

The Information contained in this handbook does NOT take precedence over University documentation, the University Calendar or announcements made in class, on Moodle or on departmental notice boards.

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# **Department of Psychology**

## **B.A and B.Sc. Psychology**

Year 1 Manager: Dr. Brenda O'Connell  
Programme Director: Dr. Deirdre Desmond

### Year 1 Handbook 2018-2019



# Psychology Year 1 Handbook

## Welcome

Welcome to Maynooth University. The staff of the Department of Psychology is pleased to welcome you to our programme in Psychology, and hope that you will enjoy learning about mental life and behaviour this year. This booklet provides you with essential information about the Psychology Department and the first year Psychology modules. This booklet is therefore an important document; you should keep it in a safe place and refer to it throughout the year. Additional documentation pertaining to various aspects of Year 1 will be made available to you in due course and will be on display on Department noticeboards, on Moodle, and on the Departmental website.

Psychology is the systematic, scientific study of human mental life and behavior. As such it is a very broad discipline, spanning topics from the biological basis of behaviour and thought through to the psychology of group behaviour, and involving the study of fundamental factors as well as the application of psychological theory directly in the lives of people. The BA and BSc programmes in Psychology will allow you to study such diverse topics, to learn about the scientific basis of psychological enquiry and to appreciate how psychology is applied in the world around us to improve lives. You will also develop key skills of critical analysis of research findings, statistical analysis and experimental design and execution. Ultimately, you will move towards a position of synthesising theory and practice in the execution of an independent research project in your final year. We believe that our degree programmes will equip you with a knowledge and understanding of psychological theory and practice that will form the bedrock for your future careers as the psychologists of tomorrow.

## The Department of Psychology

The Department is situated on the second floor of the John Hume Building on the North Campus of the University. It contains a dedicated experimental psychology laboratory, a suite of sound attenuated and electrically shielded cubicles for psychological and electro-physiological research, a dedicated computer, research and teaching laboratory, as well as developmental and social psychological laboratories with CCTV, one-way mirrors and an observation booth. This site provides the Department of Psychology at Maynooth University with state of the art teaching and research facilities for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Further details of the Department of Psychology, our Research, and our upcoming events and news, can be found at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/psychology>.

## Professional recognition of the BA and BSc degrees in Psychology

An undergraduate degree in psychology must address two key concerns. Specifically, modules in the degree must contain adequate coverage of the core areas in psychology and also have substantial training in laboratory and other practical work. These requirements have been made explicit by the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) and by the British Psychological Society (BPS). The BA and BSc (Psychology) Degrees are currently accredited by the PSI. The Psychological Society of Ireland and BPS signed a memorandum of agreement in October 2006, whereby the two Societies agreed to recognise each other's undergraduate accreditation procedures. **The Department strongly advises students to apply for Graduate membership of PSI and BPS, and for the BPS Graduate Basis for Chartership once you get your final results, particularly if you intend to apply for UK-based postgraduate courses or related employment.**

## Progression to Second Year Psychology

All students who take Psychology as a subject in first year may proceed to second year Psychology, subject to satisfactory performance in the University Examinations according to the Marks and Standards of Maynooth University (see <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/node/414644>). All modules in first year psychology are required, which means that they must be passed without compensation to progress. All coursework is compulsory, and module grades will be capped at 35% (a fail grade) where any piece of coursework for that module is outstanding. This may allow the module grade to be compensated but will prevent the student from progressing to year 2 Psychology.

## Departmental Staff and Consultation

Most staff offices are located in the John Hume building. Ms. Caroline Edwards is responsible for the administration of the undergraduate degrees. Students may call to the Departmental Office concerning any matter on **Monday to Thursday: 10.00 to 11.30 and 14.30 to 16.00**. You may also contact the office by telephone 01-708 4765. The office is closed all day Friday.

Note: 3.x refers to Third floor, SF Second floor, John Hume building

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT	Professor Andrew Coogan	Room SF19
Course Director BA Psychology	Dr. Deirdre Desmond	Room SF17
Course Director BSc Psychology	Dr. Sean Commins	Room SF20
YEAR 1 MANAGER	Dr Brenda O'Connell	Room SF18
ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	Ms Caroline Edwards	Room SF12
	Ms Anne Dooley	Room SF12 (Part time)
	Ms Victoria Thompson	Room SF12 (Part time)
LECTURERS		
Dr Laura Coffey		Room 3.10
Dr Seán Commins		Room SF20
Professor Andrew Coogan		Room SF19
Dr Michael Cooke		Room SF3.12
Dr Michael Daly		TBA.
Dr Deirdre Desmond		Room SF17
Dr Philip Hyland		Room 1.14 (Education House)
Dr Rebecca Maguire		Room SF13
Professor Sinéad McGilloway		Room SF16
Professor Malcolm "Mac" MacLachlan		Room SF11
Dr Carol Murphy		Room SF14
Dr Brenda O'Connell		Room SF21
Dr Unai Diaz-Orueta		Room 3.11
Dr Bryan Roche		Room SF18
Dr Richard Roche		Room SF15
TECHNICIAN		
Mr Derek Walsh		Room SF10

### CONSULTATION WITH TEACHING STAFF

If you wish to talk to one of the lecturing staff you can do so during the specified consultation hours posted on each staff member's office door. If you want to see a staff member outside those times, you should e-mail him/her to make an appointment. **Lecturers cannot deal with detailed academic matters pertaining to the content of lectures, tutorials, practical assignments, or examinations over email or by telephone.** Under no circumstances should a lecturer or teaching assistant be contacted outside of the University setting. Face-to-face meetings ensure that students are engaging fully with the learning process, which relies heavily on the Socratic method of enquiry and investigation. Remember that you are a full time student and so should be available on campus during the week to meet in person with your teaching assistants and lecturers during the appointed times.

### E-MAIL CONTACT WITH STAFF

It is important that written communication between academic staff and students within the University should be courteous and thoughtfully composed. Your e-mails and other written communication should reflect the high writing standards that we in the Department of Psychology teach and expect of our students. In all communications, please aim to use appropriate grammar and punctuation, and to avoid phone-text shorthand and slang. Finally, you should be as courteous and professional in your communications as you would expect of academic staff in their communications with you. Members of staff will not normally reply to discourteous, unprofessional e-mails, or to e-mails from non-Maynooth University e-mail accounts. **Please note that e-mails from non-Maynooth University e-mail accounts (e.g., Gmail) are very often filtered out of the mail system as spam, and therefore may not be received. Communications from external mail accounts also make your identity difficult**

**to verify and communicating with you via such channels may represent a breach of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). You should only email staff from a Maynooth University email account.**

## CONSULTATION WITH TEACHING ASSISTANTS/POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Please remember that teaching assistants are not full time members of teaching staff and cannot be available for consultation outside consultation periods or appointments which they have individually set. Outside of these times, teaching assistants are extremely busy with their own academic activities and full-time research. In the interest of fairness to all, please adhere strictly to individually designated consultation times and do not attempt to contact teaching assistants outside of these times or outside the university setting.

## THE FOLLOWING RULES APPLY TO ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:

- No food or drink is permitted anywhere in the Department or in any labs, lecture halls, or teaching rooms.
- All students are expected to attend all scheduled classes at the specified times; students should not enter a class more than 10 minutes after the hour.
- Students should not leave a class until it is over, except in the case of an emergency.
- Students should not talk inappropriately or make undue noise during lectures or other classes.
- Students should not congregate unnecessarily outside staff offices or laboratories.

## General Information

A First Psychology notice board is situated in the Department of Psychology in the John Hume Building. Notices from teaching staff concerning lectures and other information will be posted there, and it is important that you refer frequently to this board. You will also receive e-mails periodically from the Department to your Maynooth University e-mail address. Individual lecturers may also make online announcements via Moodle in relation to their own modules. You should keep a regular eye on Moodle if your course lecturers are using it. Please ensure that your Moodle settings allow you to receive instant emails regarding class announcements and that you are not receiving messages only in digest form.

## ON-LINE COURSE NOTES, MOODLE AND THE DEPARTMENTAL WEB SITE

The Departmental web site located at <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/psychology> contains information on the Department of Psychology, including its courses and facilities, as well as detailed information on all of the research interests and activities of academic members of staff. You can also access course materials for several of your modules via the Moodle web site at <https://2018.moodle.maynoothuniversity.ie>. You are reminded, however, that your degree programme is not a distance learning course. On-line course notes are provided by individual lecturers, each of whom will make his/her own judgments regarding the appropriate level of course materials to be provided for a given module, as well as the mode of distribution. Therefore, the use of Moodle services cannot be used as a substitute for attendance at lectures and tutorials. In some cases, class notes may not be provided at all, depending on the pedagogical requirements of the relevant module. You are strongly advised to attend all lectures, take your own course notes and use provided courses notes only as supplemental aids to your learning.

## RECORDING OF LECTURES

Students **do not** have automatic permission to record lectures. Lectures are not public addresses. Lectures may only be recorded with the permission of the relevant lecturer and this permission must be sought in advance for **each** recorded lecture. This permission cannot be granted by any third party within or outside the University.

You should remember that a recording made in secrecy compromises not only the privacy of the lecturer, but of any student who speaks or asks a question during the lecture. Furthermore, recordings may be considered inappropriate where sensitive issues are being discussed in class. It might be a serious matter to be in possession of a recording of a private lecture, symposium or workshop in which participants assumed themselves to be in a private setting.

## THE STAFF-STUDENT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

The Staff-Student Consultative Committee provides one of the most effective means of resolving any difficulties that might arise during the course of the academic year. There will be representatives on the committee from each year of the Psychology programmes. You will be asked as a year group to nominate two representatives for the committee, as well as a mature student from either the BSc or BA cohorts. The Committee will meet each semester to facilitate and agree changes in a timely manner.

The Committee will normally be composed of student representatives from all years and programmes and members of the Department's teaching staff.

### DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES

Each year, the Department of Psychology invites a number of noted guest speakers to give research talks at Maynooth University. Speakers are invited because of their widely recognised contribution to the discipline in their specialist areas. They all agree, however, to prepare talks that will be accessible to undergraduate students. If you are keen to fully grasp the University experience and wish to maximise your intellectual growth during your undergraduate studies, you are strongly advised to attend these talks. These are chances to hear world-class speakers discuss cutting-edge research in Psychology. Announcements regarding guest speakers are usually made in class, posted on the Departmental web site and posters are usually on display around the Department at least a week before each talk.

### PSYCHSOC

The Psychology Society (PsychSoc) is run by students of psychology and organises various events throughout the academic year. The Society makes a vital contribution to the 'psychology experience' at Maynooth University, and we encourage all students to get involved and support PsychSoc activities. There is a 'Psychology Undergraduates' page on Moodle, where announcements are made regarding upcoming events and initiatives.

## First Year Psychology: Course Details

### MODULES AND CREDITS

First year students in the BA and BSc Psychology take 30 credits worth of psychology, and 30 credits from 2 other subjects (Arts subjects for BA Psychology students and science subjects for BSc Psychology students). First year psychology involves 4 modules: PS150 and PS152 (first semester) and PS151 and PS153 (second semester). These modules introduce you to the core areas of Biological, Cognitive, Social, Developmental and Personality Psychology, as well as introducing the scientific basis and history of Psychology, and providing initial training in research methodology in psychology.

## FIRST YEAR PSYCHOLOGY

<i>Code</i>	Semester 1	<i>Code</i>	Semester 2
PS150	Introduction to Psychology I: Research Foundations of Psychology, Biological and Developmental Psychology. <b>5-6 JHL1 Tuesdays. 12-1 JHL1 Fridays.</b>	PS151	Introduction to Psychology II: Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Individual Differences. <b>5-6 TH1 Tuesdays. 12-1 JHL1 Fridays.</b>
PS152	Introduction to Practical Experimental Psychology. <b>1-2 CB1 Callan, Mondays. 4-5 Classhall J, Wednesdays.</b>	PS153	Introduction to Psychological Research Methodology and Analysis. <b>1-2 AX1 Mondays. 4-6 CB7 Callan, Wednesdays.</b>

## **PS150 Introduction to Psychology I: Research Foundations of Psychology, Biological and Developmental Psychology**

**Credits:** 7.5

**Module coordinator:** Prof. Andrew Coogan

**Teaching Methods:** 24h lectures  
12h tutorials  
50h planned learning activities  
100h independent learning  
Total: 186h

**Module Objective:** To introduce the research basis of contemporary psychology and introduce core topics and theories in the areas of biological and developmental psychology.

**Module content:**

- Introduction of psychology as a scientific discipline.
- Introduction to fundamental principles of research in psychology.
- Basic neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, with special reference to psychological function.
- Introduction to branches of biological psychology, including psychopharmacology and psychophysiology.
- Genetic and environmental influences on psychological development.
- Major theories of cognitive and intellectual development.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Describe the fundamental features of psychology as a scientific discipline;
- Outline core features of research approaches in psychology;
- Outline the main facets of how the brain, and its constituent components, underpins human behaviour;
- Describe the core principles/areas of developmental change in the period from conception through childhood;
- Discuss issues that comprise social, emotional or cognitive development throughout childhood;
- Construct an appraisal, informed by the psychological literature, of a current topic in biological or developmental psychology.

**Assessment:** Continuous Assessment: 40%. University scheduled written examination: 60%.

**Co-requisite:** PS151, PS152, PS153.

**Pre-requisite:** None.

**This is a required module and cannot be passed by compensation for progression in the subject.**

**Compulsory Elements:** All continuous assessment, end of semester written examination.

**Penalties:** 1 grade deducted per day from that awarded.

**Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module:** 40%.

## **PS151 Introduction to Psychology II: Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Individual Differences**

**Credits:** 7.5

**Module Coordinator:** Dr. Bryan Roche

**Teaching Methods:** 24h lectures  
12h tutorials  
50h planned learning activities  
100h independent learning  
Total: 186h

**Module Objective:** To introduce the core topics and theories in the areas of social, cognitive and individual difference psychology.

**Module content:**

- Introduction to major theories of personality;
- Introduction to theories of intelligence/ability;
- Introduction to key topics in social psychology.
- Description of the basics of the cognitive approach;
- Fundamentals of core areas of cognitive psychology, such as perception, memory and problem solving.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Outline different perspectives on personality;
- Describe the construct of intelligence/ability and outline the history of intelligence testing;
- Identify, and differentiate between, prominent theories in social psychology;
- Describe seminal experiments and studies in social psychology;
- Compare and contrast different theoretical perspectives in cognitive psychology;
- Describe seminal studies in cognitive psychology;
- Construct an appraisal, informed by the psychological literature, of a current topic in social psychology, cognitive psychology or individual differences.

**Assessment:** Continuous Assessment: 40%. University scheduled written examination: 60%.

**Co-requisite:** PS150, PS152, PS153.

**Pre-requisite:** None.

**This is a required module and cannot be passed by compensation for progression in the subject.**

**Compulsory Elements:** All continuous assessment, end of semester written examination.

**Penalties:** 1 grade deducted per day from that awarded.

**Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module:** 40%.

## PS152 Introduction to Practical Experimental Psychology

**Credits:** 7.5

**Module Coordinator:** Dr. Rebecca Maguire

**Teaching Methods:** 20h lectures  
16h laboratory  
50h planned learning activities  
100h independent learning  
Total: 186h

**Module Objective:** To introduce the process of scientific experimentation in psychology and the presentation of data from psychological experiments.

**Module content:**

- Introduction to the scientific method;
- Psychology as an empirical discipline;
- Experimental design in psychology;
- Conceptual and ethical issues in psychological research and practice;
- Undertaking searches of the psychological literature;
- Conducting and presenting the results of an experiment in psychology.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Outline the basis of psychology as an empirical, scientific discipline;
- Differentiate between scientific and pseudo-scientific psychological research;
- Define the main technical terms relating to research design and implementation;
- Apply the concepts of experimental design to the analysis of psychological phenomena;
- Undertake a search of the psychological literature on a given research topic;
- Conduct a research practical exploring a specific topic in psychology;
- Present the results from this practical appropriately, within the context of a research report.

**Assessment:** Continuous Assessment: 40%. University scheduled written examination: 60%.

**Co-requisite:** PS150, PS151, PS153.

**Pre-requisite:** None.

**Assessment:** Continuous Assessment: 40%. University scheduled written examination: 60%.

**Pre-requisite:** None.

**This is a required module and cannot be passed by compensation for progression in the subject.**

**Compulsory Elements:** All continuous assessment, end of semester written examination.

**Penalties:** 1 grade deducted per day from that awarded.

**Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module:** 40%.



## **PS153 Introduction to Psychological Research Methodology and Analysis**

**Credits:** 7.5

**Module Coordinator:** Dr. Laura Coffey

**Teaching Methods:** 24h lectures  
12h laboratory  
50h planned learning activities  
100h independent learning  
Total: 186h

**Module Objective:** To introduce quantitative statistical approaches and the use of qualitative methods in psychological research.

**Module content:**

- Descriptive statistics;
- Elementary statistical inference;
- Qualitative research methods;
- Introduction to the use of SPSS in psychology.

**Learning Outcomes:** On successful completion of the module, students should be able to:

- Outline the use and interpretation of statistical tests as applied to psychological data;
- Explain key technical terms and concepts relating to data analysis and interpretation;
- Compute descriptive and inferential statistics;
- Summarise data using appropriate tables and graphical methods;
- Describe the use of qualitative research methods in psychology;
- Demonstrate competence in the use of SPSS for basic statistical analysis.

**Assessment:** Continuous Assessment: 40%. University scheduled written examination: 60%.

**Co-requisite:** PS150, PS151, PS152.

**Pre-requisite:** None.

**This is a required module and cannot be passed by compensation for progression in the subject.**

**Compulsory Elements:** All continuous assessment, end of semester written examination.

**Penalties:** 1 grade deducted per day from that awarded.

**Pass Standard and any Special Requirements for Passing Module:** 40%.

## Reading List

### Required Text:

Schacter, D., Gilbert, D., Wegner, D., & Hood, B. (2011). *Psychology*: European edition. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

### Recommended Texts:

Francher, R. (1996). *Pioneers of Psychology* (3<sup>rd</sup> rev. ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & Co. **(PS150)**

Pinel, J. (2017). *Biopsychology* (10th ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon **(PS150)**

Sacks, O. (1998). *The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat*. New York: Touchstone. **(PS150)**

Bee, H., & Boyd, D. (2013). *The Developing Child* (13th ed.). New York: Pearson Education. **(PS150)**

Gilhooly, K., Lyddy, F., & Pollick, F. (2014). *Cognitive Psychology*. London: McGraw Hill. **(PS151)**

Kassin, S., Fein, S., & Markus, H. (2016). *Social Psychology* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA:Wadsworth. **(PS151)**

Maltby, J., Day, L., & Macaskill, A. (2010) *Personality, Individual Differences and Intelligence* (2nd ed.). New York: Prentice Hall. **(PS151)**

Kantowitz, B., Roediger, H., & Elmes, D. (2014). *Experimental psychology: Understanding psychological research* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning. **(PS152)**

The British Psychological Society. (2009). *Code of ethics and conduct*. [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk) **(PS152)**

The Psychological Society of Ireland. (2003). *Code of professional ethics*. [www.psihq.ie](http://www.psihq.ie) **(PS152)**

Brysbaert, M. (2011). *Basic statistics for psychologists*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. **(PS153)**

Howitt, D., & Cramer, D. (2008). *Introduction to statistics in psychology: A complete guide for students* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Hall Education. **(PS153)**

Further recommended reading may be made in the course of the lecture series.

## Tutorials

**All students must sign up to a tutorial group.** Tutorials will be discussed in class during the first two weeks of the first semester. Make sure to attend all of your classes in order to learn how to sign up for the tutorial scheme. The sign-up system will be on-line and accessible via the PS150 Moodle page (<https://2019.moodle.maynoothuniversity.ie>). This is an important web site for you to be familiar with because a considerable amount of teaching support is provided through the on-line Moodle system. The schedule for your tutorial group is also provided on Moodle. If you have any queries regarding your tutorial group, you can contact the Departmental Office.

Places for particular timetabled tutorial slots will be offered on a first-come-first-served basis, so please do not hesitate in logging on to Moodle and making your tutorial slot choice as soon as the sign-up system goes live (announcements will be made in class). Please ensure that you are fully aware of your first year timetable commitments, so that you can agree to a particular tutorial time that does not clash with any of your other first year classes in the first or second semesters. **Once assigned, you cannot change into another tutorial group. It is your responsibility to ensure your tutorial sessions do not clash in the timetable with your other subjects in either Semester 1 or Semester 2.**

Tutorials are used to explore psychological issues through discussion and essay writing. Although attendance is vitally important for your academic progress, the tutorials also provide you with your main point of contact with the Department. Should you encounter any difficulties that impact upon your progress in any of the four psychology modules, you should bring these to the attention of your tutor. Tutorials are *not designed* to mirror lectures or to provide coaching in exam preparation. Tutors will, however, prepare students for researching and writing essays in psychology and in general exam preparation strategy. **Attendance at ALL tutorials is compulsory.**

<b>Tutorials Year 1 Academic Year 2018/2019</b>			
<b>Semester 1 PS150</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Online or In-person Group</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	24-28 Sept	Online	Stereotypes and Misconceptions
2	1-5 Oct	In-person Group Meeting	Intro-What is Psychology?
3	8-12 Oct	Online	Essay writing/APA/Plagiarism
4	15-19 Oct	In-person Group Meeting	Essay/APA/Plagiarism
5	22-26 Oct	Online	History of Psychology
6	29 Oct-2 Nov	Study Week	
7	5-9 Nov	In-person Group Meeting	Biological Psychology
8	12-16 Nov	Online	History of Psychology
9	19-23 Nov	In-person Group Meeting	Developmental Psychology
10	26-30 Nov	Online	Biological Psychology
11	3-7 Dec	In-person Group Meeting	Exam Preparation
12	10-14 Dec	Online	Developmental Psychology
13	17-21 Dec	In-person Group Meeting	Essay Feedback
<b>Semester 2 PS151</b>			
<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Online or Group</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	4-8 Feb	In-person Group Meeting	Social Psychology
2	11-15 Feb	Online	Social Psychology
3	18-22 Feb	In-person Group Meeting	Essay Writing
4	25 Feb-1 Mar	Online	Social Psychology
5	4-8 Mar	In-person Group Meeting	Cognitive Psychology
6	11-15 Mar	Online	Cognitive Psychology
7	18-22 Mar	Study Week	
8	25-29 Mar	In-person Group Meeting	Personality & Ind. Differences
9	1-5 Apr	Online	Cognitive Psychology
10	8-12 Apr	In-person Group Meeting	Exam Preparation
11	15-19 Apr	Easter Vacation	
	23-26 Apr	<b>(Bank Holiday 22 Apr)</b> Online	Personality & Ind. Differences
12	29 Apr-3 May	In-person Group Meeting	Essay Feedback
13	7-10 May	Online	Personality & Ind. Differences

## Assignments

### ESSAYS

You will be required to write two essays as part of your course assessment (one essay for each of PS150 and PS151). The essays will provide you with practice in writing according to the conventions used in psychology. Your performance in these essays will account for 20% of your overall grades for both of these modules. **Your essays should be around 1500-2000 words in length (6-8 pages double-spaced approx).**

### A Brief Guide to Essay Writing

You should write your essay in the style recommended by the American Psychological Association (i.e. APA style; <http://www.apastyle.org>). A hard copy of the American Psychological Association's *Publication manual* is available for consultation from the Departmental Office. You can find a summary of this manual in Sternberg, R. (2005). *The psychologist's companion: A guide to scientific writing for students and researchers* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The approximate word count guide for year 1 is 1500-2000 words.

Before you hand in the final draft of your essay, you should be able to answer "yes" to all of the following questions:

#### 1. Content

(a) Have you given a full and relevant answer to the essay title? If it has two or more parts, have you given each part due weight in your answer? "Discuss" means "argue a case", while "describe" means "tell a story". Don't describe that which you are asked to discuss. Note that phrases like "before I deal with X's theory. . ." almost always indicate irrelevance.

(b) Have you confined yourself to the word limit of approximately 2,000 words (or 7-8 pages of double-spaced text)?

(c) Are your conclusions based on psychological evidence? Does your essay clearly show that you have had contact with a course in psychology? The person in the street could often write a very interesting answer, but it would likely receive a fail grade because it shows no understanding of the particular approach taken by the psychologist. Furthermore, your essay should reflect knowledge of the module to which it is relevant, rather than being based on generic material that could have been gathered by any student of any subject.

(d) Have you got the details of the evidence correct?

#### 2. Structure and Expression

(a) Have you given the essay a clear structure that is highlighted by the use of blank lines, headings, underlining, numbering of points, diagrams if appropriate, synopsis in the introduction, interim and final summaries, etc.?

(b) Have you re-read the essay to ensure that the style flows? First drafts usually seem awful. Second drafts often appear to be not much better. Your tutor should see only the polished product. Watch out for flaws in the following: logic, grammar, spelling, punctuation, typos/slips of the pen, redundancy, overly long sentences, paragraphs with more than one theme and repetition of the same word in successive lines.

(c) Is your choice of verb tense appropriate? Use the present tense for established facts and the past tense for describing details of experimental procedures. Avoid using the future tense.

(d) Have you avoided gender-specific language? Do not use the generic "he". Use the plural or recast the sentence. He/she doesn't solve the problem!

(e) Do not use text language or other slang/colloquial expressions.

### 3. References and Citations

(a) Have you appended a reference section that contains all the sources cited in the essay? You should cite the authors of all ideas that are not your own (see also 3(f) below). There is a special convention for references that you have not read at first hand, but need to cite (see 3(e) below).

(b) Is there a 100% match between citations in the text and those in the reference section?

(c) In citing references in the text of your essay, have you employed the APA's "Author, date" convention? For example, you could write "According to Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner & Hood (2011)" or you could follow a statement based on an idea expressed by those authors with "(Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner & Hood, 2011)". If you are using a direct quote from a source or pointing the reader to a specific or controversial point, you should also include the page number after the year, for example, "Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner & Hood (2011, p.91) argue that ....". Consult your psychology text books for examples. Avoid footnotes.

(d) In citing references in your reference section, have you given full details in standard APA format, so that the reader will have no difficulty in finding any of your sources? Use the reference citations in Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner and Hood (2011) as exemplars. Note the slightly different conventions for books and journal articles. Don't number your references or use quotation marks.

(e) Using Internet Sources: If you are citing an internet source, use the following citation format:

Nielsen, M. E. (n.d). Notable people in psychology of religion. Retrieved August 3, 2010, from <http://www.psywww.com/psyrelig/psyrelpr.htm>

Beware, however, that public internet sources are generally unreliable for academic purposes and serve as poor support for any convincing argument. You should not rely on the internet (e.g. Google or Wikipedia) for reputable sources, but should instead consult on-line peer reviewed international journals through the University Library Electronic Journals (E Journals) web site. You can search entire databases, such as the Web of Science database or the PsychInfo database in order to find articles on any topic (these are accessed under *Additional Resources* within the Electronic Resources section of the Maynooth University Library web page. You can also search the contents of journals via the Electronic resources section of the Maynooth University Library page. Please note that you will have to log in via a separate portal if you are off-campus.

(f) Is it clear which references you actually read and which you came across in a *secondary source* (e.g. Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner, & Hood, 2011)? You can save yourself considerable effort in writing out reference details by using the following convention. In the text; Wilson (1979, in Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner, & Hood, 2011). In the reference section, cite only Schacter, Gilbert, Wegner & Hood (2011).

(g) Have you avoided plagiarising your sources (e.g. presenting the author's words as if they were your own)? Put ideas in your own words, except where you want to use a definition or a particularly memorable statement verbatim – then use quotation marks or indenting, and acknowledge the source with name, date and page number.

### 4. Presentation

(a) Have you word-processed the essay? This is not compulsory, but it is very welcome. Remember, however, that marks are not awarded for word-processing.

(b) Have you used A4 size paper? If hand-written, is the paper wide-lined? (To help reduce paper waste, why not consider using recycled paper with print on both sides of the page?)

(c) Are the pages of your essay attached together with a single staple at the top left corner? Have you attached your essay cover sheet (available in the foyer at the top of the stairs on the second floor)? Please do not use fancy covers, bindings or *plastic pockets* on individual pages, as these make essays bulky and difficult to handle.

(d) Have you filled in every section of your cover sheet properly?

(e) Have you numbered every page of your essay in a single sequence, using Arabic (1, 2), not Roman (I, II) numerals? Are the numbers clearly visible after stapling?

An excellent introduction to writing in academic and professional psychology may be found in: Sternberg, R. (2005). *The psychologist's companion: A guide to scientific writing for students and researchers* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### 5. Declaration and Turnitin

Have you signed the declaration on the Cover Sheet confirming that no part of the content of the essay has been plagiarised, and that you have run this piece of assessment through Turnitin via Moodle? Please note that you could be requested to supply the Turnitin report for any essay you have submitted at any stage by the Department.

## Plagiarism

The University has a formal policy on plagiarism which is available on the Maynooth University web site <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/university-policies/rules-regulations-students>. Specifically, you are required to sign a statement on the cover sheet provided by the essay deposit box for each submission, that the work is your own, that the wording of your assignment, unless indicated by quotation marks, is your own, and that you have cited your sources appropriately. Plagiarism-avoidance guidelines are also provided in tutorials throughout each year of the degree. Should you have any questions pertaining to plagiarism or feel that the current information is unclear in any way, you should seek advice from a Teaching Assistant or member of academic staff before submitting an assignment. You are also required to use the plagiarism checking software Turnitin, which can be accessed via Moodle, to assess the degree of potential plagiarism in your coursework before submission. You can find out about Turnitin via the website for the MU [centre for teaching and learning](#) (CTL). The Turnitin Self-Check Page available on Moodle, courtesy of the CTL, is a Turnitin *assignment* set up specifically outside students' own modules in Moodle so that they can check their work in Turnitin before submission. **Be aware that you could be required to supply the Department with a Turnitin report for any of your assignments at any point. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have not committed plagiarism.**

## Essay

### SUBMISSIONS

Essays and other assignments should be submitted in the assignment box located in the Department of Psychology on the second floor of the John Hume Building. Adjacent to the essay submission box you will find cover sheets appropriate to different types of course assignment. Please fully complete the relevant cover sheet, providing information on your identity and the assignment title, and attach to your essay or other assignment before submission.

A stapler is normally provided at the essay box for this purpose, but please come prepared to attach the cover sheet, or alternatively collect and complete it in advance of submission.

**The deadline for all assignments is 5.00pm sharp.** Your assignment will be noted as received and date stamped at 5.00pm each day. All submitted assignments will be date-stamped on the day they are submitted or received (e.g., an essay submitted after 5 o' clock will be date stamped with the next day's date). If you are off-campus, you may submit assignments by post and the date of submission will be the date of the postal mark. Again, it is your responsibility to ensure their safe and timely receipt. **You must note that under no circumstances can you submit assignments by email.** You should retain a copy of all submitted work and keep it safely through the academic year. You should also retain all returned work for re-submission to the Examination Board at the end of the academic year.

## GRADES

The standard of your psychology work will be indicated by a letter grade.

Grading Guidelines	
Letter Grade	Guide Mark
A++	100
A+	90
A	80
A-	75
B+	68
B	65
B-	60
C+	58
C	55
C-	50
D+	48
D	45
D-	40
E+	38
E	35
E-	30
F+	20
F	10
F-	0

Essay grades will be returned in person when students collect their marked and graded essays from their tutor. In addition to a grade, you will be given written comments. If you have any questions, make sure that you discuss these comments with your lecturer/teaching assistant before writing the next essay or practical report, so that you use the feedback to improve your writing. Lecturers' consultation times are posted on their office doors or are available from the Departmental Office.

It is important to understand, therefore, that the letter grades awarded for work submitted during the year merely indicate the percentage range within which the submitted work appears to fall. **Ultimately, however, all marks are subject to change under the advice of the External Examiners.**

## PENALTIES

Work submitted late without supporting documentation will have one sub-grade deducted per day from that awarded (e.g. an essay graded a B-, but submitted two days late, will be awarded a C grade). All essays and other assessments must be re-submitted to the Departmental Office at the end of the academic year. **Essays and other assessments are *not* returned to students after re-submission at the end of the academic year.** Photocopying your work to include handwritten feedback from teaching assistants is therefore strongly recommended.

## DEADLINES

You will be given ample notice of deadlines for all assignments via Moodle and in-class announcements. Assignments should be submitted before 5pm on the day of the deadline. The dates given represent the final day on which assignments can be submitted without incurring a lateness penalty. You may submit assignments at any time before the deadline; you should manage your time accordingly. Please aim to submit your assignments before the last minute deadline as a matter of good practice, but also to protect against unforeseen circumstances, such as delays in using the Turnitin software, transport issues, technical issues, and so on.

**Deadlines for Course Assignments 2018-19**

## Semester 1

Module Code	Module Title	Assignment (% of overall module)	Deadline
PS152	Introduction to Experimental Psych	Practical Report 1 (0%)	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> Nov
PS150	Introduction to Psychology I	Essay (20%)	Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov
PS152	Introduction to Experimental Psych	Practical Report 2 (20%)	Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> Dec
PS150	Introduction to Psychology I	Online MCQ (20%)	Open from Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> - Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec
PS152	Introduction to Experimental Psych	Online MCQ (20%)	Open from Tues 18 <sup>th</sup> - Thurs 20 <sup>th</sup> Dec

## Semester 2

Module Code	Module Title	Assignment (% of overall module)	Deadline
PS151	Introduction to Psychology 2	Essay (20%)	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March
PS153	Introduction to Psychological Research Methodology and Analysis	In class Assignment 1 (10%)	To be announced in class
PS153	Introduction to Psychological Research Methodology and Analysis	In class Assignment 2 (10%)	To be announced in class
PS153	Introduction to Psychological Research Methodology and Analysis	Online MCQ (20%)	Open from Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> - Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> May
PS151	Introduction to Psychology 2	Online MCQ (20%)	Open from Tues 7 <sup>th</sup> - Thurs 9 <sup>th</sup> May

**REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS**

Students are notified of coursework deadlines well in advance. A deadline is a deadline. You should aim to submit your assignment well in advance of a deadline in order to protect yourself from unforeseen events in the days immediately before. It is also your responsibility to manage your materials (e.g. computer files) carefully and responsibly. Coursework grades are awarded, in part, for the successful and timely submission of work, and not just the content contained therein. However, students do experience genuine extenuating circumstances that warrant extensions to deadlines from time to time. The Department wishes to support individuals as much as possible in these circumstances. We appreciate that it is difficult for students who are struggling with issues to discuss these with the Department. We would like to reassure students that the Department will do its best to accommodate such difficulties and would encourage students to engage actively with the various supports that the wider University provides. Naturally, all sensitive information will be treated with the utmost respect and confidentiality.

- Extensions can **only** be granted by the appropriate Programme/Year Manager.
- An extension should be requested **prior to** the deadline. A student should not take an extension of his/her own accord or assume that its duration can be decided autonomously.
- A student should not expect to meet a Year Manager regarding an extension **within 48 hours** of that deadline.
- Extensions will not be granted for routine or minor illnesses (e.g. headaches, colds, etc.).
- Requests for extensions based on an illness or situation occurring **more than five working days** immediately prior to deadline are not normally granted. If such an extension is granted, the **number of days extended is proportionate to the number of days covered by the appropriate documentation.**
- When a Year Manager approves a request, s/he will set a new deadline that is **directly in line with** the nature of the situation, illness, or medical instructions.
- Even if previously requested, **penalties will only be lifted when appropriate documentation is provided** (e.g. a medical certificate or a death notice on R.I.P.ie). Vague medical certificates or documentation not specifying a timeframe that relates directly to the deadline are not acceptable.
- When an assignment is submitted late (even if requested), **the relevant documentation must be attached to the assignment.**



- Loss of work due to failure of a PC, laptop, or memory stick does **not** warrant an extension. If this occurs, you may ask your Year Manager if you may bring the malfunctioning hardware to the Departmental Technician Mr. Derek Walsh, who may advise you on your technical situation.

## MARKS BREAKDOWN

If you require a breakdown of your marks for the year beyond that provided by the Examinations Office, you should contact the Year Manager. Please note that a university-wide Consultation Day occurs following notification of the Summer examination results and Year Managers, along with all academic staff, are available on that day to provide some general information of this kind. You will be notified of the date of Consultation Day in your examination pack. **Post-exam consultation will occur only on this date. In general, academic staff will not be available to consult on modules between this date and the beginning of the new semester.** Under no circumstances will such information be sent via e-mail, fax, or regular post, and neither will such information be transmitted over the phone or given to a third party, including family members.

## Library Resources

A collection of several thousand psychology books is held in the University library. Several copies of all of the books listed as recommended reading in this handbook are available in the library. Furthermore, the library currently subscribes to many on-line journals of psychology. You will also find the complete *PsycInfo Database* online at the university library web site. This database contains psychology abstracts from 1887 to the present. Web of Science, which is also available, is a multi-disciplinary database providing extensive indexing and abstracting information on psychology texts and journal articles. It currently incorporates the Science Citation Index Expanded, the Social Science Citation Index and the Arts and Humanities Citation index. The Library also receives ScienceDirect, a web database containing the full text of more than 2,000 Elsevier Science Journals. These databases are accessed under *Additional Resources* within the Electronic Resources section of the Maynooth University Library web page.



**MU Library** is a popular place to meet, study and research in. We're located in the middle of the campus on the southern side, beside the Kilcock road. Choose from a variety of study spaces; from the open-access area on the ground floor, where food, drink and chat is allowed, with access to over 50 laptops and print facilities, to the quieter areas on levels 1 and 2, with training rooms and meeting rooms. There's a Starbucks located on the ground floor, and even sleep-pods on level 1 if you need to re-charge. Use our [bookable group study rooms](#) for your group project-work. MU Library hosts campus exhibitions and events in the foyer during the year, so there's nearly always something new to view.

MU Library is the portal to a vast collection of Psychology resources that you'll need for your essays and research. Take a look at the MU [library homepage](#); we've excellent information, training, materials, supports and services that will help you in your studies. We also provide a dedicated [insert link to subject guide] space on our webpage that we recommend you bookmark; it's a great source of subject-specific material and news. Check out the "[New2MU](#)" tab in your [insert subject] subject guide containing lots of useful stuff for MU-newbies, whatever your level.



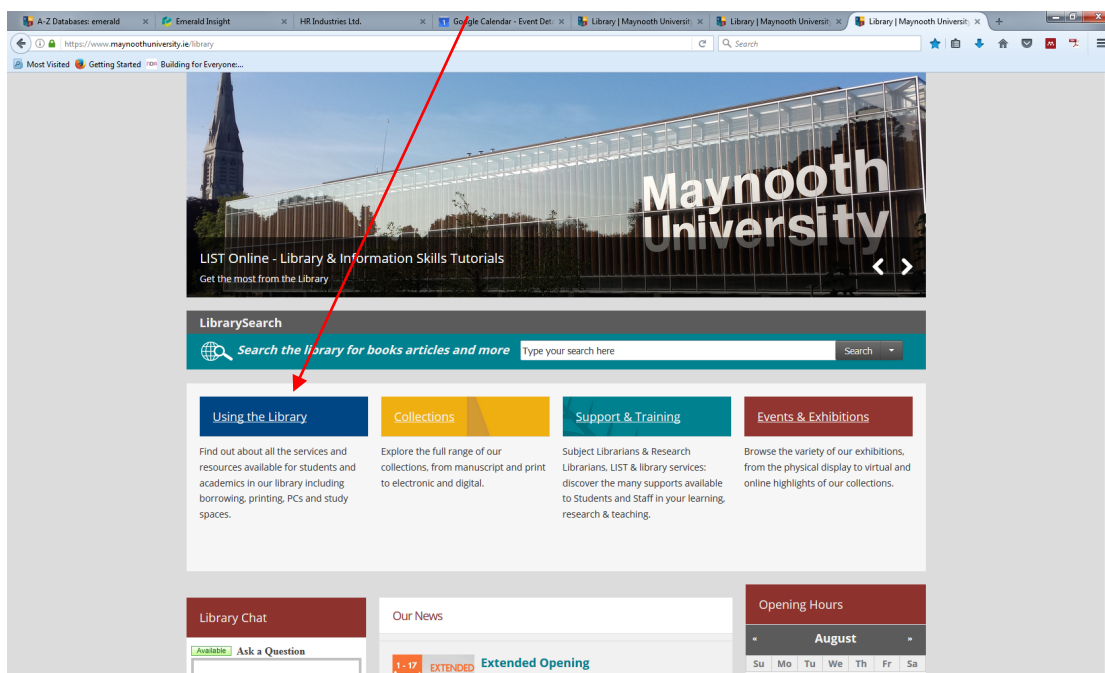
Psychology subject guide online at <http://nuim.libguides.com/psychology>



The search-box, LibrarySearch, that searches all the content in MU Library

Use **LibrarySearch** on the library homepage to discover everything MU Library holds on your subject and topics. It gives you the location and details of thousands of e-books and e-journals you can read online on your devices, as well as information on books, journal articles, and databases on your subject. We also have online e-dictionaries, encyclopaedias and e-books; basically, everything you need to write successful assignments. If it seems like a lot of stuff, start with your subject guide here [insert subject guide link] for basic suggestions and help.

You can access the information on LibrarySearch, and e-books, e-journals and databases when you're on or off-campus. You have options for basic and advanced search features to find exactly what you are looking for. Get hacks for running successful searches in our free [LIST Online](#) tutorials, and come to our **LIST training sessions** in the library (later in Semester 1) to learn skills that will help in your essays and assignments. If you've any queries about finding material, whether it's online, or on the shelf, library staff are happy to help you; just ask at the Library desk or live "*Library Chat*" box on our homepage. You'll also see us around campus in Semester 1 as we hold "pop-up" events, where you can find out more about what the library can offer you. Your **MyCard** (student card) entitles you to borrow material from the Library. If you are not sure how many items you can borrow, click on the [Using the Library](#) blue box (see Fig. 4 below) on the library homepage for information.



Library Homepage with arrow to the "Using the Library" section

Explore the green box **Support and Training** for your subject guide, containing suggestions and lots of subject-support. Take our free, short, **online training sessions** in your own time to upskill in information skills that you'll need in university; see [LIST Online](http://nuim.libguides.com/list-online) (<http://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>). They cover everything from finding items on your reading lists, to using e-books, avoiding plagiarism in your essays, and how to evaluate information – all essential skills for students.

You can borrow a laptop from the laptop-bank, opposite the library desk, to use within the library, or you can log on to one of the library PC's to do your essays. The Library is wireless so you can use your own laptop in the library too. We have a 3D printer available (ask us at the Library desk) as well as a colour photocopier, in addition to numerous black and white photocopiers. You use your MyCard to load it with credit to print. **IT Services** have a dedicated space at the main library desk too where you can go if you need IT help. The **Maths Support Centre** (ground floor) and **Writing Centre** (level 1) are also located in the library.

[Contact us](#) with your **queries** about using the Library, finding information for your studies or how to use any of the online material. There is no such thing as a "stupid question". We all know it can be a lot to take in when you start in university and we are here to help you!

The Library wishes you every success in your studies and we really look forward to seeing you during your years in MU.

#### USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACTS:

- Library homepage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>
- Psychology Subject Guide: <http://nuim.libguides.com/psychology>
- LIST online: <http://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>
- Undergraduates contact: Áine Carey/Niall O'Brien: [aine.carey@mu.ie](mailto:aine.carey@mu.ie) / [niall.obrien@mu.ie](mailto:niall.obrien@mu.ie)

## Other University Resources

The University offers a number of useful services for students, including the Writing Support Centre and the Mathematics Support Centre – details of all of these resources can be found on the Maynooth University website. Two services which may be of particular interest are as follows:

### PROGRAMME ADVISORY OFFICE (for Programme choices and options information)

The Programme Advisory Office is available to assist and advise undergraduate students with programme related decisions you may be unsure about during your time at Maynooth University. The Programme Advisory Office acts as a guide to students as you navigate your own way through your programme options. The Programme Advisory team can assist first year students with questions about subject combinations, changing subjects and progression options for second year. Continuing students may also avail of the service if you are unsure about your programme options, for example if you have any questions about the flexible degree pathways, or whether or not to choose to take an Elective.

Email: [programme.choices@mu.ie](mailto:programme.choices@mu.ie) Phone: 01 474 7428

Website: [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/programme-advisory-office](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/programme-advisory-office)

Location: Room 1.17, ground floor Rowan House

### THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OFFICE

Why not experience more from your degree programme by opting to take an experiential learning module\*, such as Professional Development and Employability (involving employer-led sessions) or MU SPUR (paid six week summer research placement) where you will be learning by doing and reflecting, and have the opportunity to connect classroom content with real-world experience.

*\*The availability of experiential learning modules is limited, timetable dependent and may require an application process.*

Email: [Aisling.Flynn@mu.ie](mailto:Aisling.Flynn@mu.ie) Tel: 01 474 7760, [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/experiential-learning-office](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/experiential-learning-office), Location: Room 1.18, ground floor Rowan House.

## Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Looking after your mental health is an important part of University life, and the University offers a number of services for students who are experiencing mental health difficulties or are feeling overwhelmed. These services are listed on the Maynooth University website at this following link:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-life/student-wellbeing-support>

In addition, a **NiteLine** service also operates on campus. NiteLine is a non-profit service provided free of charge to students, run by a team of dedicated volunteer students who have undergone rigorous training with the intention of supporting their peers. They are open every night of term from 9pm - 2.30am, supporting students through instant messaging and over the phone.



## Final Words

We hope that you find this document helpful and informative. The staff of the Department of Psychology wish you the very best of luck with your studies this year and we hope that you enjoy your time with us.