



Psychology



Ranked 7th

for Psychology by *The Independent Complete University Guide 2012.*

Postgraduate study opportunities 2012/13

World-class taught and research degrees to PhD



95%
of our research was rated as being of international quality in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise.

Psychology

The Department of Psychology was founded in 1952 and forms part of the Faculty of Science, teaching programmes in both Durham City and Queen's Campus, Stockton.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

In the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, 95% of our research was recognised as of international quality and 60% as internationally excellent or world-leading (3* and 4*).

The Department has particular research strengths in developmental psychology and psychopathology, cognitive neuroscience and vision, evolutionary psychology and emotion, social cognition and forensic psychology. There are weekly research seminars in addition to meetings organised by members of the Centre for Vision & Visual Cognition. There is also an active social side to the Department, with daily coffee meetings and term-time social events.

In Durham City the Department is based in an attractive purpose-built building which won a Civic Trust design award. It is part of the University's Mountjoy complex, on the Science Laboratories Site, within easy reach of the University Library. At Queen's Campus, Stockton, the Department occupies part of the riverside development and is actively involved in research carried out at the Wolfson Research Institute.

RESEARCH DEGREES

The following research degrees are currently offered:

- MSc
- MA
- MPhil
- PhD.

MAIN AREAS OF RESEARCH

(These are examples of research areas within the department).

Cognition and Cognitive Neuroscience

- Neurorehabilitation of neurovisual deficits
- Attention, awareness and eye movements
- Colour vision
- Role of posterior parietal cortex in visuomotor transformation
- Emotional prosody
- Emotional processing in abnormal psychology
- Sex differences in cognition
- Hemispheric asymmetries and interhemispheric interaction
- Psychoneuroendocrinology
- Inner speech and auditory verbal hallucinations.

Developmental Psychology

- Social and cultural transmission in children
- Developmental psychopathology (including autism and eating disorders)
- Technology enhanced learning
- Attachment
- Maternal infant interactions
- Foetal development
- Premature infant development
- Pain in infants.

Social, Emotional and Evolutionary Psychology

- The mechanisms of stereotype threat
- The role of the social environment on observational learning
- Perception of emotion in facial and body movements
- Understanding the developmental precursors of adult mate choice
- Evolutionary explanations of attraction
- The nature of aggression
- Sex differences and impulsivity.



Neuroscience of Learning and Memory

- Neural basis of episodic memory in animals
- Functional imaging of episodic memory in humans
- The role of the cholinergic basal forebrain in memory
- Spatial learning in humans and non-human animals
- The role of motivation in learning and memory
- Perceptual learning
- The role of sleep in learning.

Applied, Clinical and Health Psychology

- Psychopathology
- Forensic psychology
- Criminological psychology
- Health psychology
- Early parenting styles.

RECENT THESIS TITLES

- “Blind date: mate selection in visually impaired and sighted population”
- “Perception, action and the cortical visual streams”
- “Bridging the transmission gap in attachment: the role of mind mindedness in mothers and fathers”.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH FACILITIES

The Department is particularly well equipped in the areas of eye movement recording and motion analysis. We have a state-of-the-art system for Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) research, an EEG system for multi-channel ERP recording and coherence analysis, and a world-class laboratory for colour vision research. In collaboration with a local NHS Trust, the Department expects to have a new fMRI scanner come online by Summer 2011.

We have close links with offender management services including prisons, probation and the third sector.

MSc students in the Department have access to dedicated laboratory space with equipment linked to teaching on the programmes and available for dissertation project use. There are weekly research seminars in the Department, given by invited external speakers, members of staff, and postgraduate students. Postgraduate research students also present their research at a postgraduate conference which takes place each September. We have an active Postgraduate Committee which administers funds earmarked to support postgraduate research and conference attendance.

STAFF RESEARCH INTERESTS

If you are thinking of coming to Durham University for postgraduate research at PhD or Masters level you will know that you are entering a research environment second to none. With 95% of Durham’s research assessed as being of international quality and examples of world-leading (4*) research excellence in every department, you are guaranteed to study in an academic environment of great quality.

In the Department of Psychology you will receive the guidance of scholars and researchers at the very front of their field internationally, and be given the chance to participate in your chosen research field at the global level. More importantly, when you join us, you will be invited to actively participate in our research environment through seminars, conferences and workshops, and you will enjoy full access to our clinical and experimental facilities.

TYPICAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR RESEARCH DEGREES

- 2:1 in Psychology or Psychology related subject (or equivalent).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

- IELTS of 6.5 or above in all components, or equivalent.

We welcome applications from holders of international qualifications. For advice on the equivalency of international qualifications and further information on English language requirements, please contact our International Office on international.office@durham.ac.uk or visit our website at www.durham.ac.uk/international

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

- ESRC North East Doctoral Training Centre Studentships 1+3 and +3
- Durham Doctoral Studentship Scheme.

The University also has a range of funding opportunities for postgraduate students. To find out what support you could be eligible to receive see our online funding database at www.durham.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/fees/search



TAUGHT PROGRAMMES
MA in Research Methods
(Developmental Psychology)

The MA in Research Methods (Developmental Psychology) is a one-year full-time taught course designed for those who are planning a career in research. A distinctive feature of this programme is the provision of research training at three different levels. In addition to generic training in social science research methods and subject-specific training in psychology methods and skills, the programme also provides more specialised training of particular relevance to the research area of the student's PhD. The aim is to provide a clear context for the research methods being learned and to equip the student with specific skills relevant to the area of their PhD research.

MSc in Developmental Psychopathology

The MSc in Developmental Psychopathology is a one-year full-time taught course designed for students who are planning a career in research, clinical psychology, child health or education. A key focus of the programme is the study of research methods.

One third of the assessment is devoted to the research project (dissertation) and dissertation work is carried out in an area of child or adolescent psychopathology.

You will receive generic training in social science research methods and subject specific training in methods and skills required by researchers working in the field of developmental psychopathology. The course includes both generic and subject level components, providing an introduction to broad issues and methodological approaches in social science and also in-depth analysis of research issues closely related to the student's own dissertation area.

MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience

The Department has a strong cognitive neuroscience research group with expertise in a range of techniques including fMRI, neuropsychology, animal behaviour, ERP, TMS and research interests including perception, action, attention, learning and memory and developmental cognitive neuroscience.

The course is designed to cover this range of theoretical issues and techniques to provide students with a wide range of transferable skills including various professional ways of disseminating knowledge. In addition, students are encouraged to put this focus on cognitive neuroscience in the context of psychology and research methodologies in general by incorporating more generic research training components with students from other courses.

The MSc is run in partnership with Cambridge Research Systems (Ltd) who provide research equipment for areas of cognitive neuroscience research in the Department. In addition to students gaining useful transferable skills in the use and programming of this equipment, a number of internships with Cambridge Research Systems are available as an option to students studying on the course. This provides an excellent opportunity for students who wish to further develop their transferable skills, or to have experience of using their skills within a business environment.



MSc in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience

The main strength of the Department of Psychology lies within the developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience research groups. The MSc in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience combines these strengths and is aimed at students who are seeking to build on their undergraduate qualifications to develop their project management skills and knowledge base in developmental aspects of the brain sciences for a career in research, clinical psychology or educational psychology.

The MSc provides students with detailed historical, philosophical, theoretical and practical knowledge of a broad range of developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience techniques.

This wide-ranging knowledge makes students extremely strong candidates for future research positions, and provides them with an ability to develop broad research programmes, utilising a range of techniques, as independent researchers.

Further, the programme will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that may be required of a professional in clinical psychology, child health and educational psychology.

The MSc in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience allows students to choose one third of their degree on subject specific modules that align with their interests that are offered in the MSc Developmental Psychopathology and the MSc Cognitive Neuroscience.

The dissertation module comprises one third of the course and is specifically on the topic of Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience. The final third of the course comprises generic research skills training which is provided for all MSc students within the Department.

MSc in Criminological Psychology

This is an exciting new programme which combines academic rigour with a clear practice based focus for those working with, or wishing to work with, those from socially disadvantaged groups (e.g. offenders).

The course will be underpinned by a pervasive consideration of ethical issues with an emphasis on practical professional skills. Topics covered will include: developmental approaches to prevention and desistance, risk assessment and management with violent and sexual offenders, reducing crime and reoffending and psychological assessments, clinical and counselling values and skills.

This course is designed to suit those already working with disadvantaged groups or those actively seeking such employment in the future. The course will also provide a firm basis for those wishing to pursue a research role in this fascinating and rapidly growing field. There will be contributions from a range of policy and practitioner perspectives in addition to the traditional academic input.

TYPICAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

- MA in Research Methods (Developmental Psychology) and MSc Developmental Psychopathology: 2:1 in Psychology or psychology related subject (or equivalent)
- MSc in Cognitive Neuroscience: 2:1 in Psychology, Biological Sciences or other related disciplines (or equivalent)
- MSc in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience: 2:1 in Psychology, Biological Sciences or other related disciplines (or equivalent)
- MSc in Criminological Psychology: 2:1 in Psychology or psychology related subject (or equivalent) and, in addition, preference will be given to those with experience of working with socially disadvantaged groups (such experience could be gained in a range of sectors, e.g. mental health, housing, youth justice, child protection, prisons or probation). Suitably qualified ex-offenders are particularly welcome to apply.

“The skills I have learnt during the course and the international contacts I have made will be invaluable for any job that I choose. Not only has this given me subject-specific skills but it has given me belief in my own strength.”

Aimee Kay Crisp, PhD Psychology.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

- IELTS of 6.5 or above in all components, or equivalent.

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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KEY INFORMATION

Each year we admit around 150 undergraduates, 50 Masters and 10 PhD students to the Department which has around 40 academic members of staff.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The MA Research Methods (Developmental Psychology) is designed for students who plan to continue their graduate studies at PhD level in an area of developmental psychology, psychology or social psychology, while the MSc Developmental Psychopathology is designed for students who are planning a career in clinical psychology, research, child health or education.

The MSc Cognitive Neuroscience is designed for UK and international students who are seeking to build on their undergraduate qualifications to develop their project management skills and theoretical knowledge for a career in research or related disciplines.

In addition, the programme is aimed at those from closely related science backgrounds who wish to build up a knowledge and practical experience of cognitive neuroscience and psychology before embarking on a psychology related career.

Those successfully completing the MSc Criminological Psychology course will have a range of very marketable skills and a sound knowledge base which we would anticipate would mean an eligibility for a range of positions across both public and private sector employers of those working with socially disadvantaged children and adults.

CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

For further information on career options and employability, including the results of the Destination of Leavers survey, student and employer testimonials and details of work experience and study abroad opportunities, please visit www.durham.ac.uk/psychology/postgraduate/employability

Job prospects for all successful students on our taught postgraduate programmes are very good and, in addition, graduates from each of our Masters programmes continue their studies to PhD level every year.



Name:
Aimee Kay Crisp

Home Country:
UK

Postgraduate Course:
PhD Psychology

I heard about the PhD during my undergraduate studies at Durham University. The main attraction was that the Department of Psychology has a thriving research community with lots of opportunities and support available.

From a social perspective there is a huge diversity of students from different countries and cultures so it is a unique opportunity to broaden your horizons without the need to travel.

The skills I have learnt during this course and the international contacts I have made will be invaluable for any job that I choose. Not only has this given me subject-specific skills but it has given me belief in my own strength.

One of the highlights has been getting my first manuscript accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. Without the invaluable advice from my supervisor this wouldn't have happened so early on in my research.

As this qualification opens so many doors I'm not quite sure what I'm going to do when I finish. Carrying out research in an academic environment in a foreign institution or getting a job in the private sector are options, but having so many choices is one of the major benefits of this qualification.



Contact details

For further information on taught programmes or research degrees contact:

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