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ABERDEEN

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School of Psychology

UNDERGRADUATE GUIDE



**ABERDEEN WAS THE FIRST
UNIVERSITY IN THE UK TO
ESTABLISH A LECTURESHIP IN
PSYCHOLOGY AND THE SUBJECT
HAS NOW BEEN TAUGHT HERE
FOR OVER 100 YEARS.**

Welcome

Being a part of the School of Psychology at the University of Aberdeen means belonging to a vibrant, supportive, inclusive, friendly and fun academic community.

Our School will help you develop the academic and personal skills that will enable you to thrive during and after your studies. Our aim is for you to not only feel better educated, but also to feel more independent, resilient, and engaged – you should feel empowered to make a positive difference in your own life and to society.

Our School will provide a springboard to your future career. If you already know which career path you want to take, we will help you develop the skills and knowledge you need to get there. If you are still unsure which career path you want to take, we will provide you with diverse experiences and expert advice to help find the right career for you.

Our aim is that when you stand on stage at your graduation you will not only look out on an audience of proud family members, tutors, and new friends for life, you will also look back at the amazing experiences you have had during your time at university and look forward to the bright future that lies before you.

Dr Doug Martin
Head of School



Your learning experience

The School of Psychology provides an exciting and vibrant research-led learning environment for both undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

At Aberdeen, studying Psychology introduces you to state-of-the-art concepts and theories taught by award-winning teachers and world-class researchers.

You will study the core fields of psychology - cognition, lifespan development, sensation & perception, evolution & emotion, biological psychology and social psychology. Our psychology degrees can be studied with many other subjects and are offered as single, joint and combined BSc and MA degrees.

In addition to studying cutting-edge research methods through lectures and practicals, you will be taught by practicing and/or active researchers within clinical, educational, forensic and organisational psychology who will give you an insight into exactly what it means to be a 21st century psychologist and help prepare you for your future.



The British Psychological Society
Accredited Undergraduate Psychology

ALL OF OUR PSYCHOLOGY DEGREES ARE ACCREDITED BY THE BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY GUARANTEEING AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED HIGH STANDARD OF EDUCATION.

We offer a range of optional support groups to suit your style of learning, from peer-assisted learning where you get help from other students, to a vibrant Psychology Society, to Online Forums where you can engage with lecturers and students alike.

While studying at Aberdeen, psychology students have access to researchers with international reputations. This is particularly important in the final year where students have the opportunity to do a research project supervised by these researchers. In fact a number of our students' projects have been published in highly regarded academic journals.

Our Science Teaching Hub opened in 2022, providing students with advanced analytical tools and flexible, safe laboratory spaces.

Students have access to research grade equipment in a digitally focussed, paperless environment. The open plan layout offers a fantastic opportunity for interdisciplinary and collaborative teaching.

Find out more: abdn.ac.uk/sth

“There are lots of cool places to visit within walking distance of the university campus and the Sir Duncan Rice Library is a super facility and a great place to study”.

DARREN-
BSc PSYCHOLOGY



Combining teaching with research excellence

Dr Margaret Jackson

Dr Jackson is a senior lecturer in the School of Psychology at the University of Aberdeen. She did her Psychology degree at Aberdeen, and then completed a PhD in Cognitive Psychology at Bangor University. The majority of her current research examines the interaction between emotion and cognition. She is currently investigating how emotional expression and eye gaze influence attention to and memory for faces, and how one's own current mood state and social anxiety influence the perception and understanding of others' emotions. She teaches Developmental Psychology at Level 3 and is the chair of the School of Psychology Neurodiversity Steering Group.



Professor Ben Tatler

Ben Tatler is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Aberdeen. He obtained his undergraduate degree in Natural Sciences from Cambridge University and a PhD from the University of Sussex. Ben's Active Vision Lab studies how vision is used to provide the information we need to complete our activities of everyday life. Two key questions if we are to understand how vision supports behaviour are where we look and what we encode and retain from the places that we look at. A particular emphasis in his lab is the importance of studying vision in the context of natural behaviour in real environments, rather than exclusively in laboratory settings. In practice this means that he studies people making cups of tea, driving, playing sports and other everyday activities. He teaches courses on Biological Psychology at Level 3.

Key teaching staff



Dr Sandie Cleland

Director of Education

Dr Cleland is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology. She did her undergraduate degree at the University of Glasgow and completed her PhD at the University of Edinburgh. She has research interests in the psychology of language and numerical processing. She joined the University of Aberdeen in 2006 and took up the role of Director of Education in 2026, with responsibility for leading our approach to teaching and learning.



Dr Mirjam

Lecturer (Scholarship)

Dr Mirjam Brady-Van den Bos ("Dr Mirjam") is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology. She did her Psychology degree in The Netherlands at the University of Groningen, and completed her PhD in Cognitive Psychology at Keele University, UK. Her research is mainly qualitative in nature and focuses on aspects of identity development (how do athletes cope with severe injury? when do beginning teachers really feel they are teachers?), as well as student learning (what do students do when they revise? does group work really work?). She is course coordinator of the Level 1 methodology courses and keenly uses interactive and innovative ways of teaching throughout the degree.



Study Abroad

Our psychology students have the opportunity to study abroad in the second year of their studies (one or both semesters).

Many Aberdeen students undertake part of their degree study in another country. Our global networks offer you the opportunity to make an international experience part of your degree.

International Exchange

We support international exchange with seven of the most distinguished state universities and private colleges in North America. Exchange with these universities present a great opportunity to grow personally and academically.

The majority of our partner universities teach in English, so you do not need to speak another language to participate in study exchange.

Our international exchange partners allow study abroad while still satisfying the requirements of BPS accreditation for undergraduate psychology degrees. Exchange is only possible in Year 2 of study.

Careers and employability

Psychology students are generally considered to be highly employable upon graduation due to the range of transferable skills (such as communication and numeracy) that the degree provides and the wide range of career options post-graduation.

Aberdeen psychology graduates are employed in a wide spread of areas covering traditional roles, such as Clinical and Educational Psychology, but also in industry. To further enhance student employability the School of Psychology has a distinct employability strategy that aims to help our graduates achieve work positions or places in postgraduate study. At all levels of our degrees there are lectures and workshops aimed at improving the students' employability when they graduate.

Each year our students attend our very successful Employability Networking Event which is attended by representatives from a range of different employers across the private, public and education sectors.

The School of Psychology also offers a number of paid internships for students to apply for, allowing students to develop their employability skills even further.

Clair Moggach Cairns Counselling



We have hosted internships and have opportunities for volunteering to help provide interim support for our service users. The university students we already have in our organisation are a great asset.



Kerrie Stewart Childline



The psychology students bring much in the way of skills that we are looking for at Childline and we enjoy working with them in developing these skills and progressing through their studies.



Our students

Eva Schweiger

MA Psychology with
Counselling Skills



What drew me to Aberdeen above and beyond any other University was the impressive number of courses and electives on offer which gave me the opportunity to truly make my learning my own.

The atmosphere on campus was warm and inviting which made me feel at home from the start. Another important aspect was the readiness and availability of lecturers that were eager to connect with students, help us and instil curiosity about the world in us. I was inspired by my lecturers' passion and knowledge and found myself enjoying subjects that I never thought I would enjoy!

Overall, being in such a lively, academically stimulating environment encouraged me to explore what was possible, believe in myself and pursue my interests – so if you are looking for a place where staff and fellow students encourage you to learn and grow both personally and academically, Aberdeen is the place for you.



Lynn Walker

MA Psychology with
Counselling Skills



The most interesting part of my studies was, without a doubt, qualitative research. I loved exploring research from a lived experience perspective and exploring developmental research and specifically neurodivergence.

Thinking about my highlights of studying at the School of Psychology, it has been wonderful to work with students from all over the world, and working alongside my supervisor Dr Mirjam and Alastair Meek on my thesis, which we hope to publish, has been an absolute privilege. I am coming out of university feeling equipped with the skills and qualifications to allow me to be competitive in the job market.

After graduating, I would eventually like to study educational psychology. Prior to this, I hope to work in the third sector advocating for neurodivergent people. For those considering studying at the School of Psychology, my advice would be: do it! You are never too old, too busy, too different.

Jasmina Paneva

MA Psychology

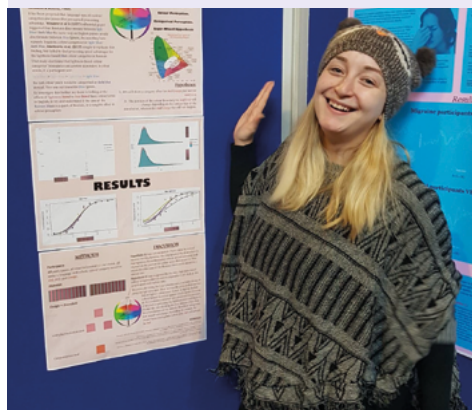
I chose to study at Aberdeen because it is on the coast. I come from a coastal city back home in Bulgaria, so I thought I would feel more at home in Aberdeen. Plus, my mum thought that the history of the School of Psychology at Aberdeen was more impressive! I enjoyed being given the opportunity and the space to discover my inner scientist. When I was applying to university, I thought I was bad at math and that I wanted to work in an applied setting. However, the staff here are so inspiring. Their passion and enthusiasm for psychology as a science showed me that I was not necessarily allowing myself access to my full potential. The girl who hated math found that her most favourite subject through the years was statistical methods. I loved being shown by my lecturers how things which may seem complicated and scary at first, are the most interesting and worth doing. Next, I am going on to do a Research Master in Cognitive Neuroscience. After that I hope to do a PhD to pursue my goal of becoming a neuroscientist.



Darja Wischerath

MA Psychology

The Psychology course is very student oriented and offers a variety of perspectives on psychology which are taught by some of the leading experts in the field. Everyone is very welcoming and the academics and administrative staff have always made sure that my needs as an international student are met by making a great support system available to me. There is always someone available who can listen and help you, no matter if it's an academic issue or you are just feeling a little homesick. One of my favourite things about Aberdeen is that the city is just big enough and it is very welcoming and friendly for students. There is always lots of stuff to do on the weekend and thanks to all the societies there are a lot of interesting talks and panel discussions to attend. I really love being so close to the beach but also having big cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh just a few hours away. After graduation I plan to do a masters degree and then a PhD. My dream is to be a lecturer and researcher in the field of social and cultural psychology.



Where your Psychology degree can take you

Once I graduated from University I became President of Societies and Student Activities at the Aberdeen University Students' Association (AUSA) which involved overseeing 140 student societies and organisations at the University of Aberdeen.

After finishing my two years with AUSA I wanted to expand my training in marketing and communications, so I applied for a Master in Communication Management at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, USA. After finishing my Masters, I worked as Student Communications Officer at Swansea University, which eventually lead me to my current job as Chief Marketing Officer at fitness company Flowin in Liverpool.

My degree at Aberdeen, together with the extracurricular activities I was able to partake in there, was essential for me to get to where I am today. I was able to gain a strong degree which prepared me academically to pursue my Masters degree in the United States and graduate with straight As and two distinction awards. My experience with extracurricular activities helped me land my first job at Societies President at AUSA and I am eternally grateful to Aberdeen University and everything I gained there.

Emma Van Carlen
MA Psychology





Lisa Kilgour

MA Psychology

I was fascinated with human behaviour and felt that psychology would enable me to learn more about this whilst also providing me with a degree that is relevant to everyone and every workplace in some way, shape or form.

After graduating, I began a role as a Support Worker, working with autistic adults who also presented a number of mental health difficulties. I supported them with their daily life and attended meetings where I offered my thoughts regarding their care package and how it might be changed to best meet the needs of the adults I worked with.

Following this, I began a role as a Residential Practitioner working with young people aged 12-21 who have experienced significant childhood trauma. I've always been passionate about caring for others and this role enabled me to find a job that better utilised my degree and associated skills. My knowledge of child development theories, an understanding of how trauma can affect the brain and an ability to empathise and remain curious about the reasons behind behaviour have all been directly relevant.

I'm still involved with the University now as I also work for a company called Scholars Mentoring Company. In this role I mentor students from local colleges and Universities in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance funding in order to help them tackle any educational barriers they feel their disability creates. I also volunteer as a Support Worker at Rape Crisis Grampian and I again feel my Psychology degree has equipped me with lots of transferable skills in relation to this such as active listening and curiosity regarding the reasons behind feelings and behaviours.

→ TOP 15 UNIVERSITY IN TWO UK LEAGUE TABLES

The Times & Sunday Times
Good University Guide 2025
and Guardian University
Guide 2025

10 reasons to choose Aberdeen

- 01 The academic strength you would expect from a 500 year old university – yet right at the forefront for careers in the 21st century**
A thriving, cosmopolitan community with students from 130 countries set within a beautiful, historic campus that has seen five Nobel Prizes.
- 02 Choice and flexibility**
At Aberdeen, Psychology can be studied with many other subjects and is offered as single, joint and combined BSc and MA degrees.
- 03 A proven track record for employment, with the best headstart your career can get**
Our experience and connections can help secure that all-important first step on the ladder to a successful career. We offer student workplace internships and the opportunity to attend our annual Employability Networking Event.
- 04 Degrees which are recognised and respected worldwide**
All of our psychology degrees are accredited by The British Psychological Society.
- 05 Opportunities to develop yourself and your interests**
Not only academic qualifications to rival the best, but also personal, communication and teamwork skills to make you an all-round achiever in whatever you choose to do. We boast over 220 clubs and societies for students to join, including a dedicated Psychology Society and offer excellent on-campus sports facilities.
- 06 The very best learning resources**
Peer assisted learning is used within the School of Psychology to enhance the formal teaching you get from lectures, tutorials and practicals.



07 A supportive community

A self-contained friendly campus in a friendly city; we will do everything we can to help you feel at home quickly. We have excellent support services to ensure you have access to all the support and guidance you might need - academic, personal, medical or financial.

08 First class accommodation

All new students are guaranteed a place in student accommodation, either on the campus or close by - so no need to set the alarm too early!

09 A buzzing, friendly city that has it all

Aberdeen is everything a student city should be and more! Historic, international, fashionable and friendly.

10 We're connected!

Daily scheduled flights from Aberdeen International Airport mean we are just 90-minutes from London, Dublin, and Amsterdam. There are also trains and buses departing every hour from Aberdeen city centre to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and the rest of Scotland.

Any questions? Phone us on 01224 272090 or email study@abdn.ac.uk



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