Psychology

About this area of study

Psychology involves the study of people's behaviour and their mental processes and the factors which lead people to differ in the way they think and behave. Studying psychology at Deakin University will provide a foundation in areas such as: assessment of personality and cognitive ability, factors which build successful group processes and interpersonal relationships, and the major determinants of individual and social mental health and wellbeing. Psychology students have a wide range of possible career options which will utilise their acquired skills in psychology-related areas of employment such as marketing, public relations, community work, teaching and human resources.

Given the wide range of psychological issues in both the public and private sectors, psychologists are able to specialise in a wide variety of areas:

- Clinical neuropsychologist specialises in the assessment and diagnosis of brain impairment and how this affects thinking skills, emotions, behaviour and personality. They are also involved in the rehabilitation and management of patients.
- Clinical psychologists are trained in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness and psychological problems. They may be located in hospitals, universities, general medical practices, community health centres and private practice.
- Counselling psychologists provides counselling, assessment and therapy to individuals, couples, families, and organisations. In general, they are dealing with people trying to cope with everyday stresses, emotional and social problems.
- Educational and developmental psychologists provide intervention, assessment and counselling in relation to the management of an individual's developmental and educational progress throughout life. Specialisations include: life span transitions, early intervention, disability, problems of learning and adjustment in schools, career and family development and ageing.
- Forensic psychologists apply psychological knowledge, to the understanding and functioning of the legal and criminal justice system. They provide expert opinion to the courts in such matters as criminal behaviour, child abuse, and family court cases.
- Organisational psychologists seek to understand the complex relationships that occur within the work place. They may apply psychological principles and methods to understand and influence work behaviour; worker attitudes, organisational structures and organisational system.
- Sports psychologists provide psychological assistance to people involved in sport and exercise at all levels who are seeking to improve their achievement, enjoyment or social interaction. Sports psychology focuses on performance enhancement, personal development, well-being and adjustment skills.

- Community psychologists are mostly concerned with preventing or reducing human problems through working with the local community in creating social change. Work may be undertaken with specific groups like the homeless and people who are mentally, socially or physically disadvantaged.
- Health psychologists help to promote and maintain health related behaviour, are concerned with the prevention and treatment of illness, and the analysis and improvement of health care systems.

Key skills that Psychology graduates demonstrate include

- ability to work with a diverse range of social groups across age groups
- interpretive and analytical capacity
- strong written and oral communication skills
- administer and interpret psychometric tests
- knowledge of relevant legislation and statutory responsibilities

Training and registration

Students who wish to become registered psychologists will require four years of academic study (three years of undergraduate study plus either a level 4 honours year of the Graduate Diploma of Psychology), followed by two years of supervised practice or a minimum two years of further approved study at the Masters level.

Courses offered at Deakin University include

- Bachelor of Psychology (Four Year Program)
- Bachelor of Applied Science (Psychology)
- Bachelor of Health Science
- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Science
- Graduate Diploma of Psychological Studies
- Bachelor of (Your Undergraduate Degree) (Honours)
- Graduate Diploma of Psychology

Registration

All Psychological practitioners are required to meet the requirements of the Psychology Board of Australia and have a current registration with that organisation.

Registration as a fully qualified Psychologist as prescribed by Psychology Board of Australia requires the completion of four years (full time equivalent) of study approved by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC), followed by either:

- two years of “Psychological Practice”, overseen by a suitably qualified supervising psychologist or;

- two years of APAC approved post graduate study in Psychology.

In Victoria, persons undertaking the two years of supervised experience are known as "Provisional Psychologists". Work as Provisional Psychologist occurs after the completion of four years of Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) approved study and is conducted under strict guidelines set by the Psychology Board of Australia.

Labour market information

Grads online has information regarding graduate salaries and where graduates go after completing their course www.gradsonline.com.au

Job Outlook has information about the labour market outlook http://joboutlook.gov.au

Related occupations

Social Worker

Social work involves a commitment to principles of non-discrimination, human rights and social justice. Social workers apply these principles to marginalised and disadvantaged groups to improve the quality of life of individuals and families within society.

Criminologist

Criminologists examine the systems by which people accused of crimes are brought to justice, attempt to explain the reasons for the criminal behaviour and suggest ways crime might be reduced

Counsellor

Counsellors assist people to better understand themselves by explaining options, setting goals and helping them to take action.

Community development officer

Assist groups to identify their needs, participate in decision-making and develop appropriate services and facilities to meet those needs. Evaluate and recommend changes to community development programs. Research, analyse and assist councils in developing community services.

Rehabilitation counsellor

Assist people with disabilities to determine rehabilitation goals including returning to paid employment. Plan, develop, implement and monitor individual client rehabilitation programs.

An industry career profile, salary and other employment information can be obtained from the My Future website www.myfuture.edu.au

Descriptions of occupations can be found at The Job Guide www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au

Occupations appropriate for supervision

These roles contain work that is "psychological" in nature, although the amount may vary and a final determination of suitability will be made by the Psychology Board of Australia.

Government employment services

- Job services Australia employment consultant
- Vocational rehabilitation consultant
- Disability employment network consultant
- Job capacity assessor

Social services

- Homeless support worker
- Drug and alcohol support worker
- Child protection worker

Specialist roles

- Parole/probation officer
- Recruitment selection specialist
- Army psychologist
- Mediator

Employers

Department of Human Services www.dhs.vic.gov.au

Private Hospitals www.health.vic.gov.au/privatehospitals

South West Health Care www.swarh.com.au/swh

Victorian Education Department www.education.vic.gov.au

Corrections Victoria www.justice.vic.gov.au

Centrelink www.centrelink.gov.au

Worksafe Victoria www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare www.cwav.asn.au

Red Cross Youth www.redcross.org.au/ourservices_acrossaustralia_youtheducation_default.htm

Lifeline Australia www.lifeline.org.au

Beyondblue www.beyondblue.org.au

Australian Drug Foundation www.adf.org.au

Australian Defence Force www.defencejobs.gov.au

Australian Unity www.australianunity.com.au

News Poll www.newspoll.com.au

Chandler Macleod www.chandlermacleod.com.au

Grey Australia www.grey.com/australia

For specific employment opportunities

Deakin University Jobshop www.deakin.edu.au/jobshop

Psychxchange www.psychxchange.com.au

Infoxchange www.infoxchange.com.au

Health and community jobs www.hacjobs.com.au

Victorian Government Health Jobs www.health.vic.gov.au/jobs

Graduate Opportunities www.graduateopportunities.com

Seek www.seek.com.au

My Career www.mycareer.com.au

Professional associations

The Australian Psychological Society www.psychology.org.au

Psychology Board of Australia www.psychologyboard.gov.au

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council www.apac.psychology.org.au