cent) per A4 copy. The cards may also be used to operate the laser printers in the School's computer lab. For any questions in relation to photocopying cards/photocopiers/top up please contact Lisa Gilroy, room 1.30, ext 2289, [psytech@tcd.ie](mailto:psytech@tcd.ie).

The general email address for technical queries is [psytech@tcd.ie](mailto:psytech@tcd.ie)

## Berkeley Library & College Libraries

The main psychology collection of books and journals is housed in the **Berkeley library** on the second floor and recent issues of journals are to be found in the **Periodicals Room** in the basement of the new **Ussher library**, where there is also a photocopying facility. General reference books, various indexes and a computer-based CD ROM database for psychology books and journal articles (called **PSYCHLIT**) are to be found on the ground floor of the Berkeley. Materials that have been specifically reserved for your use by course staff are held "on reserve" and may be requested from the counter on the ground floor. **Some of these arrangements are subject to change.** Please note that most journals are not on open shelves but have to be requested from the "stacks". Less frequently used materials have to be brought on request from the library depository in Santry. TCD library is a copyright archive, receiving by law all published materials in the British Isles, and borrowing rights are restricted. The **Student Lending** collection is currently housed in the **1937 Reading Room**. It contains books specifically recommended by staff for student borrowing. It is also worth investigating the **Hamilton Library** where an increasing number of psychology books can be found.

## Academic Registry

The Academic Registry is responsible for services that support the complete student lifecycle of Trinity College Dublin – from application to graduation <https://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/>

## 4.1 Computer Facilities

- **School Computers**

The School has two computer laboratories both located on the first floor; one (room 1.34) that contains 40 iMacs and a scanner (text and graphics) and the other (room 1.32) contains 14 iMacs. The laboratories are for student use and are booked for undergraduate and postgraduate classes at regular times during term. If you wish to use the labs after 5pm please contact **Lisa McCormack**, the Course Executive Officer for further details. You are advised to consult the noticeboards and the **"Rules and Regulations" file in the shared folder on each computer** for information on the facility, such as opening hours, booking conventions, availability for testing subjects, printing arrangements, and so on. A mono laser printer (PSYLAB) is located outside the laboratories and a colour laser printer (PSYFIRST) is located outside room 1.19. The laser printers are operated by a card system, and the cards may be purchased from the card dispenser, located outside the laboratories, at €3 (250 units) or €6 (520 units) each. Monochrome laser printer charges: A4 – 3 units, A4 double-sided – 6 units. Colour printer charges: A4 – 15 units. The cards may also be used in, the photocopier on the ground floor and outside room 1.19. Advice about the use of the computers should be sought from **Lisa Gilroy (room 1.30), ext 2289, [Lmccullen@tcd.ie](mailto:Lmccullen@tcd.ie)**,

You are advised to read the **Guide to Computing in College**, available from the ISS homepage, for information on the many and varied computers available and for access to an e-mail account.

#### **4.2 TCD Social Networking Policy**

Trinity College Dublin has developed a policy for social networking and social media to help clarify how best to use these tools to the professional benefit of the College, its staff and students. Examples of social networking websites are blogging, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Wikis etc. Both in professional and institutional roles, employees need to follow the same behavioural standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with staff, students, alumni, donors, media and other university constituents apply online as in the real world. This policy also applies to people external to the College posting material to social networking sites within the tcd.ie domain. The full policy can be read here –

<https://www.tcd.ie/media/tcd/about/policies/pdfs/Policy-on-Social-Networking-and-Social-Media.pdf>

#### **4.3 Psychometric Tests and Testing**

All test materials in the School are listed in a database file on the Psychology Local web pages. To borrow material, you should consult with and obtain permission from your supervisor. No test manuals may be taken out of the School. No testing procedures or distribution of questionnaires should be undertaken without prior permission from your supervisor. Testing material is usually copyright and should not be duplicated. You will need to let your supervisor know well in advance if you require additional test materials to be ordered from the suppliers - it can take several months. You should also consult with your supervisor to establish whether the test you require is held by any other member of the School. You are advised to restrict your research requirements to tests currently available in the School as, apart from supply delays, new tests can be very expensive to purchase

#### **4.4 NEW DATABASE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS**

##### **Access is via the Library homepage under Databases and E-Books**

The School is delighted to announce that, together with TCD Library, we have purchased a subscription to PsycTESTS® which is now available for use by all staff and students for their research and scholarly work.

PsycTESTS® is a research database produced by the American Psychological Association (APA) that provides access to psychological tests, measures, scales, surveys, and other assessments as well as descriptive information about the test and its development and administration, mostly drawn from articles in peer-reviewed journals or books, with downloadable tests. This is a bibliographic database, including descriptive summaries of the test and its development and administration, which also contains full text and multimedia (76% of test records contain the actual test or test items):

- Focuses primarily on unpublished tests, those developed by researchers but not made commercially available

- Most records link to a variety of materials describing the test in peer-reviewed literature, technical reports, or dissertations as well as links to related peer-reviewed literature describing test development, review, or use
- Each record includes data on the scope of the test, test implementation, a high-level overview of the test's development, and reliability and validity data (when available)
- Tests include those compiled from a systematic review of peer-reviewed journals published by APA, Hogrefe Publishing Group, and other large publishers; technical reports from PsycEXTRA®; contributions from individual test authors; collections from the Archives of the History of American Psychology; and more
- Commercially available tests indexed by APA are also included, with links to purchase the instrument from the publisher

### **Subject Coverage**

A diverse array of subject areas and types of tests:

- Developmental Measures
- Scales for Beliefs, Relationships, or Expectancies
- Aggression, Coping, or Functional Status Questionnaires
- Racial and Ethnic Identity Scales
- Resilience, Anger Response, or Substance Abuse Inventories
- Physical Health Related Assessments
- Personality Assessments
- Educational Measures
- Neuropsychological Assessments
- Aptitude and Achievement Measures
- Competency Measures
- Occupational Measures
- Intelligence Tests
- Military Tests

### **4.5 Laboratory Space**

If you require laboratory space for carrying out experiments, interviews, tests or using equipment, special arrangements can often be made through your supervisor.

### **4.6 Safety and Security**

You should familiarise yourself with the School Health & Safety Regulations (see notice boards) and get to know the layout of the entire School as soon as possible, taking note of the various points of exit which you might use in the event of a fire. Fire drills are held from time to time and Lisa Gilroy (Room 1.28, ext 1091) is the School's



Safety Officer/ Please inform them of any potential sources of danger or problems of safety which you may notice.

We have had a number of security problems in the past, from burglaries to daytime theft of personal effects.

Please note that it is **against the law to smoke in a public building such as the School. Eating and drinking are also not allowed in the School (excepting in designated areas and at official receptions).**

#### 4.7 Disability Service

Postgraduate students (both taught and research) who have a disability are encouraged to apply to the Disability Service ([www.tcd.ie/disability](http://www.tcd.ie/disability)) for reasonable accommodation.

##### Supports for Postgraduate Students includes:

- Academic Support
- Assistive Technology
- Occupational Therapy
- Support on Placements and Internships
- Preparation for Viva Voce examinations

An application can be made through [my.tcd.ie](http://my.tcd.ie) via the 'My Disability Service' tab. Additional information is available in a step-by-step [How to apply for Reasonable Accommodations guide](#).

Any postgraduate student in Trinity (or prospective student) is welcome to contact the Disability Service to informally discuss their needs prior to making a formal application. Please email [askds@tcd.ie](mailto:askds@tcd.ie) or visit the Disability Service [Contact page](#).

<https://www.tcd.ie/disability/contact/>

<https://www.tcd.ie/disability/support-and-resources/#d.en.1754608>

#### 4.8 Student Health, Support and Counselling in College

The Student Health Centre is located on campus. Student Counselling Service (SCS) and other support services, such as the Careers Advisory Service are located very close to the main TCD campus at 7-9 South Leinster Street, Dublin 2. Please see [http://www.tcd.ie/Student\\_Counselling/](http://www.tcd.ie/Student_Counselling/) for information on supports, facilities and services.

For student services please see <http://www.tcd.ie/students/supports-services/> please also see student services handbook [http://www.tcd.ie/stdents/assets/pdf/Student%20Services%20Booklet%20\(web%20version\).pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/stdents/assets/pdf/Student%20Services%20Booklet%20(web%20version).pdf)

#### **4.9 Dublin University Central Athletic Club – DUCAC**

Dublin University Central Athletic Club (DUCAC) is the governing body for Sport Clubs at Trinity. DUCAC is responsible for the overall administration of DU Sports Clubs in cooperation with Club Officers and for their interests and development in Trinity. An Executive Committee and other sub-committees oversee the business affairs of DUCAC, including the Pavilion Bar. DUCAC receives funding from the Capitation Committee at the University and supplements its income with a percentage of profits from the Pavilion Bar.

For more information on the DUCAC committees please follow the relevant links below: [www.tcd.ie/sport](http://www.tcd.ie/sport)

#### **4.10 Graduate Studies**

The Dean of Graduate Studies is the academic officer responsible for the admission, progression and examination of all postgraduate students in College.

As chair of the Graduate Studies Committee the Dean plays a central role in the approval of new courses of postgraduate study, and in setting regulations governing the award of degrees. Further information can be found via <http://www.tcd.ie/graduatestudies/about/roles/>

#### **4.11 Societies**

Current TCD Students can join TCD Societies. Presentation of a student card and registration with a valid TCD email address is necessary for registration. More information can be found on the webpage

<http://trinitysocieties.ie/>

#### **4.12 Students Union**

Information about the Trinity College Dublin Students Union can be found on their website here:

<https://www.tcdsu.org/your-union/officers>

They organise elections for Postgraduate Representatives to College Committees and also class representatives at the beginning of each academic year.

#### **4.13 PAS - Postgraduate Advisory Service**

##### What?

The Postgraduate Advisory Service (PAS) is a free and confidential service available to all registered postgraduate students in Trinity College. PAS offers a comprehensive range of academic, pastoral and professional supports including one-to-one appointments, workshops and trainings, and emergency financial assistance.

### Why?

PAS exists to ensure that all postgraduate students have a dedicated, specialist service independent of the School-system to whom they can turn for support and advice during their time at Trinity. Common concerns students present to PAS include stress; financial worries; queries about regulations or services available at Trinity; supervisor-relationship concerns; academic progression issues; academic appeals.

### Who?

The Postgraduate Advisory Service is led by the Postgraduate Student Support Officers who provide frontline support for all Postgraduate students in Trinity. These Support Officers will act as your first point of contact and a source of support and guidance; they can also put you in touch with or recommend other services, depending on your needs.

### How?

For an appointment, please e-mail [postgrad.support@tcd.ie](mailto:postgrad.support@tcd.ie)

Website: [https://www.tcd.ie/Senior\\_Tutor/postgraduateadvisory/](https://www.tcd.ie/Senior_Tutor/postgraduateadvisory/)

To keep up to date with the supports and events for postgraduate please check out the regular PAS newsletter sent to all postgraduates via email or follow PAS on Instagram @TCDPGAdvisory

#### **4.14 Noticeboards**

The MSc Applied Psychology noticeboard is located opposite Room 1.01. There are several noticeboards located on both floors of the School with information on staff and courses.

#### **4.15 Quality Office**

The role of the Quality Office is to ensure that Trinity is aligned to national and international standards and regulations for quality, and supports the engagement of staff, students and stakeholders in quality assurance and quality enhancement activity <https://www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/quality/quality-assurance/evaluation.php>

#### **4.16 National Framework Qualifications Guidelines**

The *Qualifications Frameworks - A European View* tab provides you with information on the relationship between the Irish NFQ and the EQF and QF-EHEA <https://nfq.qqi.ie/>

### **5. School of Psychology Staff & Research Interests**

**5.1** Please follow the link below for Academic Staff and their Research Interests.

<https://www.tcd.ie/psychology/research/research-people/>

## 6. Transcript Requests

Students and graduates are entitled to request copies of their academic transcript from the appropriate course office in the School of Psychology. A minimum of 7 working days' notice is required for such requests. All requests should be submitted via email to [msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie](mailto:msc.appliedpsych@tcd.ie).

## 7. College & Course Communications

### 7.1 Using Email

Email is a tool that we now almost take as much for granted as we do the telephone. Accordingly, official University and School correspondence is sent to your TCD email address. You may also send email to staff in the school where appropriate and necessary. Remember to check your email regularly and use the following guidelines when using email for communicating to help you to get the most out of this valuable tool.

- Keep messages brief and to the point. It is important to remember that some people receive hundreds of email messages each week.
- Make sure the information you seek is not available elsewhere first, for instance, consult the student handbook, the school web-pages, school notice-boards, your classmates.
- Specify the topic of the email in the "subject" field so that your recipient will know what the email is about.
- E-mail is an electronic communication between people and should be written in good style, with correct grammar and punctuation. Use the 'spell check' option.
- Always include your full name, student number, when communicating with a lecturer, preferably at the end of the message. If you have a question relating to a class, be as specific as you can and include all relevant information to help identify your class and lecturer.
- As a rule, use the title or form of address that you would use in verbal communication.
- Allow time for a reply. It is often not possible due to time constraints to respond immediately but most will try and respond promptly where possible. If your enquiry is urgent and you do not get a response within a reasonable timeframe, check with one of the School's Administrative Officers as the individual may for instance be abroad.
- It can also be difficult and very time-consuming to provide detailed or lengthy responses to questions using email. It is probably better to attend a lecturer's office hours to discuss those questions.
- Please do not send or forward chain email.
- Be careful how you express yourself using email and always re-read your messages before sending.

- E-mail is not private, even though it is treated confidentially, it is monitored and logged.

## Attachments

- Title the attachment in such a way that the recipient can identify it easily once it has been downloaded. For example, include your name, the name of the lecturer, the title of the work, the module title.
- In the body of your email, tell your recipient the title of the attachment, what type of software was used to create the document, and the year/version of the software. For example: "The attached file is titled 'libraryopenhours.doc' and it is in MSWord 2000."
- Make sure that you do not send very large attachments unless you are sure that your recipient's Internet connection and email client can handle them.
- Do not send unnecessary attachments. If you have presented all of the relevant information in an email message, it is unnecessary to attach a document repeating the same information.

**Please remember with any form of communication the recipient of your message expects your email to be thoughtfully written, clearly focused and respectful.**

For further information, please consult College policy on email at: [www.isservices.tcd.ie/email/usage.php](http://www.isservices.tcd.ie/email/usage.php)

## 7.2 Mobile phones

Mobile phones **must be turned OFF during all class work such as lectures, practicals, seminars and tutorials** and their use is permitted **ONLY in designated areas** (see notices). Please respect the fact that the School is a working environment.

## 7.3 Change of address

The School records your first address on entry. It is important that you inform us of any change so that we can contact you when necessary. A 'Change of Address' form may be obtained through the Academic Registry/Student Records.

## 7.4 GDPR

Information on IT Security in Trinity, including IT Security policy, GDPR Information, Awareness and Education Programmes, Recent Events and Useful Resources is detailed at <http://www.tcd.ie/ITSecurity/>. Information regarding GDPR policies and procedures is available on the following website:

[https://www.tcd.ie/info\\_compliance/data-protection/gdpr/](https://www.tcd.ie/info_compliance/data-protection/gdpr/)

## 8. WARNING ABOUT PLAGIARISM

***Please take time to read the section below carefully. Please note that students are required to submit all coursework electronically and this work will be subject to screening for plagiarism using turnitin.com.***

Taken from the Trinity College Calendar, Part 2; <http://www.tcd.ie/calendar/part2>

1. Plagiarism is interpreted by the University as the act of presenting the work of others as one's own work, without acknowledgement. Plagiarism is considered as academically fraudulent, and an offence against University discipline. The University considers plagiarism to be a major offence, and subject to the disciplinary procedures of the University.

2. Plagiarism can arise from deliberate actions and also through careless thinking and/or methodology. The offence lies not in the attitude or intention of the perpetrator, but in the action and in its consequences.

Plagiarism can arise from actions such as:

- a) copying another student's work
- b) enlisting another person or persons to complete an assignment on the student's behalf
- c) quoting directly, without acknowledgement, from books, articles or other sources, either in printed, recorded or electronic format
- d) paraphrasing, without acknowledgement, the writings of other authors

Examples c) and d) in particular can arise through careless thinking and/or methodology where students:

- (i) fail to distinguish between their own ideas and those of others
- (ii) fail to take proper notes during preliminary research and therefore lose track of the sources from which the notes were drawn
- (iii) fail to distinguish between information which needs no acknowledgement because it is firmly in the public domain, and information which might be widely known, but which nevertheless requires some sort of acknowledgement
- (iv) come across a distinctive methodology or idea and fail to record its source.

***All the above serve only as examples and are not exhaustive.***

Students should submit work done in co-operation with other students only when it is done with the full knowledge and permission of the lecturer concerned. Without this, work submitted which is the product of collusion with other students may be considered to be plagiarism.

When work is submitted as the result of a Group Project, it is the responsibility of all students in the Group to ensure, in so far as possible, that no work submitted by the Group is plagiarised.

3. It is clearly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work of others. It is commonly accepted also, however, that we build on the work of others in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. Many cases of plagiarism that arise could be avoided by following some simple guidelines:

a) any material used in a piece of work, of any form, that is not the original thought of the author should be fully referenced in the work and attributed to its source. The material should either be quoted directly or paraphrased. Either way, an explicit citation of the work referred to should be provided, in the text, in a footnote, or both. Not to do so is to commit plagiarism

b) when taking notes from any source it is very important to record the precise words or ideas that are being used and their precise sources

c) while the Internet often offers a wider range of possibilities for researching particular themes, it also requires particular attention to be paid to the distinction between one's own work and the work of others. Particular care should be taken to keep track of the source of the electronic information obtained from the Internet or other electronic sources and ensure that it is explicitly and correctly acknowledged

4. It is the responsibility of the author of any work to ensure that he/she does not commit plagiarism.

5. Students should ensure the integrity of their work by seeking advice from their Lecturers, Course Coordinator, Director or Supervisor on avoiding plagiarism. All Schools should include, in their handbooks or other literature given to students, advice on the appropriate methodology for the kind of work that students will be expected to undertake.

6. If plagiarism as referred to in paragraph (2) above is suspected, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) will arrange an informal meeting with the student, the student's Supervisor or other appropriate representative, and the academic staff member concerned, to put their suspicions to the student and give the student the opportunity to respond.

7. If the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) forms the view that plagiarism has taken place, he/she must decide if the offence can be dealt with under the summary procedure set out below. In order for this summary procedure to be followed, all parties noted above must be in agreement. If the facts of the case are

in dispute, or if the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) feels that the penalties provided for under the summary procedure below are inappropriate given the circumstances of the case, he/she will refer the case directly to the Junior Dean, who will interview the student and may implement the procedures set out in Section 5 (Other General Regulations).

8. If the offence can be dealt with under the summary procedure, the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies one of the following penalties:

a) that the piece of work in question receives a reduced mark, or a mark of zero;

**or**

b) if satisfactory completion of the piece of work is deemed essential for the student to rise with his/her year or to proceed to the award of a degree, the student may be required to re-submit the work. However, the student may not receive more than the minimum pass mark applicable to the piece of work on satisfactory re-submission.

9. Provided that the appropriate procedure has been followed and all parties above are in agreement with the proposed penalty, the Dean of Graduate Studies may approve the penalty and notify the Junior Dean accordingly. The Junior Dean may nevertheless implement the procedures set out in Section 5 (Other General Regulations).

All students, i.e., undergraduate and postgraduate new entrants and existing students, will be required to complete the online tutorial 'Ready, Steady, Write'. Cover sheets which students must complete when submitting assessed work, contain the following declaration:



## 9. RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (SPREC)

**Appropriate ethical approval must be obtained prior to commencing the work.** Submission to the TCD School of Psychology Ethics Committee (SPREC) is required. In addition, it is likely that students will be required to obtain permission from the institution/organisation where it is planned to conduct the research. If the project involves a medical or clinical group, then medical/hospital/specialist ethical approval will also be required. The School Ethics Committee cannot approve the research study until the external ethics committees have approved the study.

**Note that no commitment of resources is to be made nor is any practical work to be carried out until the full proposal has been given explicit approval from the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee.**

In rare cases, it may be necessary to refer the proposal to the University Ethics Committee. Such a referral will have implications for the timetabling of the dissertation.

<https://psychology.tcd.ie/local/Ethics/index.php>

It is now a requirement that in all applications submitted to the School of Psychology Ethics Committee, and in all requests for amendments to projects approved previously, applicants demonstrate that the proposed research activity will conform to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). More information is at

[http://www.tcd.ie/info\\_compliance/data-protection/gdpr/](http://www.tcd.ie/info_compliance/data-protection/gdpr/)

## 10. ETHICAL GUIDELINES

**Please note** that students who choose to conduct a research project that involves **CHILD** participants will be required to sign a Statutory Declaration that they do not have any previous convictions, or any pending prosecutions in Ireland or elsewhere, for offences against children or offences against the person. Safety Guidelines for the testing of **ADULTS** are published on the School website and you must adhere to them.

### **Extract from the PSI Code of Professional Ethics, revised version November 2010; Summary of the Code**

The PSI Code of Professional Ethics is based on the structure of the Meta-Code of Ethics of the European Federation of Professional Psychologists' Associations (1995). The MetaCode proposes four overall Ethical Principles with a number of subheadings for each one. The clauses identifying the various Ethical Standards in the Society's Code of Professional Ethics are classified under these subheadings. The Code consists of four overall ethical principles, which subsume a large number of specific ethical standards.

The Code consists of four overall ethical principles, which subsume a large number of specific ethical standards.

#### ***Principle 1: Respect for the rights and dignity of the person***

This principle requires of psychologists that they treat their clients as persons of intrinsic worth with a right to determine their own priorities, that they respect clients' dignity and give due regard to their moral and cultural values. Psychologists shall take care not to intrude inappropriately on clients' privacy. They shall treat as confidential all information (including oral, verbal, written and electronic) obtained in the course of their work, except where the law requires disclosure. As far as possible, they shall ensure that clients understand and consent to whatever professional action they propose.

#### ***Principle 2: Competence***

Psychologists must constantly maintain and update their professional skills and ethical awareness. They shall recognise that psychological knowledge and their own expertise and capacity for work are limited, and take care not to exceed the limits.

#### ***Principle 3: Responsibility***

In their professional and scientific activities, psychologists are required to act in a trustworthy, reputable and accountable manner towards clients and the community. They shall avoid doing harm to clients and research participants, and act to prevent harm caused by others. They shall co-operate with colleagues and other professionals to ensure the best service to clients and act positively to resolve ethical dilemmas. They shall ensure

that those whom they supervise act ethically. In research with animals, they shall take care to treat the animals humanely.

#### ***Principle 4: Integrity***

Psychologists are obliged to be honest and accurate about their qualifications, the effectiveness of the services which they offer, and their research findings. They shall take steps to manage personal stress and maintain their own mental health. They shall treat others in a fair, open and straightforward manner, honour professional commitments, and act to clarify any confusion about their role or responsibilities. Where possible, they shall avoid the use of deception with research participants. They shall not use the professional relationship to exploit clients, sexually or otherwise, and they shall deal actively with conflicts of interest. They shall take action against harmful or unethical behaviour in colleagues or members of other professions.

#### **The Code in Detail**

##### **1.0 RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY OF THE PERSON**

Psychologists shall honour and promote the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all people. They shall respect the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and autonomy, consistent with the psychologist's other professional obligations and with the law.

More specifically, psychologists shall:

##### **1.1 General Respect**

- 1.1.1 Have sensible regard for individual clients' moral and cultural values.
- 1.1.2 Not allow their service to clients to be diminished by factors such as gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, race, ethnicity, age, national origin, party politics, social standing or class.
- 1.1.3 Convey respect for and abide by prevailing community mores, social customs, and cultural expectations in their scientific and professional activities.
- 1.1.4 Use language that conveys respect for the dignity of others (for example, gender-neutral terms) in all written or verbal communication.
- 1.1.5 Avoid or refuse to participate in practices which are disrespectful of the legal, civil, or moral rights of others.

##### **1.2 Privacy and Confidentiality**

- 1.2.1 Explore and collect only that information which is germane to the purposes of a given investigation or intervention, or which is required by law.

- 1.2.2 Take care not to infringe, in research or service activities, on the personally or culturally defined private space of individuals or groups unless clear and appropriate permission is granted to do so.
- 1.2.3 Respect the right of employees, supervisors, students, or psychologists in training to reasonable personal privacy.
- 1.2.4 Take care not to relay, except as required or justified by law, confidential information about others (for example, colleagues, colleagues' clients, students, or members of organisations) to which they have become privy in the course of their professional activities.
- 1.2.5 Share confidential information with others only with the informed consent (see Section 1.3) of those involved, or in a manner that the individuals involved cannot be identified, except as required or justified by law, or in circumstances of actual or possible serious physical harm or death.
- 1.2.6 Store, handle, transfer and dispose of all records, both written and unwritten (for example, computer files, video tapes), in a way that attends to the needs for privacy and security. They also make adequate plans for records in circumstances of their own serious illness or death.
- 1.2.7 Take all reasonable steps to ensure that records over which they have control remain personally identifiable only as long as is necessary in the interests of those to whom the records refer and/or to the research project for which they were collected, or as required by law, and render anonymous or destroy any records under their control that no longer need to be personally identifiable.
- 1.2.8 Be acutely aware of the need for discretion in the recording and communication of information, so as to prevent it from being interpreted or used to the detriment of others. Appropriate action includes, but is not limited to: not recording information which could lead to misinterpretation and misuse; avoiding conjecture; clearly labelling opinion; and, communicating information in language that can be understood clearly by the particular recipient of the information.
- 1.2.9 Inform those to whom they offer services about legal limits on confidentiality where it is appropriate to do so.
- 1.2.10 Clarify what measures will be taken to protect confidentiality, and what responsibilities family, group, and community members have for the protection of each other's confidentiality, when engaged in services to or research with individuals, families, groups or communities.

### **1.3 Informed Consent and Freedom of Consent**

- 1.3.1 View informed consent not just as the signing of a consent form, but as the outcome of a process of agreeing to work collaboratively. However, they recognise that certain investigations and interventions may be compulsory under the law.

- 1.3.2 Respect and integrate as much as possible the opinions and wishes of others regarding decisions which affect them.
- 1.3.3 Obtain informed consent from all independent and partially dependent persons for any psychological services provided to them.
- 1.3.4 Provide, in obtaining informed consent, as much information as a reasonable or prudent person, family, group, or community would want to know before making a decision or consenting to an activity. The psychologist relays this information in language which the persons understand and shall take whatever reasonable steps are necessary to ensure that the information is, in fact, understood.
- 1.3.5 Ensure, in the process of obtaining informed consent, that at least the following points are understood: purpose and nature of the activity; mutual responsibilities; likely benefits and risks; alternatives; the likely consequences of non-action; the option to refuse or withdraw at any time, without prejudice; over what period of time the consent applies; and, how to rescind consent if desired.
- 1.3.6 Act in emergencies (for example, where a client threatens suicide) on the basis of their professional judgment, if necessary, without consent, but if possible obtain fully informed consent at a later stage.
- 1.3.7 Take all reasonable steps to ensure that consent to receive service or participate in research is not given under conditions of coercion or undue pressure.
- 1.3.8 Take all reasonable steps to confirm or re-establish freedom of consent, if consent for service is given under conditions of duress or conditions of extreme need.
- 1.3.9 Obtain informed consent for all research activities which involve obtrusive measures, invasion into the private lives of research participants, risks to the participant, or any attempt to change the behaviour of research participants.
- 1.3.10 Seek willing and adequately informed participation from any person of diminished capacity to give informed consent and proceed without this consent only if the service or research activity is considered to be of direct benefit to that person.
- 1.3.11 Carry out informed consent processes with those persons who are legally responsible or appointed to give informed consent on behalf of individuals who are not competent to give consent on their own behalf.
- 1.3.12 Do not use persons of diminished capacity to give informed consent in research studies, if the research involved might equally well be carried out with persons who have a fuller capacity to give informed consent.
- 1.3.13 Seek an independent and adequate ethical review of human rights issues and protections for any research involving vulnerable groups and/or persons of diminished capacity to give informed consent, before making a decision to proceed.

- 1.3.14 Ensure that information is revealed only with the client's consent, except when subject to the requirements of law or where concealment would result in danger to the client or others.
- 1.3.15 Discuss psychological or evaluative data on individuals only for professional purposes, and only with those who are clearly entitled to know or be consulted.
- 1.3.16 Publish information about clients, in oral or written form, only with their consent, or where their identity is adequately disguised.
- 1.3.17 Make audio, video or photographic records of clients or research participants only where these persons have given prior agreement to the making of the record and the conditions of subsequent access. This clause does not apply to recording of public behaviour or research situations where other ethical safeguards have been implemented.
- 1.3.18 Clarify to all concerned the nature of their loyalties in cases of conflict of interest (between, for example, the interests of the client and the psychologist's employing institution).
- 1.3.19 Clarify the nature of any multiple relationships to all concerned parties before obtaining consent, if services or research are at the behest of third parties (which may include schools, courts, government agencies, insurance companies, police, and special funding bodies). The clarification includes, but is not limited to, the following information: the purpose of the service or research; the use that will be made of information collected; and the limits on confidentiality.
- 1.3.20 Obtain clients' consent to the attendance of trainees and other third parties not directly involved in the provision of professional services.

#### **1.4 Self-determination**

- 1.4.1 Seek as full and active participation as possible from others in decisions which affect them.
- 1.4.2 Respect the right of recipients of service, research participants, employees, supervisees, students, and others, to safeguard their own dignity.
- 1.4.3 Respect the right of individuals to discontinue participation or service at any time, and are responsive to non-verbal indications of a desire to discontinue if individuals have difficulty in verbally communicating such a desire.

## **2.0 COMPETENCE**

Psychologists shall strive to ensure and maintain high standards of competence in their work. They recognise the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They shall provide only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by education, training or experience.

## **2.1 Ethical Awareness**

- 2.1.1 Accept the obligation to study and understand the provisions of this Code of Professional Ethics.
- 2.1.2 Avoid entering into agreements or contracts which might oblige them to contravene provisions of this Code of Professional Ethics.

## **2.2 Limits of Competence**

- 2.2.1 Be aware of how their own experiences, attitudes, culture, beliefs and values influence their interactions with others, and integrate this awareness into all efforts to benefit and not harm others.
- 2.2.2 Recognize the boundaries of their competence, and do not exceed these.
- 2.2.3 Offer or carry out (without supervision) only those professional activities for which they have established their competence to practise to the benefit of others.
- 2.2.4 Take immediate steps to consult or to refer a client to a colleague or other appropriate professional, whichever is most likely to result in competent service to the client, if it becomes apparent that they are not competent to deal with a client's problem.
- 2.2.5 Avoid delegating professional activities to persons not competent to carry them out to the benefit of others.

### **2.3 Limits of Procedures**

- 2.3.1 Be mindful, when they make decisions based on psychological data and the use of psychological techniques, of the limitations of such data and techniques.
- 2.3.2 Direct their interventions towards clear objectives, and do not persist with those interventions after the objectives have been met or if it has become apparent that the objectives cannot be met.
- 2.3.3 Terminate an activity when it is clear that the activity is more harmful than beneficial, or when the activity is no longer needed.
- 2.3.4 Carry out pilot studies to determine the effects of all new procedures and techniques which might carry some risks, before considering their use on a broader scale.
- 2.3.5 Not carry out any scientific or professional activity unless the probable benefit is proportionately greater than the risk involved.
- 2.3.6 Provide thorough discussion of the limits of their data, if their work touches on social policy and structure.

### **2.4 Continuing Professional Development**

- 2.4.1 Maintain and develop their professional competence.
- 2.4.2 Participate in and contribute to continuing education and their own and colleagues' professional and scientific growth.
- 2.4.3 Keep themselves up to date with relevant knowledge, research methods, and techniques, through the reading of relevant literature, peer consultation, and continuing education activities, in order that their service or research activities and conclusions shall benefit and not harm others.
- 2.4.4 Perform their teaching duties on the basis of careful preparation, so that their instruction shall be current and scholarly.

### **2.5 Incapacity for Practice**

- 2.5.1 Refrain from practice when their professional judgment or ability to benefit and not harm others is seriously impaired by a physical or psychological condition. When they become aware of problems that may affect their competence, they seek competent professional assistance to determine whether they should limit, suspend or terminate their professional activity.



### 3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Psychologists shall be aware of their professional and scientific responsibilities to clients, to the community, and to the society in which they work and live. Psychologists shall avoid doing harm and shall be responsible for their own actions, and assure themselves, as far as possible, that their services are not misused.

More specifically, psychologists shall:

#### 3.1 General Responsibility

- 3.1.1 Contribute to the discipline of psychology and to society's understanding of itself and human beings generally, through a free pursuit and sharing of knowledge.
- 3.1.2 Monitor and evaluate the effect of their professional activities, record their findings and, if appropriate, communicate new knowledge to others in the field.
- 3.1.3 Are sensitive to the needs, current issues, and problems of society when determining research questions to be asked, services to be developed, information to be collected, or the interpretation of results findings.
- 3.1.4 Protect the dignity and wellbeing of research participants at all times.
- 3.1.5 Help develop, promote, and participate in accountability processes and procedures related to their work.
- 3.1.6 Maintain records of all psychological procedures and interventions for an appropriate period of time commensurate with the nature of the records and ensure that these are properly stored and/or transferred to a colleague or other responsible entity in the event of a change in job role, position or other life circumstances.
- 3.1.7 Help to establish and abide by fair procedures in their activities as employers, evaluators, adjudicators, editors, and peer reviewers.
- 3.1.8 Make every reasonable effort to ensure that psychological knowledge is not misused, intentionally or unintentionally, to infringe on human rights.
- 3.1.9 Speak out if the policies, practices or regulations of the organisation within which they work seriously ignore or oppose any of the principles of this Code of Professional Ethics.

#### 3.2 Promotion of High Standards

- 3.2.1 Uphold the discipline's responsibility to society by promoting and maintaining the highest standards of the discipline.
- 3.2.2 Ensure that they maintain the highest standards of scientific integrity in their research.

3.2.3 Protect the reputation of the profession and discipline by ensuring that all professional activities carried out conform to the provisions of this Code of Professional Ethics.

3.2.4 Behave in professional activities in such a way as not to undermine public confidence in the profession.

### **3.3 Avoidance of Harm**

3.3.1 Behave in professional activities in such a way as not to damage clients' interests.

3.3.2 Be sufficiently sensitive to and knowledgeable about individual differences and vulnerabilities to discern what will benefit and not harm persons involved in their professional activities.

3.3.3 Assess the individuals, families, groups, and communities involved in their professional activities adequately enough to discern what will benefit and not harm those persons.

3.3.4 Do everything reasonably possible to stop or offset the consequences of actions by others when these actions are likely to cause serious physical harm or death. Action may include reporting to appropriate authorities (for example, the police) or an intended victim, and may be carried out even when a confidential relationship is involved.

3.3.5 Make every reasonable effort to ensure that psychological knowledge is not misused, intentionally or unintentionally, to harm others or infringe human rights.

3.3.6 Take all reasonable steps to ensure that tests and assessment methods are only used by those qualified and trained to do so.

3.3.7 Refuse to advise, train, or supply information to anyone who, in their judgement, will use the knowledge or skills to harm others or infringe human rights.

3.3.8 Not contribute to nor engage in research or any other activity which promotes or is intended for use in deliberate impairment of the individual's psychological integrity (for example, torture), the development of prohibited weapons, destruction of the environment, or any other act which contravenes relevant international law.

3.3.9 Act to minimise the impact of their research activities on research participants' personality or their mental or physical integrity.

3.3.10 Screen research participants and select those not likely to be harmed, if risk or harm to some research participants is possible.

3.3.11 Debrief research participants in such a way that any harm caused can be discerned, and act to correct any resultant harm.

- 3.3.12 Not disadvantage participants (individuals, groups, families or communities) by offering them no service over an unreasonable period of time in order to fulfil a control condition in a research study; where a study reveals beneficial effects, and resources allow, psychologists subsequently offer the beneficial service to participants in the control condition.
- 3.3.13 Not offer rewards to motivate individuals or group to participate in activity that has possible or known risks for them or others.
- 3.3.14 Seek an independent and adequate ethical review of the balance of risks and potential benefits of all research which involves procedures of unknown consequence, or where pain, discomfort, or harm are possible, before making a decision to proceed.
- 3.3.15 Exercise particular care when reporting results on vulnerable groups to counter misinterpretation or misuse in the development of social policy, attitudes, or practices (for example, manipulation of vulnerable persons or discrimination against specific populations).
- 3.3.16 Refuse to help individuals, families, groups, or communities to carry out or submit to activities which, according to current knowledge and/or legal and professional guidelines, would cause serious physical or psychological harm to themselves or others.
- 3.3.17 Use animals in research only where there is a reasonable expectation that the research will increase understanding of the structures and processes underlying behaviour, or increase understanding of the particular animal species used in the study, or result eventually in benefits to the health and welfare of humans or other animals.
- 3.3.18 Use procedures subjecting animals to pain, stress, or deprivation only if alternative procedures are unavailable and the goal is justified by prospective scientific, educational, or applied gains.
- 3.3.19 Make every effort to minimize discomfort, illness and pain in animals. Such effort includes performing surgical procedures only under appropriate anaesthesia, using techniques to avoid infection and minimise pain during and after surgery, and disposing of experimental animals only in a humane way.
- 3.3.20 Use animals in classroom demonstrations only if the instructional objectives cannot be achieved through the use of videotapes, films, or other methods, and if the type of demonstration is warranted by the anticipated instructional gain.

### **3.4 Continuity of Care**

- 3.4.1 Make themselves aware of the knowledge and skills of other disciplines (for example, law, medicine) and advise the use of such knowledge and skills, where relevant to the benefit of others.

- 3.4.2 Strive to obtain the best possible service for those needing and seeking psychological service. This includes recommending professionals other than psychologists, if appropriate.
- 3.4.3 When referring a client, maintain support and responsibility for caring until contact has commenced with the agent to whom referral was made.
- 3.4.4 Give reasonable notice and make reasonably certain that discontinuation will cause no harm to the client, before discontinuing services.
- 3.4.5 Contribute where appropriate to the co-ordination of client services in order to avoid duplication or working at cross purposes. To facilitate this process, they shall maintain adequate records and communicate with other service providers.

### **3.5 Extended Responsibility**

- 3.5.1 Assume overall ethical responsibility for the scientific and professional activities of those (students, trainees, assistants, supervisees, employees) whose work they supervise. The responsibility includes monitoring of subordinates' activity and making them aware of the values and ethical prescriptions of the discipline.
- 3.5.2 Facilitate the professional and scientific development of those whose work they supervise by arranging appropriate work experience and offering constructive feedback.
- 3.5.3 Guard against misuse or misinterpretation by others of psychological data.

### **3.6 Resolving Dilemmas**

- 3.6.1 Use a systematic procedure for investigating ethical issues and resolving ethical dilemmas. A recommended procedure is presented in Appendix A, and a categorisation of affected/interested parties (stakeholders) in Appendix B.
- 3.6.2 Inform all parties, if a real or potential conflict of interest arises, of the need to resolve the situation in a manner that is consistent with this Code of Professional Ethics and take all reasonable steps so to resolve it.
- 3.6.3 Consult with colleagues and/or appropriate groups and committees if faced with a difficult situation or apparent conflict between compliance with the law and following an ethical principle. They seek consensus on the most ethical course of action and the most responsible, knowledgeable, effective, and respectful way to carry it out. In an emergency, where there is no time to consult, they make their own best professional judgment.

## 4.0 INTEGRITY

Psychologists seek to promote integrity in the science, teaching and practice of psychology. In these activities psychologists shall be honest, fair and respectful of others. They shall attempt to clarify for relevant parties the roles they are performing and to function appropriately in accordance with these roles.

More specifically, psychologists shall:

### 4.1 Recognition of Professional Limitations

- 4.1.1 Engage in self-care activities which help to avoid conditions (for example, burnout, and addictions) which could result in impaired judgement and interfere with their ability to benefit and not harm others.
- 4.1.2 Seek emotional support and/or supervision from colleagues when feeling stressed or vulnerable due to professional dilemmas.

### 4.2 Honesty and Accuracy

- 4.2.1 Ensure that they and others accurately represent their education, training and experience, and the effectiveness of the services which they offer, in all spoken, written or printed communications. Relevant communications include but are not limited to: advertisements of services, course and workshop descriptions, academic grading requirements, and research reports. Where misrepresentation has occurred, they act quickly to correct it.
- 4.2.2 Take due care to avoid misrepresentation, exaggeration, distortion or errors in reporting by themselves or others of psychological assessment results, research findings or the effectiveness of the services which they offer, and act quickly to correct any such misrepresentation, exaggeration, distortion or error.
- 4.2.3 Make clear whether they are acting as private citizens, as members of specific organisations or groups, or as representatives of the discipline of psychology, when making statements or when involved in public activities.
- 4.2.4 Ensure that families, and other interested parties, are aware that the psychologist's primary responsibilities are generally to the individual.
- 4.2.5 Take care in communicating their knowledge, findings and views to clearly differentiate facts, opinions, theories, hypotheses, and ideas.
- 4.2.6 Not suppress disconfirming evidence of their findings and views and acknowledge alternative hypotheses and explanations.

- 4.2.7 Conduct research in a way that is consistent with a commitment to honest, open inquiry, and to clear communication of any research aims, sponsorship, social context, personal values, or financial interests that may affect or appear to affect their research.
- 4.2.8 Compensate others justly for the use of their time, energy, and intelligence, unless such compensation is refused in advance.
- 4.2.9 Not accept or attempt to secure fees or benefits over and above those agreed contractually in advance. They shall not accept significant gifts where such acceptance would undermine their impartiality.
- 4.2.10 Not participate in, condone, or allow themselves to be associated with dishonesty or fraud.
- 4.2.11 Honour all promises, and commitments included in any written or verbal agreement unless serious and unexpected circumstances (for example, illness) intervene. If such circumstances occur, then the psychologist shall make a full and honest explanation to other parties involved.
- 4.2.12 Be clear, when entering into contracts with third parties, about obligations under this Code of Professional Ethics, and ensure that all parties concerned are aware of their rights and responsibilities.
- 4.2.13 Ensure that those who commission research are aware of the rights and responsibilities of all interested parties.
- 4.2.14 Clarify ownership of documentation, data, and rights of publication with those who commission research.
- 4.2.15 Give publication credit to others (including students) in proportion to the professional contribution that they have made. Publication includes all forms of media. Professional contributions include but are not limited to: ideas generated, execution of research, analysis of results, and writing.

### **4.3 Straightforwardness and Openness**

- 4.3.1 Respect the right of clients and research participants to receive an appropriate explanation of the nature, purpose and results of investigations, assessments and research findings, in language that these persons can understand.
- 4.3.2 Be clear and straightforward about all information needed to establish informed consent or any other valid written or unwritten agreement (for example: fees; concerns; mutual responsibilities; ethical responsibilities of psychologists; purpose and nature of the relationship; alternatives; likely experiences; possible conflicts; possible outcomes; and, expectations for processing, using, and sharing any information generated).
- 4.3.3 Fully explain reasons for their actions to persons who have been affected by their actions, if appropriate and/or if asked.

- 4.3.4 Avoid using deception (or techniques which might be interpreted as deception) in research or service activities if there are alternative procedures available or if negative effects cannot be predicted or offset.
- 4.3.5 Provide a debriefing for research participants following studies in which deception (or the use of techniques which could be interpreted as deception) has occurred. Psychologists shall clarify the real nature of and rationale for the study and seek to remove any misconceptions and re-establish trust.
- 4.3.6 Seek an independent and adequate ethical review of the risks to public or individual trust and of safeguards to protect such trust for any research which uses deception or techniques which might be interpreted as deception, before making a decision to proceed.

#### **4.4 Conflict of Interests and Exploitation**

- 4.4.1 Not exploit any professional relationship to further their own personal, political or business interests. Examples include: soliciting for private practice clients of one's employing agency; taking advantage of trust or dependency to frighten clients into receiving services; appropriating student's ideas, research or work; using the resources of one's employing institution for purposes not agreed to; securing or accepting significant financial or material benefit for professional activities which are already rewarded by salary; prejudicing others against a colleague for reasons of personal gain.
- 4.4.2 Not exploit clients for gratification of sexual desires, either during the professional relationship or after its termination.
- 4.4.3 Be acutely aware of the problematic nature of dual relationships (with, for example, students, employees or clients), and recognise that it is not always possible to avoid them (for example, when offering services in a small community, or engaging in person-centred teaching or training). Where it is possible, psychologists shall avoid such relationships; where it is not, they take active steps to safeguard the students', employees' or clients' interests.

#### **4.5 Actions of Colleagues**

- 4.5.1 Act to stop or offset the consequences of professional activities of a colleague or a member of another discipline which are clearly harmful or apparently unethical. Depending on the nature of the harmful activities, action may include talking informally with the professional involved, and obtaining an assurance that any harm will discontinue and be corrected. However, if the harm is serious and/or the activities persist, the psychologist shall report the situation to the Society's Board of Professional Conduct, or other appropriate regulatory body. Where such activities come to psychologists' attention in the course of a confidential client relationship with the professional, they use their professional judgment on whether to break confidentiality.
- 4.5.2 Offer, as appropriate, emotional support and/or supervision to colleagues who request it.

***PLEASE REFER TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND (PSI) 'CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS' –***

***<https://www.psychologicalsociety.ie/Article/Code-of-Ethics-1>***



## 11. DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

### Rationale

The dissertation provides students with an opportunity to employ their research skills to empirically investigate a topic of their own choosing from within the field of applied psychology. It provides them with an opportunity to develop methodological and analytical skills to an advanced level through their application in an applied setting. Students will be expected to demonstrate a level of academic performance and scholarship appropriate to the degree of MSc in Applied Psychology.

### Learning Outcomes

Students should develop and demonstrate a capacity to:

- 1) Provide a rationale for the selection of a particular topic of empirical enquiry; taking into account relevant ethical, practical, theoretical and organisational considerations.
- 2) Prepare documentation and liaise with appropriate authorities to secure ethical approval for the proposed investigation.
- 3) Carry out a review of the relevant empirical literature.
- 4) Generate an appropriate set of hypotheses or ideas to be tested.
- 5) Select and employ suitable methods and procedures for the collection of data.
- 6) Apply or arrange for the application of interventions, as appropriate.
- 7) Conduct and report on an appropriate analysis of the data collected.
- 8) Draw reasonable conclusions from the results and discuss them in terms of the hypotheses generated.
- 9) Present the study as a whole in a coherent, systematic and acceptable fashion.
- 10) Draw well-reasoned conclusions and discuss their relevance for applied practice.

### Overview of Dissertation

**A key point to note:** In addition to the learning outcomes, particularly (9) above, it is recommended that the write-up of the dissertation in general, takes the form of something more akin to a draft for submission to a journal for publication, rather than the traditional 'look and feel' of a dissertation or thesis. Amongst other skill-focused elements in this respect, beginning from the conception of your research idea and question, you should be considering the publish-ability of your study. It is therefore recommended that whilst you read around the subject area of your research, you choose a few key journal publications that will guide you on your approach to

conducting the research; the key questions/hypotheses; the methods; the analyses; and the possible pertinent conclusions and recommendations that you intend to make.

The dissertation is a research study characterised by its **scientific integrity**. The research will be judged in relation to the substantive nature of the research question, the appropriateness of the methodology used to answer the question, and the validity of conclusions drawn from the analysis. No one specific methodological approach or paradigm is privileged. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data generation and analysis are acceptable. The logic and coherence of both the theoretical formulation and the methodology are critical features of the dissertation. It is expected that students will attempt to answer theoretically meaningful questions using methodologies appropriate to the questions being asked and to use analysis appropriate to the data produced. Acceptable research studies are theoretically driven, focus on an important applied topic, and contribute to the advancement of psychological science. ***Such studies are publishable in an appropriate peer-reviewed psychology journal.***

### **Choosing an Appropriate Topic**

A replication and extension of a previous study may be acceptable but the conceptual nature of the extension and its potential to produce substantive novel findings must be considered. The dissertation should clearly show how the findings contribute to the knowledge base and practice in an applied area of psychology. The research should be explicitly embedded in a theoretical framework drawing on existing psychological theories and research to develop research questions or hypotheses.

Research is planned so that useful scientific information can be derived from its execution. A study designed to test a major hypothesis must have sufficient statistical power to reasonably test the hypothesis. In essence, sample sizes should be adequate to permit valid statistical tests of hypotheses. If the study cannot provide an adequate test of the research hypothesis, then the study is not acceptable.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

While the dissertation is an independent piece of research designed and conducted by the student, the student has access to a variety of supports over the course of the research. The student has an academic supervisor over the duration of completing the dissertation. The student must use these supports in order to successfully complete the dissertation.

#### **11.1 The role of the Research Supervisor**

The Research Supervisor is a member of the School of Psychology who has primary responsibility for the supervision of the dissertation. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the research is feasible and meets all course requirements, for overseeing the conduct of the research project, statistical analysis and write-up, and for ensuring that students are on track for the punctual completion of the research and write-up. It is expected

that the primary supervisor will play an active role in guiding the design, implementation and write-up of the research.

The Head of School, Trinity College Dublin, has ultimate responsibility to ensure that the standards of supervision meet all College standards. As a general guideline, the Research Supervisor will meet with the student a sufficient number of times for a formal, scheduled supervision tutorial and should last for at least one hour. In addition, Research Supervisors should try to make themselves available for informal discussions of matters that arise between formal supervision sessions. It is expected that students will discuss their research in detail with their supervisors. The research supervisor may provide feedback on written drafts of all components of the thesis.

Specifically, the supervisor's role will be:

- (a) To help the student to develop specific research questions and hypotheses
- (b) To advise on the literature search
- (c) To advise on the availability and /or construction of data collection instruments and /or interview schedules
- (d) To advise on ethical and legal issues
- (e) To advise and monitor data collection
- (f) To advise on data analysis
- (g) To advise on and provide feedback on the content and format of the dissertation
- (h) To provide feedback on the Dissertation proposal and the Literature review
- (i) To suggest literature relevant to the research to the student to be read in between supervisory sessions.

Students are encouraged to approach potential supervisors at an early stage in the course to discuss research ideas. A list of the academic staff and their research interests is given in the Course Guidelines. There are several potential advantages of choosing to work with a supervisor who has an established research programme on a specific topic. First, the supervisor will be aware of the current theoretical and methodological issues around the topic and will be able to offer help formulating a question and design. Second, the supervisor is likely to have addressed (or at least be aware of) many of the feasibility problems around research on the topic.

### **11.2 Student Responsibilities**

The student is the chief investigator on the project and takes the primary role in developing the rationale, aims and hypotheses of the project, designing the study and methodology, seeking ethical approval, collecting and analysing data, and writing the dissertation. Students must identify a research supervisor. If individuals experience difficulties in finding an appropriate supervisor, the course director can provide additional support.

The student is primarily responsible for arranging all meetings with supervisors and advisors. The student must maintain regular contact with the research supervisor throughout the course of the dissertation. In collaboration with the supervisor a timetable for the completion of the dissertation should be drawn up and adhered to. The student should complete and write up the project in a manner that is consistent with the guidelines as specified herein. The student must inform the supervisor of any changes to the project or of difficulties encountered in carrying it out.

At the beginning of the research, the supervisor and student should construct an agreed research schedule with specific goals. This should include a month-by-month schedule detailing the stages of assembling the core literature and any tests or assessment materials needed for the study; the stages of data collection, analysis and write-up. In addition, there should be specific contingency plans detailing the fall-back position in the case of drop-outs etc. This schedule should be submitted in writing to the Research Committee.

### **Procedures for approval & implementation of the Dissertation:**

#### **- Identification of topic and research supervisor**

After selecting a research topic the student should discuss the project with the chosen supervisor who will advise on the appropriateness and feasibility of the study. Through student-led discussion of the proposed study, the student must write up a research proposal. It is expected that students and their supervisors will work through several draft versions of the proposal.

Full-time students must gain agreement from a supervisor and have the intended project properly formulated very early in the Michaelmas term. **It is essential that students approach a potential supervisor in the first few weeks of term as there may be limited availability for a supervisor in your preferred subject area.**

- The proposal for the research must be submitted by **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 by 4pm.**
- Submission date for the final dissertation is **Monday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 by 4pm.**

#### **- Feedback from the Course Director on the Dissertation Proposal**

After the proposal has been submitted and reviewed by the course director it may be the case that students will be asked to make changes to the proposal prior to full approval being granted. **You will only receive feedback if you are required to make amendments.**

#### **Submit revised proposal (if necessary)**

Based on the feedback from the Course Director, the student will revise the proposal and submit any amendments to the Course Director and Administrator.

**Feedback from the Course Director (if necessary)**

The Course Director will consider the revised proposal to evaluate if the required amendments have been performed. If the responses to comments are satisfactory, the Course Director will provide formal approval for the research to be accepted. Failure to make satisfactory progress in the proposal will result in the student being required to resubmit an acceptable proposal within a specified time frame. If progress has been sufficiently below the required standards, a recommendation will be made that the student be withdrawn from registration on the course.

**12. Guidelines for the Preparation of the Proposal**

The full proposal (10 pages maximum) should be of sufficient detail to enable your supervisor to decide upon (a) the practicality and (b) the adequacy and appropriateness of the design and intended procedures. The proposal should include a brief review of the relevant literature, statement of aims/ hypotheses/ rationale for the design and methods, procedures for ethical clearance, methods of analysis and strategies, a programme of dates for the project. An estimate and breakdown of the research costs (i.e., travel, materials, equipment expenditure etc.) and how these are to be funded must be included. The proposed timetable for the research must be presented. Copies of questionnaires (or short outlines if in the process of development), survey instruments or interview schedule should be included as an appendix, together with draft information sheets and consent forms. In addition, letters from the applied setting stating a willingness to facilitate the proposed research should be presented.

Dissertations completed by former M.Sc. students are available to view on the local pages of the School of Psychology website [www.psychology.tcd.ie/local](http://www.psychology.tcd.ie/local).

**a. Proposal format**

The proposal is a maximum of 10 pages exclusive of title page, references and Appendices. The following headings are to be used.

**Title page**

The title page comprises:

- i) Working Title:** A succinct title of not more than 15 words
- ii)** Course name, student name and date of submission
- iii)** Name and affiliation of academic supervisor

**Proposal headings**

Your proposal should be prepared using the following headings:

**Supervisory Arrangements**

State if arrangements with your Research supervisor are tentative or fully agreed. Outline agreed arrangements for supervision.

**Abstract**

An abstract is a clear and concise summary of the proposal and should not exceed 100 words in length. Important areas to be covered include a statement of questions or hypotheses to be investigated, a discussion of research participants, the types of procedures that will be used and the analytic strategy.

**Research question(s)**

Explicitly state a specific question or set of questions that the study is trying to answer.

**Literature Review**

Briefly sketch the background leading to the current proposal. Critically evaluate existing knowledge, drawing attention to gaps in present knowledge and make an argument for how the research will contribute to this body of knowledge.

The literature reviewed should be oriented toward the specific questions addressed in the proposed study. Clearly identify the variables and hypotheses to be examined. It is important to provide a rationale as to why particular variables have been selected and how the variables related to each other. If the hypotheses are exploratory, they must be justified in terms of why studying them will shed new light on the research area.

**Research Design and Methods**

This section should describe the research design and the procedures proposed to accomplish the specific aims of the project. It should incorporate a plan of investigation, consisting of a statement of the practical details of how it is proposed to obtain the answers to the research questions posed. The methodology should be justified in terms of meeting the research aims and each of the following headings should be considered.

Participants - Nature and anticipated number of participants along with details of any inclusion or exclusion criteria.

- Design – Describe the overall design of the project, detailing participant groups, timing of measurements, etc.
- Measures – Refer to scales, questionnaires, interview procedures, observation schedules and coding schemes, where appropriate. Full copies of all measures, interview formats etc. are to be placed in the Appendix. Provide information on the sensitivity and standardisation of measures being used.

- Procedure – Explain how consent will be sought, how contact will be made with participants and how your data is to be collected. Copies of the information sheet for participants and consent form should be shown in the Appendix.
- Location, Equipment and Costings – State the location of the proposed project, the resources or equipment required and an estimate of research costs (i.e., travel, materials, equipment, payment to participants, etc.). Also, if there are any existing sources for funding.
- Methods of Analysis – Explain how data will be collated, stored and analysed. How does the planned analysis link back to your research questions? Specify which techniques will be applied.

### **Feasibility**

Set out the evidence that your study is practical and feasible in terms of accessing sufficient numbers of participants, the likelihood of their involvement, the availability of space for interviewing/testing, the availability of measures, your capacity to use coding schemes or statistical packages proposed and any other such information that might be relevant. A letter from the relevant applied setting stating a willingness to facilitate the research should be included in the proposal.

### **Ethics**

Outline any ethical issues particular to your area of research and how these have been or will be dealt with. Indicate whether you need to apply to the relevant local ethics committee.

### **Timetable**

Present a timetable for the proposed project, including a proposed start date, finish date and key project milestones (e.g., finish literature review, start data collection, review data collection process, commence write up of dissertation).

### **References**

The references indicate the extent to which the research area has been appraised. The citations and references are helpful to the research committee and therefore students must ensure that references are accurate. All studies cited in the review of the literature or in other sections of the proposal must be referenced in APA style (<http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>)

### **Appendices**

Include copies of all measures, interview and observation schedules as well as copies of the participant information sheet and consent form.

### **Feedback**

In the case of concerns with regard to any aspect of the proposal, a student will receive feedback and

recommendations from their supervisor and must make required changes. Depending upon the nature of the feedback, the student may need to resubmit the proposal or clarify some issues.

### **13.1 Ethical Approval (PLEASE SEE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE, Page 32)**

Appropriate ethical approval must be obtained prior to commencing the work. Submission to the TCD School of Psychology Ethics Committee (SPREC) is required. In addition it is likely that students will be required to obtain permission from the institution/organisation where it is planned to conduct the research. If the project involves a medical or clinical group then medical/hospital/specialist ethical approval will also be required. The School Ethics Committee cannot approve the research study until the external ethics committees have approved the study.

**Note that no commitment of resources is to be made nor is any practical work to be carried out until the full proposal has been given explicit approval from the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee.**

In rare cases, it may be necessary to refer the proposal to the University Ethics Committee. Such a referral will have implications for the timetabling of the dissertation.

<https://psychology.tcd.ie/local/Ethics/index.php>



### Word Count Limit

In light of the recommendation that the write-up of the dissertation should be more like a draft for journal publication rather than the traditional notion of a dissertation or thesis, the word count for the substantial elements of the work should be kept to a minimum. For example, journal articles all have guidelines for authors, and these tend to range in word count from 3000 to 6000. Some qualitative publications may allow more for extended text analyses. However, it is recommended that you read around author guidelines from key journals that are pertinent to your research area and take a general guide from there. In any event, **the maximum total length for the dissertation is 10,000 words** NOT including references and appendices etc.

Requests for extensions to the word limit must be made in writing to the Course Director. There must be valid, substantiating reason for request of an extension.

### Publication of Dissertation

Dissemination of research findings is an integral part of this aspect of the MSc in Applied Psychology. Research in psychology is carried out, in part, to facilitate knowledge so that it can benefit clients and the profession.

**Therefore, researchers have a scientific and ethical responsibility to make appropriate efforts to publicise their findings.** Second, dissemination of research is an important research skill, and training and experience will develop students' professional skills in this area.

Students are encouraged to discuss the appropriateness of publication with their Research Supervisor.

### Authorship guidelines

The American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines on authorship must be followed in relation to article publication. In practice, this means that students will usually be first author, and the academic supervisor should be a co-author. Authorship of the final journal article will be conditional on active involvement in the design, implementation, and write-up of the project. Order of authorship will depend on the relative contribution to these aspects of the project. Early in the process of setting up the main research project, the student, supervisor(s) and any other collaborators should negotiate authorship credit through outlining who will be responsible for disseminating the work and what happens, if for whatever reason, the agreed primary author is unable to carry through on the agreement.

If you have not initiated the process leading to the possible publication of your work by the end of a calendar year from the date of your submission, the supervisor is entitled to proceed with preparing your work for publication, using your findings and/or raw data. Your contribution will be acknowledged as second or subsequent author.

### Submission requirements

Please refer to the College document "Regulations, guidelines and notes for candidates on submission for a higher degree by thesis" in Appendix 1. The dissertation should be word processed on good quality A4 paper leaving a

35mm margin at the binding edge and at least 20mm at the other margins. All pages should be presented throughout in font size not less than 12 and double-spaced. The text should be numbered (Arabic) from the literature review onwards and use lower case Roman numerals prior to the review.

**You must ensure that the work is anonymised throughout so that no participant/service can be identified. Failure to do so is a breach of the code of ethics.**

**One disc/USB key** containing (i) a copy of thesis (formatted for Microsoft Word) and appendices, (ii) a complete raw data set with either the transcripts/text for a qualitative study or the SPSS (or other statistical package) file where the variable and value labels are completed for each variable. **We do not require a hard-bound copy of dissertation.**

### **Plagiarism and falsification of data**

As per School policy, proven plagiarism and falsification of data will have very serious consequences. Text and data may be randomly checked using manual and computerized methods. If evidence of plagiarism (including copying text from published work without placing that text in quotation marks) is established, then the project will receive a mark of zero and the most serious disciplinary action taken. The College's policy on plagiarism applies to all aspects of the research project. Note that this includes any evidence of the fabrication of data.

## **13. Doing the Dissertation: A Practical Guide**

There are a number of important issues to consider when choosing a research topic and planning the dissertation research.

### **Subject matter**

Ensure your topic is relevant and can be embedded in a theoretical framework. Psychological theories help you:

- a) organise and integrate the published literature
- b) identify key variables and their relationships
- c) plan analyses to examine theoretical predictions
- d) interpret the results. Theories are essential in conducting high-quality psychology research.

Your goal is to come up with a question that the answer to will have important implications for psychological science applied practice, and can be answered given a set of constraints. Therefore, you must balance between these competing qualities. For example, the most provocative potentially life-changing question is worthless if it cannot be researched.

**Generating ideas**

From the outset of the degree, set up a research ideas' folder so that, when you come across a journal article of interest or experience a flash of genius yourself you can deposit those ideas for reference at a later date.

Members of staff in the Psychology School have a broad array of research interests. A list of staff and their respective interests can be found in this handbook.

Indeed, while some students develop a topic, original question and methodology independently and with minimal supervision, others may find it more appropriate to build on research that is already in place in the School or in an applied setting. In this scenario, the student can collaborate with an established research investigator or programme, and learn from the knowledge and methodologies that have been established.

**Time constraints**

You will have less time than you anticipate for conducting your research. Remember that you will be doing your research on a part-time basis, possibly at irregular hours. There will be pitfalls along the way, which may eat into your time. Time delays can be anticipated and should be included in planning the study, e.g., applying for ethics committees. Other delays are outside of your control, e.g., a delay in getting a response from a Hospital Ethics Committee or awaiting the delivery of a particular test or questionnaire you require. Each stage of research typically takes longer than anticipated so that research, which requires measurement at numerous points in time or where the window for data collection is very narrow, can cause severe difficulties. Think about how these can be best managed.

**Participants**

You will have fewer participants than you anticipate for conducting your research. Ensure that there are sufficient numbers of the proposed participants available for participation in the study. Invariably, you will not get access to as many participants as you anticipate. Thus before you commence your research the service will have loads of 12 year old male bipolar disorder clients; however, once you commence your study, all of the potential participants will vanish. You may make your life harder by selecting a rare population to investigate. When considering a research area, make some preliminary enquiries about the availability and accessibility of participants. On other occasions, there may be no shortage of eligible participants but for ethical or practical reasons, access may be restricted. You must consider how many participants you will need to give your design sufficient power to detect significant differences or relationships.

**Dependence on others**

Research that requires the time, motivation, and enthusiasm of others to ensure completion is a risk. Remember you may not have the time, motivation, and enthusiasm at times for your research – can you reasonably expect others to? It is likely that you will be reliant on 1 or 2 individuals to help you access participants; however you

should try to avoid a situation where others are engaged in your data collection particularly where you may not have direct access to those who are to collect the data.

Relying on the kindness of strangers is a dangerous strategy at the best of times. An example of this situation might be where a consultant shares your research interest and agrees that nursing staff on certain wards could gather data with specified patients. It sounds like a good idea but there are too many variables outside of your control. In real life people barely have enough time to do the things they are meant to so it should come as no surprise if your research is not necessarily top of the priority list. Thus while people often react positively to the idea of research, their enthusiasm may wear thin when there are other competing demands for their time. It is often suggested that “the help provided by other people has a half-life of 2 weeks”. This may be an overestimate.

### **Research base**

Try to ensure that a reasonable research base exists for your chosen research question and that this research has some theoretical foundations. There may be a temptation to research an area that is completely new and untouched; however, a single study in a new area may not be as valuable in terms of contribution to knowledge and practice as one which builds on firmer research foundations. Typically, there are four reasons why nobody has tried to answer a specific question before:

- a) Nobody ever thought of it and you have a cutting-edge idea
- b) People thought about it and decided it wasn't worth doing
- c) People thought about it, did it, and solved the problem
- d) People thought about it, tried to do it and realised it was too hard to make progress with

### 13. 1 The Final Draft to do list

DO	DON'T...
Allow yourself 2-3 days to check spelling, grammar and do a thorough proof-read.	...Assume this can be done quickly.
Give yourself 2 full days to print off the final copy. Paragraph indentations, symbols, tabulations etc. may change as you print, especially if you are printing from a different computer to the one you used to write the dissertation.	...Assume that the printer will print exactly what appears on your computer screen.
Back up your work and back up your dissertation on 2 disks/USB keys.	...Let all your good work disappear if a computer breaks down. <b>See section on Course Guidelines on Technological Issues in Appendices, Part 3.</b>
check regularly using an updated anti-virus pack if you are moving disks between computers	...Forget that other people's computers and disks may be infected.
Familiarise yourself with the College document 'Regulations, guidelines and notes for candidates on submission for a higher degree by Thesis'. These regulations give you guidance on format, layout, typescript etc. <b>(See Appendix Part 1).</b>	...Think that this does not matter – <b><u>it does.</u></b>
Remember to enclose the <b>Declaration</b> page which should read 'I hereby certify that this dissertation is entirely my own work and has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at any other University. I agree that the library may lend or copy the dissertation on request'.	...Forget that you are submitting a piece of work that others may want to read.
Sign your Declaration page. This is the most common omission	...Leave it blank.
Show generosity of spirit and thank all those people who helped you directly and indirectly with your research, in your Acknowledgements section <b>(See Appendix Part 4).</b>	...thank everyone you've ever met.
Ensure that all references cited in the text are contained in your reference list. <b>NB: Use APA guidelines on referencing including DOIs or URLs</b>	...omit references – it makes you look sloppy and you really don't want that.
include a Table of Contents, listing all sections & subdivisions of the thesis, with page numbers.	...forget to make the reader's/examiner's life easy
Make sure to follow College guidelines on page numbering.	...give the reader/examiner the impression that you are sloppy or careless.

Include a list of tables, diagrams and illustrations with page references.	<i>...force the reader to have search blindly for material.</i>
Make sure that your references follow APA style.	<i>...develop your own private referencing system.</i>
Include copies of all non-standard measures used in your appendices.	<i>...assume that the reader/examiner has encountered the scale previously.</i>
Include an overall word count and word counts for each of the main sections, research report, and Appendices. Maximum word count is 10,000 for the main body of the dissertation not including references and appendices.	<i>...make the reader/examiner start counting the words.</i>

### 13.2 Conclusion

The dissertation is a fundamental component of the MSc in Applied Psychology. In order to successfully complete a thesis that is scientifically valid, students need to draw upon their own intellectual resources, and make constructive use of the feedback provided by their research supervisor. The dissertation demonstrates the student's ability to independently design, execute, and analyse a high quality research study.

**The encouragement of dissemination of results through publication of the research is a defining characteristic of the dissertation.**

### 13.3 Reading list for the Dissertation:

Austin, F. L., & Leong, J. T. (1997). *The psychology research handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

British Psychological Society (2006). *Code of ethics and conduct* (pp. 1-26). Leicester: British Psychological Society.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell. Rudestam, K., & Newton, R. (2007). *Surviving your dissertation* (3rd ed). London: Sage.

American Psychological Association. (2001) *Publication manual*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Fitzpatrick, J. (1998). *Secrets for a successful dissertation* Thousand Oaks, Calif: London : Sage.

Long, T. (1985). *Completing dissertations in the behavioural sciences and education (a systematic guide for graduate students)* London : Jossey-Bass.

Maxwell, S.E. & Cole, D.A. (1995). Tips for writing (and reading) methodological articles. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 193-198.

Piantanida, M. (1999). *The qualitative dissertation: a guide for students and faculty*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: London: Corwin Press ; Sage.

Rosnow, R.L., & Rosnow, M. (2001). *Writing papers in psychology* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole.

Sternberg, R.J. (1993). *The psychologist's companion: A guide to scientific writing for students and researchers*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swetnam, D. (1997). *Writing your dissertation: how to plan, prepare and present your work successfully* Oxford: How to Books.

## **APPENDICES**

**Thesis Regulations (for consideration when submitting a master's  
dissertation)**

**Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4**



## THESIS REGULATIONS (for consideration when submitting a masters dissertation)

### PART 1: Paraphrased Regulations from College Calendar

**Language:** The thesis or dissertation should be written in English.

**Published Work:** A thesis submitted for a higher degree may be based on or include, writings already published by the candidate, if the studies from which they derive have been carried out during the period of registration on the higher degree register. Such writings must be fully integrated into the body of the thesis.

**Length:** A thesis must be written concisely. Guidelines on the word limit have been previously circulated (10,000 for text, tables and references). If a thesis is likely to exceed these limits, the Course Director must be advised of its estimated length and her/his permission obtained at an early stage in the writing.

**Typescript and Illustrations:** The thesis must be printed on good quality, A4 (not American A4) (297 x 210mm) white paper. The type must be fully formed as in the output of a laser or ink jet printer. The output of dot matrix printers is not acceptable. The type font must be a serif font (e.g., Times New Roman), must be black and not less than 12 point. The course requires there must be double spacing between lines for text. The gutter margin of both text and diagrams must not be less than 35 mm and that on the other three sides not less than 20 mm.

**Title:** The title of the thesis must be written in full on the title page of each volume of the thesis.

#### **Declaration and online access:**

a) The thesis must contain immediately after the title page the following declaration signed by the author:

“I declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and it is entirely my own work. I agree to deposit this thesis in the University's open access institutional repository or allow the Library to do so on my behalf, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.”

b) In the case of a thesis for which the work has been carried out jointly; the declaration must have a statement that it includes the unpublished and/or published work of others, duly acknowledged in the text wherever included.

**Acknowledgements:** A formal statement of acknowledgements must be included in the thesis (see **Part 4 'Acknowledgements'** below).

**References:** All citations should be referenced and all references cited in APA style (*see APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition*).

## **PART 2: GUIDELINES (Candidates are obliged to follow these)**

**Methods of Production:** Use a computer/word processor and print your manuscript using a laser or inkjet printer. Use high-quality paper of sufficient opacity that the type is easily legible. Colour may not be used in Tables or Figures. Justification of the right-hand margin is acceptable.

**Pagination:** Pages should be numbered consecutively through the thesis including appendices but excluding diagrams that are not embodied in the text. The page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page, approximately 10 mm above the edge.

**Typeface:** Use of bold-face or italic type should not be excessive as it loses its impact if it is. All generic and specific Latin names should be italicised rather than underlined. *See APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) for rules regarding use of italics.*

**Title Page:** Include a title page in each volume of the thesis giving the following information in the order listed:

- (1) the full title of the thesis and the subtitle if any (ensure that the title describes the content of the thesis accurately and concisely)
- (2) the total number of volumes if more than one and the number of the particular volume
- (3) the full name of the author
- (4) the qualification for which the thesis is submitted
- (5) the name of the institution to which the thesis is submitted
- (6) the year of submission.

**Declaration:** This follows immediately after the title page. *See 'Thesis Regulations' above for details.*

**Acknowledgements:** Any acknowledgements should be on the page following the declaration.

**Table of contents:** A table of contents should immediately follow the acknowledgements. It should list in sequence, with page numbers, all relevant subdivisions of the thesis, including the list of abbreviations, titles of chapters and their sections and subsections; the list of references, other functional parts of the whole thesis; and any appendices. If a thesis comprises more than one volume, the contents of the whole thesis should be shown in the first volume and the contents of subsequent volumes in a separate list in the appropriate volume.

**Tables and Illustrative Material:** Lists of tables and figures should follow the table of contents. All tables and figures should be listed in the order in which they occur in the text. *See APA (6<sup>th</sup> Edition) for rules regarding*

*Figures, Tables and Footnotes in theses.* Page references in the list, except for Figures included in the text, should be to the page which the illustration faces.

**Permission to Copy:** A declaration giving permission for reproduction will be made to grant powers of discretion to the course administrator to allow the thesis to be copied in whole or in part without further reference to the author.

**Abbreviations:** Where abbreviations are used a key should be provided on a separate page. Abbreviations may be used at the discretion of the author. For an abbreviation not in common use, the term should be given in full at the first instance in the text followed by the abbreviation in brackets. *See APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) rules regarding abbreviations.*

**Chapters and Sections:** Theses are divided as appropriate into chapters, sections and subsections. The system of headings should be consistent and should provide a clear indication of changes in content, emphasis and other features that occur at each stage of the work. *See APA (6<sup>th</sup> edition) rules for Headings.*

**Section Numbering:** If section numbering is used it should not go beyond sub-subsections. The alphabet or Arabic numerals may be used for lists.

**Tables and Figures:** Numbering must follow APA rules. All legends for Figures and Tables should be fully self-explanatory.

### **Dissertation layout**

The dissertation should include the following sections:

#### **i) Title page for whole thesis**

A succinct and accurate dissertation title plus author details. See College Regulations

#### **ii) Declaration**

See College Regulations on declarations and permission to copy

#### **iii) Acknowledgements**

See College regulations and separate course guidelines

#### **iv) Table of Contents**

A comprehensive list of all sub divisions of the thesis

**v) Tables and Figures**

A separate list of Tables and Figures should be presented. The list should include the Table/Figure number, Table/Figure title and page number. All Tables and Figure should be listed in the order in which they occur in the text.

**vi) List of appendices**

All appendices should be listed in the order in which they occur in the appendix. The list should include the Appendix number, Appendix title and page number.

**vii) Abstract**

A 250-word structured summary of the whole dissertation.

**viii) Word Count Page**

Sectional and total word counts must be indicated.

**ix) Literature review**

**x) Research report**

**xi) References**

**xii) Appendices**

## **PART 3: COURSE RECOMMENDATIONS in technological difficulties in relation to the Dissertation**

Computer malfunction or accidental deletion of information has created difficulties for students in the past. According to the regulations, non-submission of work at the appropriate time will normally be graded as failure, with the work, once submitted, treated as a resubmission. Computer failure, accidental deletion of material or some other technological difficulty will **not be** considered as a grounds for extension.

***Please follow these guidelines to avert any major problems:***

### **Computing hints**

1. Ensure that you always back up your file
2. Clearly label versions of the document to avoid erroneously deleting the required version.
3. Consider using Automatic Save: Tool/Options/Save/Automatic Save Every 10 minutes (This creates a backup file every 10 minutes. It doesn't change your original until you close the document.)
4. If you suddenly think you've lost a file don't switch off or quit the programme or close anything. There's a good chance your file is still there. Get help from the nearest competent person!
5. If you have opened an old document, modified, and then unintentionally saved it over the old version, don't close the programme in which it was created. Instead, save the new one with a second name and then use 'edit' 'undo' multiple times to completely undo all changes to the document. You will then have retrieved the original document.

### **Other practical hints**

1. Keep a spare copy of the disk in a different place
2. Make corrections to drafts in pencil so that they can be easily erased if necessary.
3. Print out hard copies of the assignment at draft stage, and when close to the final version.
4. Print out the final version with at least two days to spare.

## **PART 4: Course Guidelines for the 'ACKNOWLEDGMENTS' Section in Dissertations**

The purpose of the acknowledgements is to first acknowledge and then thank all those individuals and institutions that have contributed to the research work contained in the dissertation. Students are free to express this acknowledgement and thanks in an individual and personal way. However, the following are guidelines on how to structure the acknowledgements section.

- 1.** First, thank the person who formally supervised your dissertation by name and title, e.g. 'Prof Mary Smith, my Dissertation Supervisor'. Then thank by name and title all those individuals who helped directly with the dissertation, e.g., (name), Lecturer in Research Methodology and Statistics, Psychology, who advised on statistical design.
- 2.** Secondly, thank course staff by name and title, i.e., (name) Course Director; (name), for help with the earlier stages of research planning, advice or more general support throughout training. It is particularly important that the Course Administrators and other staff are thanked for their many personal services throughout the training period and for any particular help with the practicalities of the submission of the dissertation.
- 3.** Thirdly, all those who participated as subjects in the research should be specifically thanked for their cooperation and time, although clearly not by name. Similarly, all those staff and institutions that facilitated the research should be thanked by name and title e.g., (name) Remember, without willing research subjects, your dissertation would not have been possible.
- 4.** Finally, acknowledge and thank all those individuals who personally helped and supported you, e.g., family, friends.

### **Intellectual Property Guidelines for Student Researchers**

The following guidelines aim to clarify principles of engagement and management of intellectual property when Students are engaged in research projects during the course of their programmes.

TCD endeavours to protect and manage IP in accordance with the TCD Policy, Practice and Regulations on Intellectual Property. As such, TCD requires Students who are engaged in research projects, as permitted by a supervising Principal Investigator (PI), to consider the following guidelines:

- All research projects and project results should be considered confidential;
- No IP (i.e. data, results, etc.) should be disclosed/presented/disseminated/published without the permission of the supervising PI;
- Students must consult with their supervising PI prior to submitting an abstract/poster/project summary for public dissemination (internally or externally);
- Students must consult with their supervising PI prior to submitting their Thesis dissertation and/or depositing a publication to TARA via the TCD Research Support System;
- Supervising PIs may, at their discretion, request that a Student signs an undertaking to assign IP and maintain obligations of confidentiality if necessary:
  - This may be dependent on terms and conditions of the funding underpinning a project; and
  - This may be dependent on the commercial sensitivity of the project.;
- Subject to the nature of and commercial sensitivity of IP created by a Student, the Students may be advised that their IP must be assigned to TCD in accordance with TCD's IP Policy:
  - Confirmation that assignment is necessary should be agreed by the Students in advance of participating in any research project; and
  - The assignment would be facilitated by the Technology Transfer Office.;
- Subject to the nature of and commercial sensitivity of IP created by a Student, the Student may be advised that a stay on a Thesis may be necessary to prevent public access - until such time as IP can be patent-protected or otherwise disclosed. Any stay required is in accordance with Section 1, paragraph 110 of the University Calendar, Part III, "Withheld access ".

- Students wishing to engage with third party Academic Institutions or Industry, and where Student-owned IP may be discussed or used for such engagement and/or collaboration, should always consult with their supervising PI or Head of School or TR&I, as appropriate. In the case of such external engagements, an agreement outlining terms and conditions of IP ownership and use between the parties may be required.
- Where Students assign their IP rights to TCD according to the TCD Policy, Practice and Regulations on Intellectual Property, they will be treated as an Inventor and will receive a share of Net Commercialisation Proceeds in accordance with Section 6 of the above Policy.

The Student is encouraged to always consult with the supervising PI with respect to the research project and any conditions which may be attached in terms of ownership of IP, publication, confidentiality and thesis submission. Any concerns with respect to the above guidelines should be raised by the Student prior to selecting or being assigned a research project. All queries regarding these guidelines can be directed to: Office of Corporate Partnership & Knowledge Exchange, Trinity Research & Innovation. OCPKE@tcd.ie

*Please note that although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the contents of this handbook, it is not a legally binding document and the School of Psychology reserves the right to modify any element, subject to the normal regulations of the University. In the event of any conflict or inconsistency between the General Regulations of the Board and this handbook, the provisions of the General Regulations shall prevail.*