

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Name, title and level of final qualification(s)	Grad Cert Psychosocial Studies (Level 6)
Name and title of any exit qualification(s)	N/A
Awarding Body	University of London
Teaching Institution(s)	Birkbeck, University of London
Home School/other teaching departments	School of Social Sciences
Location of delivery	Central London
Language of delivery and assessment	English
Mode of study, length of study and normal start month	Part-time (1 year) September
Professional, statutory or regulatory body	N/A
QAA subject benchmark group(s) Higher Education Credit Framework for England	N/A
Birkbeck Course Code	GCGPSYSL_C
HECoS Code	100498
Start date of programme	October 2012
Date of programme approval	Summer 2012
Date of last programme amendment approval	November 2012
Valid for academic entry year	2025-26
Programme Director	Brendan McGeever
Date of last revision to document	15/11/22

Admissions requirements

Minimum second-class honours degree or its equivalent in a discipline relevant to psychosocial studies, which includes most humanities and social science disciplines (such as psychology, sociology, politics, history, cultural studies).

In exceptional circumstances, the admissions tutor will consider applicants who have substantial professional experience (for example, teaching, social work, counselling and psychotherapy, mediation, development work, arts and cultural industries) without a first degree, and who can demonstrate through interview and a written assignment that they have the required academic abilities to complete a postgraduate-level course.

Applications are reviewed on their individual merits and your professional qualifications and/or relevant work experience will be taken into consideration positively. We actively support and encourage applications from mature learners.

Course aims

The Graduate Certificate programme in Psychosocial Studies offers an introduction to psychosocial studies for students who are either (a) wishing to have such an introduction without committing themselves to one of the full Masters programmes offered by the School of Social Sciences; or (b) wishing to proceed to the MA Psychosocial studies, or MA Culture, Diaspora and Ethnicity but not yet having the necessary academic background in a relevant area of study. Its main aims are to:

1. Introduce students to substantial strands of psychosocial theory - theory that proposes different ways of understanding the inter-relation between the development of subjectivity and identity and historical and contemporary social and political formations. For the Grad Cert, the focus is on psychoanalysis and social theory.
2. Prepare students to identify and analyse a range of psychosocial phenomena (e.g. violence, war, trauma, terrorism; intimacies, communities, care, human rights; agency, resistance, personal and social transformations, etc).
3. Provide students with opportunities to experience the application of psychosocial thinking and practice through experiential work in the form of reflective group-work and group discussion and negotiation throughout the course.
4. Advance students' study skills in order to prepare them for postgraduate programmes in psychosocial studies.
5. Provide a progression route for students on the BSc Social Science interested in the general field of psychosocial studies.

The programme is distinctive in its focus on the interdisciplinary terrain of the psychosocial, which sets it apart from programmes within the traditional disciplinary frames of psychology and sociology within the University of London and beyond. The programme will be rigorous in its development of students' capacities for analytical and theoretical work, and will provide an excellent basis for the move to postgraduate study in the psychosocial area.

We would normally expect successful completion of the Grad Cert at Merit level to guarantee entry onto the MA programmes listed above; students who pass the Grad Cert will be guaranteed an interview for the MA programmes.

Course structure

The programme consists of two thirty-credit core modules taken at level 6 as shown below.

Level	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Comp Core/ Option	Likely teaching term(s)
Full-time – 1 year					
6	SSPA057S6	Psychoanalysis.	30	Core	T1
6	SSPA058S6	Social theory	30	Core	T2

Core: Module must be taken and passed by student

Compulsory: Module must be taken but can be considered for compensated credit (see CAS regulations paragraph 24)

Option: Student can choose to take this module

How you will learn

Your learning and teaching is organised to help you meet the learning outcomes (below) of the course. As a student, we expect you to be an active learner and to take responsibility for your learning, engaging with all of the material and sessions arranged for you.

Each course is divided into modules. You will find information on the virtual learning site (Moodle, see Academic Support below) about each of your modules, what to expect, the work you need to prepare, links to reading lists, information about how and when you will be assessed.

The programme will be delivered through part-time, evening, face-to-face study. Teaching and learning methods include:

1. Formal teaching and lecturing by specialist staff in the School of Social Sciences.
2. Seminars, tutorials, group and individual supervision provided by staff in the School of Social Sciences
3. A range of small-group work carried out by students outside of teaching time in order to develop generic skills in listening, negotiation, leadership, co-operation, collective organisation, collective writing and document preparation (including mastering internet wiki technology) and oral presentation.
4. A range of writing, documenting and recording projects that may include the production of case notes, field notes, reflective process notes, collective writing using wiki technology, creative and autobiographical writing, journalistic pieces, etc.
5. Student teaching experience in the form of small-group mini-lectures to fellow students on developing research topics.

How we will assess you

Assessment is used to enhance your learning rather than simply to test it. For most of the modules associated with this course, your assessment will be through written essays.

Learning outcomes (what you can expect to achieve)

'Learning outcomes' indicate what you should be able to know or do at the end of your course. Providing them helps you to understand what your teachers will expect and also the learning requirements upon which you will be assessed.

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of a range of interdisciplinary theoretical approaches to the psychosocial constitution of the human subject and the relationship between the psychic and the social in the wider social formation.
2. Demonstrate the capacity to apply a psychosocial understanding to key problematics and phenomena.
3. Demonstrate a conceptual grasp and practical understanding of psychoanalytic and social theoretical approaches in the field of the psychosocial.
4. Work effectively in a small-group so as to perform a number of small-group tasks including group oral presentations.
5. Manage their own independent reading and learning outside staff contact-time so as to produce assignments of the required standard.

Careers and further study

Graduates in Psychosocial Studies can pursue career paths in mental health, education, social research, international development, conflict resolution, human rights, or the cultural industries. Possible professions include:

- counselling psychologist
- further education lecturer
- human resources officer
- social researcher
- psychotherapist.

Birkbeck offers a range of careers support to its students. You can find out more on [the careers pages of our website](#).

Academic regulations and course management

Birkbeck's academic regulations are contained in its [Common Award Scheme Regulations](#) and Policies published by year of application on the Birkbeck website.

You will have access to a course handbook on Moodle and this will outline how your course is managed, including who to contact if you have any questions about your module or course.

Support for your study

Your learning at Birkbeck is supported by your teaching team and other resources and people in the College there to help you with your study. Birkbeck uses a virtual learning environment called Moodle and each course has a dedicated Moodle page and there are further Moodle sites for each of your modules. This will include your course handbook.

Birkbeck will introduce you to the Library and IT support, how to access materials online, including using Moodle, and provide you with an orientation which includes an online Moodle module to guide you through all of the support available. You will also be allocated a personal tutor and provided with information about learning support offered within your School and by the College.

[Please check our website for more information about student support services](#). This covers the whole of your time as a student with us including learning support and support for your wellbeing.

Quality and standards at Birkbeck

Birkbeck's courses are subject to our quality assurance procedures. This means that new courses must follow our design principles and meet the requirements of our academic

regulations. Each new course or module is subject to a course approval process where the proposal is scrutinised by subject specialists, quality professionals and external representatives to ensure that it will offer an excellent student experience and meet the expectation of regulatory and other professional bodies.

You will be invited to participate in an online survey for each module you take. We take these surveys seriously and they are considered by the course team to develop both modules and the overall courses. Please take the time to complete any surveys you are sent as a student.

We conduct an annual process of reviewing our portfolio of courses which analyses student achievement, equality data and includes an action plan for each department to identify ongoing enhancements to our education, including changes made as a result of student feedback.

Our periodic review process is a regular check (usually every four years) on the courses by department with a specialist team including students.

Each course will have an external examiner associated with it who produces an annual report and any recommendations. Students can read the most recent external examiner reports on the course Moodle pages. Our courses are all subject to Birkbeck Baseline Standards for our Moodle module information. This supports the accessibility of our education including expectations of what information is provided online for students.

The information in this programme specification has been approved by the College's Academic Board and every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information it contains.

Programme specifications are reviewed periodically. If any changes are made to courses, including core and/or compulsory modules, the relevant department is required to provide a revised programme specification. Students will be notified of any changes via Moodle.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for the College's courses is [available online](#).

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