

2021-09-TPT

**Medical Sciences Divisional Board**

**Approved at the meeting of the Graduate School Committee on 01.06.21**

**Title of Programme/ Name of Regulation**

Master of Science by Coursework in Psychological Research

**Brief note about nature of change:** Minor amendment to assessment

**Location of change**

In *Examination Regulations 2020-21*

<https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=mosbcinpsycrese>

**Effective date**

**For students starting from MT 2021**

And

**For first examination from 2021-22**

**Detail of change**

1. The Divisional Board of Medical Sciences shall appoint for the supervision of the course an Organising Committee, which shall have the power to arrange lectures and other instruction.
2. The Organising Committee shall appoint an academic adviser for each candidate.
3. Each candidate shall follow a course of study in Psychological Research for at least three terms and for a substantial part of the three subsequent vacations, as determined by the course timetable.
4. The examination shall consist of the following parts:

*A. Core Modules*

Candidates shall be examined in each of five core modules:

*I. Research Evaluation*

Each candidate shall be required to submit one electronic copy of a 2,000 word review of a journal article assigned by the Organising Committee. This assignment must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the time and date specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work

#### II. *Statistical Theory and Methods*

- (a) Each candidate shall be required to submit one electronic copy of each of the ~~four~~ three Statistical Workshop assessments based on data analyses carried out during statistical workshops. All such assignments must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the times and dates specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work.
- ~~(b) Each candidate shall also be required to sit a two-hour written examination. The examination will be marked on a pass/fail basis and candidates failing to reach the required standard will have one further opportunity to enter for the examination before the end of the academic year.~~

#### III. *MatLab Programming for Experimental Psychology*

Each candidate shall be required to submit one electronic copy of a piece of MatLab code that they have produced, as well as one electronic copy of a report of no more than 3,000 words that explains the code. All such assignments must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the time and date specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work. Each candidate shall make a brief oral presentation of their code to a group of two assessors, after which, the candidate shall be assessed *viva voce* on the code. The form of the presentation to the assessors shall be specified in the course information at the beginning of the academic year of the examination. Candidates who do not give a presentation and do not pass the viva voce assessment to a satisfactory standard will be deemed to have failed the module.

#### IV. *Philosophical Foundations of Psychology*

Each candidate shall be required to submit one electronic copy of an essay of no more than 3,000 words. This assignment must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the times and dates specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work. Essay topics must be approved by the Organising Committee.

#### V. *Project Design*

Each candidate shall be required to submit one electronic copy of a 3,000 word review of relevant literature and methods relating to their chosen research project. This assignment must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the time and date specified at

the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work. Each candidate shall make an oral presentation on the methodological aspects of their own research project. Candidates who fail to give a presentation will be deemed to have failed the module.

### *B. Optional Modules*

Candidates shall be assessed in each of three optional modules, selected from the following list:

- I. *Computer Modelling of Brain Function*
- II. *Brain and Cognition*
- III. *Affective Science*
- IV. *Developmental Science*

For each optional module undertaken, candidates shall be required to submit one electronic copy of an essay of no more than 3,000 words. All such assignments must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the times and dates specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work. Essay topics must be approved by the Organising Committee.

For the Computer Modelling of Brain Function optional module, each candidate shall additionally be required to submit one electronic copy of a portfolio of reports based on practical work completed during the module. This assignment must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system by the time and date specified at the start of the course in the Course Handbook. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work.

### *C. Research Project*

Candidates shall be required to submit not later than noon on the first Monday in September, one electronic copy of a dissertation of not more than 10,000 words in length (excluding bibliography and any appendices) on ~~his or her~~ their research project. This assignment must be uploaded to the ~~Assignments section of the Degrees WebLearn site~~ University approved online submission system. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work.

Candidates shall also be required to deliver a poster presentation based on their research project. However, this shall not contribute to the overall result for this module. The date on which candidates are required to deliver their presentations will be in the Long Vacation.

5. Candidates must achieve a pass in each of the modules in order to pass the examination overall. In the event that a candidate is deemed not to have achieved the required standard in an element of the examination, ~~he or she~~ they will have the opportunity to re-submit or re-sit the relevant assessment on one further occasion.
6. Each written submission must be accompanied by a statement signed by the candidate confirming that it is ~~his or her~~ their own work.

7. Candidates may be required to attend an oral examination at the discretion of the examiners and this may include questions on the candidate's dissertation, or on any other element of the examination.

## **Schedule**

### *A. Core Modules*

I. *Research Evaluation* This module is delivered as a series of oral presentations prepared by individual students followed by group discussions. The focus is on research articles that illustrate the use of particular kinds of methodology and/or design.

II. *Statistical Theory and Methods* This module comprises a series of statistical lectures and statistical workshops.

III. *MatLab Programming for Experimental Psychology* This module provides practical training in MatLab programming for psychologists. This will provide students with programming skills early on in the course, which can then be used in research projects.

IV. *Philosophical Foundations of Psychology* This module begins with historical and foundational issues and progresses to philosophical issues arising from areas of contemporary research in psychology. Topics studied will include some of: the subject matter of psychology; levels of description; the epistemology of psychology; psychological understanding; cognitive science; the study of neuropsychological and psychiatric disorders; the scientific study of consciousness; and philosophical issues arising from areas of contemporary research.

V. *Project Design* This module provides practical instruction in research and presentation skills. Students will undertake detailed planning of the Research Project.

### *B. Optional Modules*

I. *Computer Modelling of Brain Function* This module provides an introduction to the goals and methods of computational modelling in the context of cognitive neuroscience, covering the architecture, function, and properties of a number of basic prototypical classes of neural network. It also looks at how these basic neural networks provide building blocks for larger-scale models of brain function. Lectures will be supplemented by practical sessions providing hands-on experience of computational modelling.

II. *Brain and Cognition* This module covers methods used in research in cognitive psychology and neuropsychology. It presents foundational knowledge from neuroanatomy, neurological disorders, neurological and psychological assessment and the use of experimental methods, to familiarise students with the diverse methodologies which contribute to cognitive neuropsychology. Methodologies deployed in the investigation of perception and cognition are discussed and evaluated.

III. *Affective Science* This module provides a critical analysis of the range of methods and approaches used in social psychology and the study of individual differences.

*IV. Developmental Science* This module addresses theories and methods used in selected areas of developmental psychology. Experimental methods are reviewed and evaluated with examples from recent research. Attention is also given to studies of brain function during typical and atypical development and to the uses of fMRI, EEG and other neuroimaging techniques. We will discuss particular issues arising from the study of infants, children and those with developmental disorders, and consider translation to the clinic and the classroom.

*C. Research Project*

1. Each student shall carry out a project involving data collection and analysis under the supervision of a research supervisor, on a subject selected in consultation with the academic advisor and approved by the Organising Committee. The Organising Committee shall be responsible for the appointment of the research supervisor.

**Explanatory Notes**

The removal of the exam and the switch to a 100pt scale of the summative assessments creates a more cohesive assessment framework which ensures greater transparency for students and higher similarity to the other course modules.

Minor amendments are also made to amend references to Weblearn for submissions, and to amend remaining binary gender wording.