



**UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON**

# Programme Specification 2020–2021

Organizational Psychology  
Human Resource  
Management

MSc  
Postgraduate Diploma  
Individual modules

**Important document – please read**



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## Important information regarding the Programme Specification

### About this document

Last revised 21 January 2020

The Programme Specification gives a broad outline of the structure and content of the programme, the entry level qualifications, as well as the learning outcomes students will achieve as they progress. Some of the information referred to in this programme specification is included in more detail on the University of London [website](#). Where this is the case, links to the relevant webpage are included.

Where links to external organisations are provided, the University of London is not responsible for their content and does not recommend nor necessarily agree with opinions expressed and services provided at those sites.

If you have a query about any of the programme information provided, whether here or on the website, registered students should use the *ask a question* tab in the [student portal](#); otherwise the *Contact Us* button on each webpage should be used.

### Terminology

The following language is specific to the programme:

**Module:** Individual units of the programme are called modules. Each module is a self-contained, formally-structured learning experience with a coherent and explicit set of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

### Key revisions made

Programme specifications are revised annually. The relevant committee of Birkbeck, as part of its annual review of standards, confirms the programme structure and the educational aims and learning outcomes, and advises on any development in student support.

Where changes have been made which may impact on continuing students, these are listed below. For all new students, the programme and general information provided in this document is correct and accurate and will be applicable for the current year.

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## Significant changes made to the Programme Specification 2020-2021

Prior to the 2020-21 academic year, the **Research Project** was a single 60-credit module comprised of two elements: a research proposal (25%) and a final dissertation (75%). From 2020-21, the Research Project is split into two modules: Research Proposal (15-credits) and Dissertation (45-credits). Students must pass the Research Proposal module in order to register for the Dissertation module.

Prior to the 2020-21 academic year, a minimum of **two** satisfactory contributions to the tutor supported **computer conferencing** per discussion topic was required (excepting the Research Project). Failure to satisfy the requirements led to removal of access to the computer conferencing forums for the module concerned. From 2020-21, removal of access of no longer applicable. Instead, satisfaction of the minimum tutor supported computer conferencing requirements for a module is now worth 10% of the overall module mark. If you fail to satisfy the requirements, you will receive 0% out of 10% towards the overall module mark.

## **Programme title and awards**

Postgraduate Degrees of the University of London may be classified. The award certificate will indicate the level of the academic performance achieved by classifying the award. The classification of the degree will be based on the ratified marks from the completed assessments.

The classification system for the MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Organizational Psychology / Human Resource Management is as follows:

Distinction; Merit; Pass.

Specific rules for the classification of awards are given in the [Programme Regulations](#), under Scheme of Award

### **Programme titles**

- Organizational Psychology
- Human Resource Management

### **Qualifications**

- Master of Science in Organizational Psychology
- Master of Science in Human Resource Management
- Postgraduate Diploma in Organizational Psychology
- Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management

### **Intermediate qualifications**

Students may not normally receive an intermediate qualification and continue to a higher qualification, even if they are registered on the intermediate qualifications.

### **Exit qualifications**

- Postgraduate Diploma in Organizational Psychology
- Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resource Management
- Postgraduate Certificate in Organizational Psychology
- Postgraduate Certificate in Human Resource Management

An exit qualification is an intermediate qualification, for which the student may not have registered at the outset but which may be awarded on completion of specific modules (or credit accumulated) in a longer programme of study, if the student leaves the programme.

Exit qualifications are awarded at the discretion of the Board of Examiners. A student who has accepted an exit qualification is not permitted to register again on the same programme with the University of London.

The specific rules are given in the [Programme Regulations](#) under Scheme of Award.

### **Individual modules on a stand-alone basis**

There is also provision for individual modules to be studied on a stand-alone basis. Students may take up to four individual modules (60 credits) on a stand-alone basis, with the exception of the Research Project, without being registered for the MSc or PGDip in Organizational Psychology / Human Resource Management.

### **Qualification titles may be abbreviated as follows:**

Master of Science – MSc

Postgraduate Diploma – PGDip

Postgraduate Certificate – PGCert

### **Level of the programmes**

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies (FHEQ) forms part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education of the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education](#) (QAA).

The qualifications are placed at the following Levels of the FHEQ:

- MSc Level 7
- PGDip Level 7
- PGCert (exit qualification only) Level 7

Individual modules are offered at Level 7

### **Relevant QAA subject benchmarks group**

Not applicable

### **Awarding body**

University of London

### **Registering body**

University of London

[www.london.ac.uk](http://www.london.ac.uk)

### **Academic direction**

Birkbeck, University of London

### **Accreditation by professional or statutory body**

The MSc Organizational Psychology has been accredited as part of the [British Psychological Society](#) (BPS) Stage 1 set of requirements to train to become a registered practitioner psychologist with the [Health Care and Professions Council](#) and become eligible for Chartered Status with the Society.

## Programme Specification 2020-2021 Organizational Psychology / Human Resource Management (MSc/PGDip/Individual modules)

Alongside this MSc, the BPS requires students to become Graduate Members of the Society. To join as a Graduate Member, BPS requires a 2:2 in an undergraduate Psychology degree accredited by the Society or a BPS accredited conversion course. Both the Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership and the completed MSc allow for successful completion of Stage 1. Students can then proceed to Stage 2 of accreditation which leads, on successful completion, to Chartered status. Stage 2 study is undertaken directly with the BPS.

### Language of study and assessment

English

### Mode of study

Flexible and online study

### Programme structures

The **MSc** Organizational Psychology consists of:

- Eight 15-credit compulsory modules plus a compulsory 15-credit Research Proposal module and a compulsory 45-credit Dissertation module.

The **PGDip** Organizational Psychology consists of:

- Eight 15-credit compulsory modules

The **MSc** Human Resource Management consists of:

- Eight 15-credit compulsory modules plus a compulsory 15-credit Research Proposal module and a compulsory 45-credit Dissertation module.

The **PGDip** Human Resource Management consists of:

- Eight 15-credit compulsory modules

Full details of the Scheme of Award are included in the [Programme Regulations](#).

### Maximum and minimum periods of registration

The maximum and minimum period of registration, from a student's effective date of registration, are:

Qualification	Minimum	Maximum
<b>MSc degree</b>	One year	Five years
<b>Postgraduate Diploma</b>	One year	Five years
<b>Individual modules</b>	One year	Two years

Study materials are made available after registration and on payment of the applicable fee, approximately one month before the start of the term in which the module is taught.

## **Credit value of modules**

Further information about the credit systems used by universities in the UK and Europe is provided by the [Quality Assurance Agency](#) and the [European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System](#).

Where credits are assigned to modules of a programme, credit indicates the amount of learning carried out in terms of the notional number of study hours needed, and the specified Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-awarding Bodies (FHEQ) level indicates the depth, complexity and intellectual demand of learning involved. The details below indicate the UK credits and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) values.

Credits are assigned to the modules of the programmes as follows:

- All compulsory modules – 15 UK credits or 7.5 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 7
- Research Proposal module – 15 UK credits or 7.5 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 7
- Dissertation module – 45 UK credits or 22.5 ECTS credits at FHEQ Level 7

A student awarded the MSc degree will have accumulated 180 UK credits or 90 ECTS credits.

A student awarded the PGDip will have accumulated 120 UK credits or 60 ECTS credits.

A student awarded the PGCert (exit qualification only) will have accumulated 60 UK credits or 30 ECTS credits.

## **Recognition of prior learning**

Recognition of prior learning is a generic term for the process by which we recognise and, where appropriate, award credit for learning that has taken place elsewhere, before entry onto a programme of study. Where the prior learning covered a similar syllabus to a module/course on the University of London programme, credit will be awarded as if you took the University of London module/course.

See the [General Regulations](#) (Section 3) and [Programme Regulations](#) for more rules relating to prior learning.

Students who satisfy the entrance requirements for an award and are appropriately qualified may apply for recognition of prior learning mapped against a maximum of one module. An application will be considered on the basis of successfully completed studies at an appropriate level. Prior learning will not be recognised for the Research Project modules (Research Proposal or Dissertation).

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## **Entrance requirements**

### **Postgraduate entrance requirements**

Applicants must submit an application in line with the procedures and deadlines set out on the [website](#).



Entrance requirements for a postgraduate qualification, or Individual modules, vary. Full details are provided on the programme page under Entry Requirements:

[Human Resource Management](#)

[Organizational Psychology](#)

### **English language requirements**

Applicants must satisfy the English language requirements for the programme. These are set out in detail on the programme page under Entry Requirements:

[Human Resource Management](#)

[Organizational Psychology](#)

Where an applicant does not meet the prescribed English language proficiency requirements but believes that they can demonstrate the requisite proficiency for admission, the University may, at its discretion, consider the application.

### **Internet access and computer specification**

Students will require regular access to a computer with an internet connection to use the University of London's online resources and systems.

The computer should have at least the following minimum specification:

- a web browser with Cookies and JavaScript enabled (a latest version of Firefox, Chrome or Internet Explorer is recommended);
- a good internet connection;
- a speaker.

And the following applications installed:

- a word processor that accepts Microsoft Word formats (.doc and .docx);
- a PDF reader (for example Adobe);
- software for playing mp3 and mp4 files.

### **Students with access requirements**

The University of London welcomes applications from disabled students and/or those who have access requirements. The University will make every effort to provide reasonable adjustments to enable those with a disability, learning difficulty or access requirements to have the same opportunity as all other students to successfully complete their studies.

The University is committed to managing the application procedure and the programme itself to ensure that services are accessible for all students and that an inclusive environment is created. Students with a disability, or others who may need access arrangements to assist in taking examinations, should complete the relevant section of the application form, or contact the [Inclusive Practice Manager](#). A separate room or other arrangements may be considered.

Requests are considered by a University panel, whose purpose is to ensure that students with disabilities and/or specific access requirements are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by such arrangements when compared with other students. These considerations remain separate from the academic selection processes.

For further information, see [Inclusive Practice Policy](#)

### **Sources of funding and scholarships**

Information about potential sources of funding and scholarships is updated annually and where available is included in the prospectus web pages.

For further information see the [website](#)

## **Educational aims and learning outcomes of the programmes**

### **Learning outcomes of the programmes**

These programmes are designed to familiarise students with the best and most up-to-date theory and research available on organizations, particularly the psychological and social processes which operate within them.

The programmes are aimed at anyone who is interested in finding out how organizations function and particularly the human processes that take place within them.

The main educational aims of these programmes are to offer a challenging, flexible scheme of study invigorated by research, which advances students' ability to develop academic and practical insights into the management of organisations. It is intended that students will be encouraged to develop a range of transferable and subject-specific expertise using their initiative and thinking out problems themselves.

The programmes aim to:

- develop a sound basis in which to explore, interpret, evaluate and critique any issues within organizational psychology or human resource management;
- encourage independent critical and evaluative skills that can be used to apply independent judgment;
- teach students how to apply the conceptual and practical tools needed to design and initiate research into organisational management;
- allow students to develop a theoretical framework with which to make sense of organizations;
- facilitate self-development into professionally organized and interactive individuals by practising skills of selection, assimilation and communication.

### **Subject specific – knowledge and understanding:**

All students will be able to:

- demonstrate a sound foundation of knowledge about organizational psychology and human resource management in the areas studied (which may include motivation, performance, organizational change, careers, personnel selection, training, employment relations, practices in human resource management, and well-being at work);
- Design and critically evaluate qualitative and quantitative research, and carry out basic forms of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis on quantitative data;
- make use of information technology to obtain information for research into organizational behaviour or human resource management;

Additionally, MSc students will have gained skills to carry out a Research Project in the field.

### **Intellectual and transferable skills:**

All students will be able to:

- demonstrate the skills needed to interpret, evaluate, synthesise, and critically analyse information from a range of sources;
- define concepts properly, evaluate the evidence for propositions, identify faulty logic or reasoning and make appropriate generalisations;
- consider the views of others openly, and to be sensitive to the culture, business and management practices of others;
- demonstrate the skills needed to collaborate with others in the learning process and to undertake intellectual debate;
- use problem solving skills in a range of situations;
- use fluent and effective communication and discussion skills on line and in a formal written context;
- have a capacity to handle ideas and scrutinise information in critical, evaluative and analytical ways;
- manage their own learning, including working effectively to deadlines, plan, organise and prioritise tasks.

Additionally, MSc students will be able to conduct an empirical study through the collection of first-hand data and be equipped to construct a scientific report.

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## **Learning, teaching and assessment strategies**

Modules are offered across three terms of eleven weeks from October to December (Term 1), January to March (Term 2) and April to July (Term 3). This 11 week period includes 9 weeks of guided study followed by a personal study week. The examination period for each module is in the final week of each term.

The programmes use tutor supported computer conferencing as the main mode of communication between staff and students. Students will discuss topics in tutor groups of normally 12-15 students. Each discussion topic has an allocated period within which students may contribute to the conference discussion; in terms 1 and 2 there is a two-week period and in term 3 a one-week period. All contributions are stored and form a permanent record of the discussion. Students engage in dialogue, and develop and negotiate

conclusions with others, which are key components in the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and transferable skills. The computer conferencing makes it possible to teach students interactively wherever they are located in the world, and minimises the isolation often experienced on conventional distance learning programmes.

Students are provided with all the materials they will need online. For each module, they will receive either nine recorded lectures (audio/visual, or audio only), or nine dedicated audio recordings. The lectures will be recorded 'live' at Birkbeck in London, and each one will be about 75-90 minutes long. The length of the dedicated audio recordings will vary according to the topic. All recordings will be accompanied by, and will refer to, a set of PowerPoint slides which are also provided. As a consequence, students all over the world will be able to access at home the same lectures as those given to students attending Birkbeck in London.

Students will also have access to tutor-led online seminars. Because these seminars are not run in 'real-time', students can contribute to discussions, and read the contributions made by the tutor and other students.

When students begin their programme of study, they have the option to take part in an Introductory Seminar for new students. This is held online via Skype calls. In addition, they may take part in an Examination Revision Seminar which is run every year online in addition to a Group Forum.

Students have online access to a very extensive library allowing them to search for, and download, a huge number of academic articles published in the world's leading journals, allowing access to a world class library in their own home.

Advice and practical information such as study techniques, planning, preparation for assessment is available in the student handbook. Within this teaching framework, students manage their own learning.

### **Assessment methods**

Each module is assessed by an unseen written examination worth 90% of the overall module mark, with the exception of OPM210 *Professional Development and Learning* and the Research Project modules (Research Proposal and Dissertation). The questions in these examinations are structured to allow students to demonstrate that they have acquired appropriate knowledge and understanding. The way that students manage data, solve problems, evaluate ideas and the organizational skills they use to structure answer allow the standard of intellectual and transferable skills to be assessed.

Module OPM400 *Research Methods* is assessed by a multiple choice two-hour unseen written examination worth 90% of the overall module mark.

The written examinations take place on three occasions each year, normally in December, March and July.

Full details of the dates of all examinations are available on the [website](#).

Module OPM210 *Professional Development and Learning* is assessed by a 3,000 word Learning and Development report worth 90% of the overall module mark.

For each module (except for the Research Project modules), students are required to make a minimum of two satisfactory contributions to the tutor supported computer conferencing per discussion topic (and to attempt the assessment in the year of registration for the module concerned), unless permission has been given to defer one or more of these elements. Satisfaction of the minimum tutor supported computer conferencing requirements for a module is worth 10% of the overall module mark. Students who fail to satisfy the requirements will receive 0% out of 10% towards the overall module mark.

The Research Project is comprised of two modules: Research Proposal (15-credits) and Dissertation (45-credits). All MSc students undertake these two modules and are assessed on their ability to carry out an empirical study on some aspect of Organizational Psychology or Human Resource Management, and to write a well-structured and reasoned scientific report.

The Research Proposal module is assessed by a 3,000 word research proposal.

The Dissertation module is assessed by an 8,000-10,000 word dissertation (excluding bibliography, notes and appendices).

For the Research Proposal module, a structured abstract (maximum 200 words) is submitted in October before submission of the Research Proposal in December. In order to register to submit the Dissertation module in Term 3, students will need to pass the Research Proposal module first. If unsuccessful, there is an opportunity to resubmit the Research Proposal in Term 2. Submission of the final dissertation is in September.

Assessment criteria for the programme will indicate the level at which these skills have been achieved.

### **Individual modules taken on a stand-alone basis**

If taken on a stand-alone basis, a student may choose whether or not to be formally assessed in a credit-bearing individual module for which they are registered. Students who choose to be formally assessed will be examined in the same way as for the MSc.

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## **Student support and guidance**

The following summarises the support and guidance available to students:

- [Student Portal](#): for accessing student induction, study skills support, careers and employability resources, student wellbeing advice.
- The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE): This gives access to materials (including lessons, activities and assignments) for each module studied.
- The VLE also includes a range of additional study resources such as:
  - Online student café and discussion areas which allow students to communicate with each other.
  - Past examination papers and examiners' commentaries; these provide generic feedback from assessment and guidance on writing examinations.
  - Employability skills module; guidance on how to manage your career in the future.



- [Student Guide](#): This provides information which is common to all students and gives information about matters of importance from the start of a student's relationship with the University of London through to their graduation.
- Programme Handbook: This tells students how to access available resources and assessment and examinations procedures.
- Module subject guides for each module studied; these introduce and develop the topics.
- [The Online Library](#): This provides a range of full-text, multidisciplinary databases where journal articles, book reviews and reports can be found.
- University of London library: Registered students may use the resources located within the Senate House library.
- A University of London email account and web area for personal information management.

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## Quality evaluation and enhancement

The University of London delivers the majority of its flexible and distance learning programmes through a collaboration between the University of London Worldwide and member institutions of the University of London. However, some of the flexible and distance learning programmes draw solely on academic input from the University of London, and are delivered without academic lead by a member institution. The policies, partnerships (where applicable) and quality assurance mechanisms applicable for the programmes are defined in the following key documents: The Quality Framework, the [Quality Assurance Schedules](#), [Guidelines for Examinations](#), [General Regulations](#) and, for each programme, [programme specific regulations](#).

### Awards standards

All University of London awards have to align with the [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies](#) to assure appropriate standards for each qualification. In addition, every programme that is developed by a member institution of the University of London (or a consortium with representation by more than one member institution) will be developed to the same standard as would be applied within the institution concerned. Proportionate and robust approval procedures, including external scrutiny and student engagement are in place for all programmes. Learning materials are written and all assessments are set and marked by academic staff who are required to apply the University's academic standards.

### Review and evaluation mechanisms

Some of the key mechanisms in place to assure the standards of all University of London awards and the quality of the student experience, include:

- Annual programme reports: produced for all programmes in order to review and enhance the provision and to plan ahead;

- Independent external examiners: submit reports every year to confirm that a programme has been assessed properly and meets the appropriate academic standards;
- Annual student information statistics: prepared for all systematic reporting within the University of London;
- Periodic programme reviews: carried out every 4-6 years to review how a programme has developed over time and to make sure that it remains current and up-to-date.

Improvements are made as necessary to ensure that systems remain effective and rigorous.

### **Student feedback and engagement**

The principal channel for collecting feedback from students is the Student Experience Survey. Carried out every two years, this collects feedback from the student body on a range of topics relating to the student lifecycle. The results are analysed externally and then considered in a number of different ways, including by the programme team, principal committees and the senior leadership team. Details of any resulting actions taken are published on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and the Student Portal.

Additionally, on completion of their programme of study students will be invited to take a survey that seeks to measure what they have gained from their studies.

There are also opportunities for students to get involved in governance. An undergraduate and postgraduate student member is appointed by the University to the majority of committees through an annual appointment round. Some programmes also recruit student members at the programme level. Students are frequently invited to take part in quality review processes such as Periodic Programme Reviews, Programme approval, Thematic Reviews, MOOC review panels and ad hoc focus groups. Opportunities such as these are advertised through social media and on the website. More information can be found on the [website](#).

Students can also apply to join the Student Voice Group, which meets four times a year to consider initiatives for enhancing student experience. Notes from these meetings are published on the Student Portal.

VLEs also provide the opportunity for informal feedback and discussion.

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## **After graduation**

### **Further study**

Successful completion of the programme can allow students to progress to a higher level award in the subject area.

### **Graduate employment routes**

At registration, students are asked to complete a small number of questions relating to where they are in their career planning. This data is used to assist with the implementation of employability strategies and interventions.

Some graduates of this programme use the knowledge, skills, and qualification they have gained to enhance and develop their existing careers. Others use the knowledge, skills, and

qualification to modify or switch their career paths, for example to become consultants in government departments, large companies, or in any organization where knowledge or organizational psychology or human resource management may be useful.

### **The Alumni Community**

Upon finishing a course of study, graduates automatically become part of the University of London alumni community, a diverse global network of more than one million graduates in over 180 countries, providing lifelong links to the University and to each other.

Alumni are encouraged to keep in touch after they graduate and to become active members of the alumni community; in return they receive a number of benefits and services, including an extensive programme of events and engagement opportunities.

More information is available on the alumni [webpage](#).

Follow the alumni community on social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#)