



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

SCHOOL OF  
PSYCHOLOGY



**PSYCHOLOGY AT QUEEN'S**  
A UNIQUE STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE



**The School of Psychology at Queen's provides excellent training in Psychology and currently offers a variety of undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research degrees.**

We have world-class facilities including a movement Innovation Lab which contains state-of-the-art technology. This includes 22 Motion Capture cameras for movement analysis, AMTI force platforms for analysis of gait and posture and virtual reality systems for studying decision-making and testing products. Our Child Development Lab includes one-way mirrors, built-in video cameras and playback system, sound recording and EEG testing.

Our research collaborations across themes, different Schools within the University, and colleagues from other Universities produce ground-breaking research that furthers psychological knowledge and engenders a spirit of enquiry into Psychology from the most junior undergraduate to the most senior professor.

Our research is organised around five areas that reflect the expertise and interests of current staff and contemporary themes in Psychology. These groups are:

- Perception Action Movement
- Development, Cognition and Adversity
- Social Psychology
- Animal Behaviour and Welfare
- Health Clinical Educational

This encourages cross-disciplinary and inter-institutional research collaborations which respond to societal needs nationally and internationally.

The School of Psychology is truly world-leading in both teaching and research output.

Psychology at Queen's is rated 9th out of 82 in the UK for research intensity and tied 18th for research impact. (REF assessment 2014)

#### WHAT CAN YOU STUDY?

Study Abroad students at Queen's normally take three modules (classes) per semester. Modules are usually worth 20 credits each and students require 60 credits per semester. This equates into 15-18 US credits or 30 ECTS credits.

The following modules were offered in the 2017/18 academic year. Please note these may be subject to change for 2018/19

| Semester one   | Semester two  |
|--|---|
| Level 1 classes  |   |
| <p><b>1006 Using Psychology in Everyday Life 1:</b></p> <p>The module will cover aspects of everyday life seen from a psychological point of view. This should offer fresh insights into familiar phenomena and encourage students to question some common sense beliefs. Students will also be given the opportunity to undertake an experiment to gain experience of research in psychology in a practical setting. Lectures will discuss real-world and everyday situations and explore how psychology contributes to our understanding of them and how it is applied in everyday life. The topics are presented by members of the course team who have a specific interest and knowledge of their topic.</p> | <p><b>Using Psychology in Everyday Life 2:</b></p> <p>The module will cover how psychology may improve individual performance and provide interventions to overcome individual problems in everyday behaviours. The module will outline the role psychology has in designing and implementing interventions to influence individual performance and behaviour. The module will explore the psychology behind the behaviour(s) and how effective programmes are in influencing and changing behaviour. The module will offer fresh insights into the causes of and solutions to everyday psychological and behavioural issues experienced by the individual. The topics are presented by members of the course team who have a specific interest and knowledge of their topic.</p> |
| Semester one   | Semester two  |
| Level 2 classes  |   |
| <p><b>2065 Social Psychology &amp; Individual Differences:</b></p> <p>This module develops the topics of social psychology and individual differences.</p>   | <p><b>2065 Conceptual Issues in Psychology &amp; Perception:</b></p> <p>This module develops the topics of conceptual and historical issues in psychology and the perception element of cognitive psychology.</p>   |
| <p><b>2066 Cognitive Psychology &amp; Psychobiology:</b></p> <p>This module develops the topics of cognitive psychology and psychobiology which were introduced in level 1. Cognitive topics include memory, executive function, problem solving and reasoning. Psychobiology lectures will address themes such as evolutionary psychology, neurophysiological structures and drug treatments.</p>   | <p><b>2066 Developmental Psychology and Employability/ Career decision making:</b></p> <p>This module develops the topic of developmental psychology which was introduced in level 1. It also aims to develop students' ability to apply their psychological knowledge and to examine areas of employment in which psychology is pertinent. This includes applied specialisms of psychology.</p>  |





**Semester two**

**2068 Advanced Group Research Project\*:**

This module will give students experience in undertaking a psychological research project under the supervision of academic supervisor. The project will be defined and have been granted ethical approval in advance of the module start date. Students will work as a lab-group, comprising weekly meetings with the research supervisor. These meetings will introduce the theoretical background to the study and its hypotheses, outline the methods and data analyses required to evaluate the hypotheses, and teach how to write a psychological research paper. Students will start the module by formulating a data collection strategy and implement this to collect the data within an agreed period of time. They will then perform the appropriate analyses on the data and write up the results as a psychological research paper.

The title of the research project being offered in 2018/19 is: 'Stress induced when people look over your shoulder: Effects of social evaluative threat on balance control'. This project will assess the way in which stress, induced using social threat, affects postural control. Participants will be asked to perform mathematics calculations while sitting, standing, under time pressure and under social threat. Social threat in this case will be induced by telling participants that their performance isn't good enough. The project will assess how stress induced by these methods affects performance in a mathematics task and in balance control.

**Semester one**

**3115 Sport and Exercise Psychology:**

The module will introduce students to a variety of topics examining human behaviour in sport and exercise contexts. The content will begin with understanding the major developments in the history of sport and exercise psychology before progressing to exploring specific aspects such as motivation, team and group dynamics, improving performance through the use of imagery, the relationship between exercise and psychological well-being, concluding with the social construction of sport and exercise as seen through the lens of disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and ethnicity.

**Semester two**

**3106 Psychological Approached to Distress:**

This module introduces the applied topics of clinical psychology and draws on information from several key areas of psychology (social, cognitive, developmental, psychobiology, research methods). The module examines behaviours related to psychological distress. It also demonstrates how psychology can be used to design interventions for individuals with mental health difficulties with a specific focus on addiction, suicide and self-harm.

Level 3 classes\*

**Semester one**

**3104 The Visual Brain:**

The module will provide an overview of the brain systems supporting visual perception. It will investigate the evidence for specialised pathways in the visual system, drawing on research evidence from several disciplines; such as psychophysics, infant studies, neuropsychology, brain anatomy and physiology.

**3110 Applied Animal Psychology:**

The module will introduce students to the area of animal psychology, focusing in particular on the applied aspect of this field. Lectures will cover topics of animal welfare, animal ethics, environmental enrichment, pet behaviour therapy and companion animals and human health. A three-hour trip to Belfast Zoo will help to translate lecture-based theory into application.

**3096 Typical & Atypical Literacy Development:**

This module will examine current and historical perspectives of typical and atypical literacy development. The development of reading ability from early language perception to proficient text processing will be examined. We will discuss approaches to the acquisition of literacy, and the theoretical underpinnings of developmental dyslexia and specific language impairment (SLI). This module will be of interest to a wide range of psychology students, but will be of particular relevance to those intending to pursue a career related to education or to postgraduate research and study.

**Semester two**

**3080 Psychology of Serial Killers:**

This module will cover the psychology of serial killers in an attempt to address the question 'why do individuals become serial killers?' It will explore the definitions and typologies of serial killers, what distinguishes these from other types of murder(ers) and the problems and pitfalls with these descriptions. The course will consider sex murders and the concept of the psychopath. Possible explanations of why individuals become serial killers will be critically appraised. Profiling techniques, including crime scene analysis and investigative psychology will be reviewed and whether these advance our understanding of the motivation of the serial killers considered. The course will also consider the anti-hero status of some types of serial killers and public fascination with such crimes. Case studies of serial killers will be presented throughout. It should be noted the course will cover some potentially disturbing factual material.

**3088 Psychopharmacology:**

This module will consider the development and application of drugs for the treatment of psychological/psychiatric illnesses, and of commonly abused drugs. The module will provide students with knowledge of the general principles of drug action, principles of psychopharmacology, and of the types of psychoactive drugs currently in use. Areas covered in the module will include distribution of drugs in living systems, the blood/brain barrier, dose and route of administration, and drug receptors. With respect to psychotherapeutic drugs the module will consider the classification of these drugs, and the clinical effects of anxiolytic drugs, antidepressant drugs, antipsychotic drugs, and stimulants. The central focus of the module will be the effects of drugs on behavior and neurochemical mechanisms of action.

**3108 Exploring Psychological Issues in Cancer:**

This module will introduce some of the issues that need to be considered when designing and conducting psychological research among people with cancer, people at risk of cancer, oncology health care professionals and the family/carers of people with cancer. The module will also include discussion of the role of psychology in the causes and consequences of cancer and the diversity of psychological challenges at different time points along the cancer journey. As an applied module, the topics covered in the module will draw on several key areas of psychology (e.g. social, cognitive, developmental, research methods). Classes will be organised on a participatory basis and include group discussions of key issues.



### 3118 Using Nudges to influence behaviour:

This module will introduce students to recent theory and practice relating to behaviour change. Specifically, it will consider the psychology of "nudges", small changes to choice architectures which encourage certain desirable behaviours without making those behaviours mandatory. Having addressed important theoretical background, the module will consider nudges in a variety of contexts including health, finance and pro-social behaviour. The module will conclude with a consideration of implications of nudge theory for policy and the very recent debate about the ethics of nudges. The module will be assessed via group reports proposing, analysing and justifying novel nudges for particular applied contexts.

### 3109 Psychology of Music:

This module will explore the psychology of music. Topics covered will include: musical sound; music and the brain; performance and perception of music; musical skill acquisition and expertise; uses of music in therapy, sport, and rehabilitation. Students will discover some of the ways that psychology can help us to understand music better. They will also learn how music as a rich exemplar of human behaviour can inform theories and understanding across a wide range of psychology domains, such as motor control and learning, expertise, neural plasticity, social co-ordination, and non-verbal communication. Classes will involve lectures, and seminars with group discussion.

### 3111 Advanced Topics in Cognitive Development:

This course will focus on a set of key topics regarding cognitive development, building on students' knowledge of the area acquired at Level 2. Topics will include memory development, the development of the ability to plan and think about the future, and the development of the set of socio-cognitive skills usually described as "Theory of Mind". Against the background of these topics, the course will introduce competing approaches to cognitive development that have become prominent over the last two decades and explore the methodological challenges that developmental psychologists face in researching children's thinking.

### 3117 Psychology of Gender:

This course introduces students to the psychological literature on gender. Course topics include the causes of sex differences and similarities, the influence of gender roles on life experiences including those related to workplace/leadership, parenting, sexuality, violence and aggression, as well as the relationship between gender and health and well-being.

This work might involve a range of activities including:

- Designing stimuli
- Recruiting participants
- Running experiments
- Coding data

In the process, students will gain a greater understanding of how research is performed, as well as developing key skills in the specific areas in which they work.

## MEET OUR STAFF AND STUDENTS



Dr Laura Taylor is a Lecturer in the School of Psychology at Queen's University, Belfast. Her research uses an intergroup developmental approach to study risk and resilience processes for youth in settings of protracted conflict. Her work has implications for youth outcomes, such as aggression and prosocial behaviours, as well as broader psychosocial processes, such as shared education and intergroup relations, which may fuel or constrain conflict. Toward this end, she studies how and why violence affects behaviours and attitudes related to conflict transformation, primarily during adolescence. Through teaching and mentoring, she engages undergraduate and graduate students in research that is sensitive to the psychological needs of individuals and communities, particularly in divided societies.



Dr Matthew Rodgers is interested in the links between auditory perception and skilful action. His research investigates how people time movements to different auditory events, such as synchronising with a beat, walking to rhythmic sounds (particularly as an aid for gait in Parkinson's disease), or catching a moving object without vision. He also looks at how 'movement sonification' (using motion capture data to trigger sounds in real-time) can be used as feedback to enhance learning of motor skills. This involves research into both fundamental questions of perceptual-motor learning, and applications to habilitation for children and adults with Visual-Impairment. He is also interested in skill acquisition in music performance, including understanding how sound-movement coupling emerges through musical training, techniques to enhance musical skill acquisition, and understanding skilful adaptability in the context of music improvisation.



I made the decision to study at Queen's School of Psychology for a number of different reasons. The biggest draw for me was the impressive staff. I learned that most professors work on their own research while also teaching and I enjoyed the idea of learning from individuals who are active within the field of psychology,

Queen's University and the School of Psychology surpassed all my expectations. I was very nervous moving to a different country, being on my own and beginning the next step in my education. All my fears and insecurities were quickly put to rest with the start of orientation week. The School had set up a week where all first years got to know the staff, their peers and the campus. It was very informative and quite fun. Before I knew it I was swept into the hustle and bustle of my first year at Queen's. The lectures, essays, lab reports and various assignments have kept me very busy. However, despite the late nights studying and cramming I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year in the School of Psychology. It has been a long time since I have studied something that equally interests me and challenges me. Psychology offers both of these things.

Jessica Geiger USA



## MORE INFORMATION

Students can also opt to take modules from other disciplines across the University or to undertake a survey/research module of independent study

\*Some module choices may require demonstration of prior learning. This is detailed in the course catalogue.

## STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY TO TAKE PART IN RESUS

The Research Experience Scheme for Undergraduate Students at the School of Psychology, Queen's University Belfast (RESUS) is intended to provide an online framework within which psychology undergraduates can gain valuable experience working on research projects with members of staff here in the school.



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