Course Specification

Course Summary Information		
1	**Course Title**	BSc (Hons) Psychology and Counselling
2	**Course Code**	US0960
3	**Awarding Institution**	Birmingham City University
4	**Teaching Institution(s)** (if different from point 3)	
5	**Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation** (if applicable)	British Psychological Society (BPS)

6	**Course Description**
	BSc (Hons) Psychology and Counselling is an excellent starting point if you're interested in understanding people, supporting mental health and building a career in psychology and/or counselling professions. This course is weighted as 60% psychology and 40% counselling. The course is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS), which is important if you plan to continue your training after graduation and is ideal if you're thinking about becoming a Counsellor, Psychotherapist, Counselling Psychologist, or progressing to postgraduate study in psychology or related fields. Learning is interactive and hands-on. You'll take part in group projects, class discussions, and counselling skills practice, helping you gain confidence and experience working with others. You'll study psychological theory, develop research skills alongside counselling approaches and ethical practice. This balance means you graduate with strong analytical, research, and interpersonal skills, opening up a wide range of career and study options. You'll be taught by a team of experienced psychologists and qualified counsellors, so your learning is closely linked to real-world practice. Teaching includes lectures, interactive seminars, online learning activities, and recorded lectures to support independent study—helping you build the study skills needed for postgraduate education. **What's covered in this course?** Some modules focus on psychology, others on counselling, but the main aim is to connect the two. Each year includes interactive learning to help you apply theory to real situations. In your first year, you will learn what counselling is, be introduced to ideas of personal development and self-awareness, and address contemporary challenges with counselling theory. Your second year is focused around developing understanding for interpersonal relationships, verbal and non-verbal communication, emotional regulation, mental health disorders, and the management of distress. In your final year you will apply counselling theories to others, developing professional communication skills, ethical awareness, and cultural competence. As you progress, you'll have more choice in your modules, allowing you to tailor the course to your interests—whether that's research, mental health, or counselling-focused study. **Future opportunities** While studying for the BSc, you can apply to stay for an extra year and progress to an MSci Psychology and Counselling (an integrated master's degree). This option is only available to students already on the BSc and provides a clear, supported pathway to postgraduate-level study. Students who complete the MSci, along with 100 supervised counselling hours, can apply for registration with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP). This means

	graduates can move directly into counselling roles, build professional experience, or continue with advanced psychology training. Overall, this course is designed to help you develop confidence, build employable skills, and prepare for postgraduate study, while keeping your career options open in psychology, counselling, and mental health.

7	Course Awards		
7a	**Name of Final Award**	**Level**	**Credits Awarded**
	Bachelor of Science with Honours Psychology and Counselling	Level 6	360
	Bachelor of Science with Honours Psychology and Counselling with Professional Placement Year	Level 6	480
7b	**Exit Awards and Credits Awarded**		
	Certificate of Higher Education Psychology and Counselling Diploma of Higher Education Psychology and Counselling Bachelor of Science Psychology and Counselling Bachelor of Science Psychology and Counselling with Professional Placement Year Bachelor of Science Psychology and Counselling with Foundation year	Level 4 Level 5 Level 6 Level 6 Level 6	120 240 300 420 420

8	Variation from the University Regulations
	None

9	Delivery Patterns		
Mode(s) of Study	**Location(s) of Study**	**Duration of Study**	**Code(s)**
Full Time	City centre	3 years	US0960
Year long Professional Placement	City Centre	4 years	US1413
Part-time	City Centre	5 years	US****

10	Entry Requirements	
	Home:	*The admission requirements for this course are stated on the course page of the BCU website at https://www.bcu.ac.uk/ or may be found by searching for the course entry profile located on the UCAS website.*
	EU:	
	International:	
	Access:	

11	Course Aims
	The BSc Psychology and Counselling combines analytical and interpersonal skills to prepare graduates for various careers. The course is accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) meaning successful graduates with at least a lower second-class degree are eligible for Graduate Basis for Chartered Membership of the BPS. The programme also provides a thorough grounding in counselling theory, personal development and practical counselling skills helping graduates to pursue postgraduate training in counselling, psychotherapy or Counselling Psychology. Additionally, graduates of the programme are well suited to undertaking professional roles that require competence in analytical, research and soft skills such as HR, social work, mentoring, marketing and teaching. The BSc Psychology and Counselling has been designed with a developmental view of learning and offers opportunities for increased specialisation as students move through their studies.

	During year one and the first part of year 2, students take a prescribed route of both psychology and counselling modules continuing with a set pathway of core psychology modules until the end of their degree. Option module choices include either counselling or psychology specialisms. The counselling content is designed to progress from gaining understanding of counselling and counselling approaches to application of counselling theories and approaches to self and others. All students undertake a minimum of one 20 credit counselling skills module in Level 6. Those aiming to specialise in counselling may complete further skills training and a specialist module in counselling ethics at Level 6. Students whose interests are more aligned with psychology, have the flexibility to choose psychology option modules instead. Uniquely, students on the BSc Psychology and Counselling can apply to transfer to the MSci Psychology and Counselling which turns the three-year degree into a four-year integrated master's programme. The MSci Psychology and Counselling enables students to apply for individual registration with the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and includes a requirement for completion of a supervised counselling placement. Entry to the MSci is through completion of a prescribed route of counselling and psychology modules as well as a rigorous application process. Applicants must demonstrate core personal and professional competencies specified by professional counselling bodies as part of the application process including self-awareness, maturity, resilience and the ability to cope with the demands of a professional counselling training. Successful graduates of the MSci Psychology and Counselling can work in private practice or obtain employment as BACP registered counsellors, and / or to proceed to further BPS accredited training and qualifications

12	**Course Learning Outcomes**
	Knowledge and Understanding
1	Know and understand of the British Psychological Society (BPS) GBC core syllabus and topic areas in Psychology.
2	Knowledge and understanding of the historical and scientific underpinnings of the disciplines of psychology and counselling. Demonstrate how these underpinnings change across the core curriculum topic areas in Psychology and have a clear understanding of the key characteristics of the counselling relationship and the importance of personal development for counselling professionals
3	Understand core areas of psychology and explore how research and theory can be applied to behaviour
4	Explore how research methods can underpin concepts and approaches within psychology.
5	Develop and understand core theoretical counselling modalities and their views on human nature and development
6	Demonstrate critical awareness of the way in which social, political and legislative systems reproduce structures of power in society and critically reflect on the influence of these on the development of a personal values base
7	Understand and appraise the influence of social and cultural factors on mental health and the interrelatedness of psychological and physical symptoms.
	Skills and other attributes
8	Employ evidence-based reasoning and examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with the range of methodologies.
9	Use a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software, laboratory equipment and psychometric instruments.
10	Apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues, recognising that psychology involves a range of research methods, theories, evidence and applications in a way that fosters critical evaluation and reflection.

11	Appropriately use a range of research methods and understand how to obtain and analyse evidence acquired and demonstrate understanding through practical work.
12	Integrate ideas and findings across the multiple psychological perspectives, recognising the distinctive approaches to relevant issues, leading to an appreciation of theory, research findings, and relevant ethical and socio-cultural issues.
13	Review and critically evaluate psychological theory and empirical research using a range of techniques.
14	Appropriately comply to APA referencing and formatting expectations
15	Appraise and evaluate psychological approaches, and discuss the key issues and debates related to these
16	Carry out an extensive piece of independent empirical research to demonstrate a range of research skills, including planning, considering and resolving ethical issues, analysis and dissemination of findings.
17	Be effective in written and oral communication using appropriate arguments supported by relevant evidence
18	Display numerical reasoning skills, understanding and employing appropriate statistical methods.
19	Be computer literate, displaying skills in the using software applications which are generic, and discipline based.
20	Effectively retrieve, organise and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information found in library books and journal collections, and online.
21	Recognise and understand the complexity of social interaction and behaviours required for effective teamwork and competent in evaluating your own strengths and weaknesses.
22	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to convey meaning to a variety of audiences
23	Begin developing a coherent understanding of interpersonal relationships and their role in working with distress and change.
24	Engage with, and critique, recent research in counselling, psychology and neurobiology on the development and management of psychological distress
25	Develop and articulate ethical reasoning and practice drawing on professional sources of ethics and legislative frameworks.
26	Use counselling / helping skills and understand how to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries in helping relationships.
27	Demonstrate critical self-reflection and reflexivity and display effective interpersonal, helping and analytical skills when working with people from a range of different backgrounds.

13	**Level Learning Outcomes**
	Upon completion of Level 4 / the Certificate of Higher Education, students will be able to:
1	Know and understand of the British Psychological Society (BPS) GBC core syllabus and topic areas in Psychology.
2	Knowledge and understanding of the historical and scientific underpinnings of the disciplines of psychology and counselling. Demonstrate how these underpinnings change across the core curriculum topic areas in Psychology and have a clear understanding of the key characteristics of the counselling relationship and the importance of personal development for counselling professionals.
4	Explore how research methods can underpin concepts and approaches within psychology
5	Develop and understand core theoretical counselling modalities and their views on human nature and development.
18	Display numerical reasoning skills, understanding and employing appropriate statistical methods.
19	Be computer literate, displaying skills in the using software applications which are generic, and discipline based.

20	Effectively retrieve, organise and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information found in library books and journal collections, and online.
	Upon completion of Level 5 / the Diploma of Higher Education, students will be able to:
3	Understand core areas of psychology and explore how research and theory can be applied to behaviour
7	Understand and appraise the influence of social and cultural factors on mental health and the interrelatedness of psychological and physical symptoms.
8	Employ evidence-based reasoning and examine practical, theoretical and ethical issues associated with the range of methodologies.
9	Use a variety of psychological tools, including specialist software, laboratory equipment and psychometric instruments.
11	Appropriately use a range of research methods and understand how to obtain and analyse evidence acquired and demonstrate understanding through practical work.
21	Recognise and understand the complexity of social interaction and behaviours required for effective teamwork and competent in evaluating your own strengths and weaknesses.
23	Begin developing a coherent understanding of interpersonal relationships and their role in working with distress and change.
24	Engage with, and critique, recent research in counselling, psychology and neurobiology on the development and management of psychological distress.
	Upon completion of 60 credits at Level 6 / the Bachelors Degree, students will be able to:
6	Demonstrate critical awareness of the way in which social, political and legislative systems reproduce structures of power in society and critically reflect on the influence of these on the development of a personal values base.
10	Apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues, recognising that psychology involves a range of research methods, theories, evidence and applications in a way that fosters critical evaluation and reflection.
12	Integrate ideas and findings across the multiple psychological perspectives, recognising the distinctive approaches to relevant issues, leading to an appreciation of theory, research findings, and relevant ethical and socio-cultural issues.
13	Review and critically evaluate psychological theory and empirical research using a range of techniques.
14	Appropriately comply to APA referencing and formatting expectations
15	Appraise and evaluate psychological approaches, and discuss the key issues and debates related to these
16	Carry out an extensive piece of independent empirical research to demonstrate a range of research skills, including planning, considering and resolving ethical issues, analysis and dissemination of findings.
17	Be effective in written and oral communication using appropriate arguments supported by relevant evidence
22	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to convey meaning to a variety of audiences
25	Develop and articulate ethical reasoning drawing on professional sources of ethics and legislative frameworks.
26	Use counselling / helping skills and understand how to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries in helping relationships.
27	Demonstrate critical self-reflection and reflexivity and display effective interpersonal, helping and analytical skills when working with people from a range of different backgrounds.

14	**Course Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy**
	This section explains the learning and teaching approaches, activities and experiences that your course will offer; the range of assessments and types of feedback and feed forward you will encounter, and explains how these will support your continuous learning throughout the course, and the expectations we have of you in this learning partnership. We recognise that our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and bring a wealth of different experiences to their higher education experience with us. Our goal is to inspire,

develop, support and empower our diverse community of students in their chosen field of study.

Our approach to learning, teaching and assessment emphasizes:

- Providing high-quality teaching informed by research.
- Employing engaging and inclusive methods to support learning.
- Designing assessments that are meaningful and relevant.
- Delivering feedback that is timely and constructive.
- Offering regular academic support and guidance.
- Embedding employability and personal development within the curriculum.

Our learning, teaching and assessment approach is grounded in subject-specific research, sector knowledge of pedagogical developments, and an understanding of potential graduate destinations. By applying best practices, reflection, and innovation, we aim to foster curiosity, confidence, ambition, and essential skills in our students, preparing them for employment, enterprise, or further study. We support students by:

a. Using a variety of assessments to build your analytical, written and oral communication skills.
b. Offering option modules to allow you to tailor your learning experience towards your interests and employment aspirations.
c. Encouraging you to learn outside of the classroom; you will be supported with further reading and online based resources which will promote independent learning.
d. Providing regular formative learning activities that play a central role in building confidence and preparing you for your summative assessments.

Our counselling modules emphasize both theoretical knowledge and personal skill development, including self-awareness and communication. We adopt an experiential and discussion-based teaching approach to enhance soft skills and reflective abilities. Students on the BSc program have the option to extend their studies to the integrated MSci in Psychology and Counselling through an additional year of study. This means that counselling modules on the BSc / MSci are aligned with the professional requirements set by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

We expect our students to actively engage with learning materials and opportunities throughout the academic year. High levels of engagement benefit the entire learning community, enabling everyone to share diverse experiences and perspectives that enrich the educational environment.

15	**Course Requirements**
15a	**Level 4:** ***In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):***

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
PSY4047	Doing Psychological Research 1	20
PSY4049	Perspectives within Psychology	20
PSY4053	Foundations for Counselling 1	20
PSY4050	Doing Psychological Research 2	20

PSY4054	Counselling Theories	20
PSY4051	Psychology in Practice	20

Level 5:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
PSY5073	Social, Cultural and Community Psychology	20
PSY5074	Lifespan Psychology	20
PSY5082	Foundations for Counselling 2	20
PSY5075	The Human Brain: Biological and Cognitive Psychology	20
PSY5076	Research Methods and Analysis in Psychology	20

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least _____ credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules.

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
*PSY5080	Psychopathology	20
PSY5059	Infancy	20
PSY5071	Stress and Health	20
PSY5081	Positive Psychology and Wellbeing	20

Students progressing to the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY Psychopathology as an option module.***

Level 6:

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete all the following CORE modules (totalling 120 credits):

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
PSY6132	Counselling Skills 1	20
PSY6120	Independent Psychology Project	40
PSY6121	Debates in Psychology	20

In order to complete this course a student must successfully complete at least 40 credits from the following indicative list of OPTIONAL modules. (20 optional credits per semester)

Module Code	Module Name	Credit Value
Semester 1		
*PSY6112	Counselling Ethics	20
PSY6107	Counselling Psychology	20
PSY6122	Educational Psychology	20
PSY6123	Forensic Psychology	20
PSY6124	Health Psychology	20

PSY6125	Work and Organisational Psychology	20
PSY6127	Psychology of Addiction	20
PSY6128	Psychology of Eating Behaviours and Body Image	20
PSY6129	Decolonising Psychology	20
PSY6126	Ageing, the Brain and Society	20
Semester 2		
*PSY6134	Counselling Skills 2	20
PSY6119	Applied Interpersonal Skills	20
PSY6108	Gender and Sexualities	20
PSY6130	Developmental Psychology Conditions	20
PSY6115	Psychology of Policing and Criminal Justice	20
PSY6131	Professional Skills in Psychology	20

***Students undertaking the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY6112 Counselling Ethics and PSY6134 Counselling Skills 2.**

15b	Structure Diagram

Please note list of optional modules is indicative only. Students' choice will not be guaranteed for optional modules but a fair and transparent process will be adopted and shared with students.

Include a structure diagram for each mode of study. Level 4 is completed as an example including modules which extend the whole year.

Level 4

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core PSY4047 Doing Psychological Research 1 (20 credits) PSY4049 Perspectives within Psychology (20 credits) PSY4053 Foundations for Counselling 1 (20 credits)	Core PSY4050 Doing Psychological Research 2 (20 credits) PSY4054 Counselling Theories (20 credits) PSY4051 Psychology in Practice (20 credits)

Level 5

Core PSY5073 Social, Cultural and Community Psychology (20 credits) PSY5074 Lifespan Psychology (20 credits) PSY5082 Foundations for Counselling 2 (20 credits)	Core PSY5075 The Human Brain: Biological and Cognitive Psychology (20 credits) PSY5076 Research Methods and Analysis in Psychology (20 credits)
	Optional *PSY5080 Psychopathology (20 credits) PSY5059 Infancy (20 credits) PSY5071 Stress and Health (20 credits) PSY5081 Positive Psychology and Wellbeing (20 credits)

Students undertaking the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY5 Psychopathology**

Level 6

Core PSY6132 Counselling Skills 1 (20 credits) PSY6120 Independent Psychology Project (40 credits AYR)	Core PSY6121 Debates in Psychology (20 credits) PSY6120 Independent Psychology Project (40 credits AYR)
Optional *PSY6112 Counselling Ethics (20 credits) PSY6107 Counselling Psychology (20 credits) PSY6122 Educational Psychology (20 credits)	Optional *PSY6134 Counselling Skills 2 (20 credits) PSY6119 Applied Interpersonal Skills (20 credits)

PSY6123 Forensic Psychology (20 credits) PSY6124 Health Psychology (20 credits) PSY6125 Work and Organisational Psychology (20 credits) PSY6127 Psychology of Addiction (20 credits) PSY6128 Psychology of Eating Behaviours and Body Image (20 credits) PSY6129 Decolonising Psychology (20 credits) PSY6126 Ageing, the Brain and Society (20 credits)	PSY6108 Gender and Sexualities (20 credits) PSY6130 Developmental Psychology Conditions (20 credits) PSY6115 Psychology of Policing and Criminal Justice (20 credits) PSY6131 Professional Skills in Psychology (20 credits)

***Students undertaking the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY6112 Counselling Ethics and PSY6134 Counselling Skills 2.**

Structure Diagram for Part-Time Route

Level 4, year 1

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core PSY4047 Doing Psychological Research 1 (20 credits) PSY4049 Perspectives within Psychology (20 credits)	Core PSY4050 Doing Psychological Research 2 (20 credits) PSY4051 Psychology in Practice (20 credits)

Level 4 / 5, year 2

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core PSY4053 Foundations for Counselling 1 (20 credits) PSY5073 Social, Cultural and Community Psychology (20 credits)	Core PSY5076 Research Methods and Analysis in Psychology (20 credits) PSY4054 Counselling Theories (20 credits)

Level 5, year 3

SEMESTER ONE	SEMESTER TWO
Core PSY5074 Lifespan Psychology (20 credits) PSY5082 Foundations for Counselling 2 (20 credits)	Core PSY5075 The Human Brain: Biological and Cognitive Psychology (20 credits) Optional *PSY5080 Psychopathology (20 credits) PSY5059 Infancy (20 credits) PSY5071 Stress and Health (20 credits)

	PSY5081 Positive Psychology and Wellbeing (20 credits)

Students undertaking the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY5 Psychopathology**

Level 6, year 4

Core PSY6** Counselling Skills 1 (20 credits)	Core PSY6*** Debates in Psychology (20 credits)
Optional *PSY6112 Counselling Ethics (20 credits) PSY6107 Counselling Psychology (20 credits) PSY6122 Educational Psychology (20 credits) PSY6123 Forensic Psychology (20 credits) PSY6124 Health Psychology (20 credits) PSY6125 Work and Organisational Psychology (20 credits) PSY6127 Psychology of Addiction (20 credits) PSY6128 Psychology of Eating Behaviours and Body Image (20 credits) PSY6129 Decolonising Psychology (20 credits) PSY6126 Ageing, the Brain and Society (20 credits)	Optional *PSY6134 Counselling Skills 2 (20 credits) PSY6119 Applied Interpersonal Skills (20 credits) PSY6108 Gender and Sexualities (20 credits) PSY6130 Developmental Psychology Conditions (20 credits) PSY6115 Psychology of Policing and Criminal Justice (20 credits) PSY6131 Professional Skills in Psychology (20 credits)

***Students undertaking the MSci Psychology and Counselling must choose PSY6112 Counselling Ethics and PSY6134 Counselling Skills 2.**

Level 6, Year 5

Core PSY6120 Independent Psychology Project (40 credits AYR)	Core PSY6120 Independent Psychology Project (40 credits AYR)

16 Overall Student Workload and Balance of Assessment

Overall student *workload* consists of class contact hours, independent learning and assessment activity, with each credit taken equating to a total study time of around 10 hours. While actual contact hours may depend on the optional modules selected, the following information gives an indication of how much time students will need to allocate to different activities at each level of the course.

- *Scheduled Learning* includes lectures, practical classes and workshops, contact time specified in timetable
- *Directed Learning* includes placements, work-based learning, external visits, on-line activity, Graduate+, peer learning
- *Private Study* includes preparation for exams

The *balance of assessment* by mode of assessment (e.g. coursework, exam and in-person) depends to some extent on the optional modules chosen by students. The approximate percentage of the course assessed by coursework, exam and in-person is shown below.

Level 4

Workload

20% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	243
Directed Learning	277
Private Study	680
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	95%
Exam	5%
In-Person	0%

Level 5

Workload

19% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	229
Directed Learning	243
Private Study	728
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	100%
Exam	
In-Person	

Level 6

Workload

18% time spent in timetabled teaching and learning activity

Activity	Number of Hours
Scheduled Learning	211
Directed Learning	250
Private Study	739
Total Hours	1200

Balance of Assessment

Assessment Mode	Percentage
Coursework	78%
Exam	0
In-Person	22%