

# The London School of Economics and Political Science



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Dear prospective applicant

Many thanks for your interest in our programme. The MSc in Social and Cultural Psychology is based in the Institute of Social Psychology, a thriving centre for the study of societal and cultural psychology, which has the largest concentration of social psychologists in Europe and an international reputation in the fields of social representations, health and community, cognition and culture, ethnicity, race and multiculturalism, organisations and the media. The programme follows the legacy of late Professor Hilda Himmelweit, whose work in social and cultural psychology has firmly placed the study of psychological phenomena in a social science context. This year sees the re-naming of the programme from Social Psychology to Social and Cultural Psychology, which better expresses our focus on both societal and cultural issues. The program offers you:

- A high quality academic training addressing the relations between psychological, social and cultural phenomena, providing extensive coverage of both theoretical and applied issues.
- A unique approach emphasising the development of critical thinking and analytical skills, which integrates theory and practice for the construction of research and intervention at the individual, institutional and community levels.
- The experience of studying in a culturally vibrant international environment, within the world's leading institution of the social sciences, where social and cultural psychology is in close contact with sociological, anthropological, economic, and social policy debates.
- An extensive choice of specialist courses within the Institute and the School, addressing a variety of theoretical and applied issues in social and cultural psychology and in the social sciences as a whole.
- An MSc degree with research training recognition from the Economic and Social Research Council/UK, from which students may progress to research degrees or employment in the public and private sectors.

I look forward to receiving your application.

With all my best wishes

Dr Sandra Jovchelovitch  
Director of the MSc in Social and Cultural Psychology

## **MSc in Social and Cultural Psychology**

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### **About the Institute of Social Psychology**

The Institute of Social Psychology is a thriving centre for the study of social psychology and has an international reputation for its research-led teaching in a variety of fields. Founded in 1964 as the Department of Social Psychology in LSE, the institute is one of the largest concentrations of social psychologists in Europe with 11 members of staff and over 140 graduate students enrolled on three specialist Masters programmes and conducting research towards a PhD. The MSc degree in Social Psychology, established in 1964, was the first specialised degree in Social Psychology in the UK. The MSc in Organisational and Social Psychology was launched in 1990, the MSc in Social and Public Communication in 2003. The MSc Social Psychology and MSc Organisational and Social Psychology (research track) are recognised by the Economic and Social Research Council as providing research training. In the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (in which the Institute was assessed with Sociology) the research of the Institute received a rating of 5. The MScs in Social Psychology and Organisational and Social Psychology were also evaluated by the Quality Assurance Agency in 1999/2000 and received a rating of "excellent", scoring 23 points out of a possible maximum of 24.

The Institute has an active interest in a wide range of theoretical, methodological and applied issues. Its research atmosphere still benefits from the legacy of Emeritus Professor Rob Farr and the late Professor Hilde Himmelweit, whose work established the LSE as a centre for the study of societal and sociological forms of social psychology. Understanding social phenomena in their social contexts is a key aspect

of the research conducted in the Institute. Among the range of current interests are social representations, health, community, racism, ethnicity, culture, communications and the media, organisational psychology, the social construction of technology, gender, economic psychology, sexuality, social identities and risk in society. The Institute also maintains active teaching and research links with The Methodology Institute, The Gender Institute, The Interdisciplinary Institute of Management and the Departments of Sociology and Social Policy.

More than three-quarters of our students come from abroad, reflecting our international outlook, our historical grounding in both American and European traditions of research, and our strong interest in promoting interchange and dialogue between these traditions and the ideas and practices of academics and social activists from other parts of the world. We have distinguished academic visitors from abroad and have well-established research and collaborative networks stretching from South and North America to Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia. The academic staff and their research students are frequent contributors to international meetings on all five continents. Our former students include many professors, lecturers, researchers, professionals and policy makers in the worlds of business, the media, NGOs and social and public policy now working in the UK, the rest of Europe, North and South America and other parts of the world. Many of our students go on to hold academic positions in universities both in the UK and abroad. Our alumni hold positions in a variety of international organizations including the UN and the WFP. Others have entered a variety of occupations including social research, marketing, media and broadcasting, industry, personnel, consulting and teaching. About one in five graduates from our master's programmes go on to complete higher degrees by independent research.

In the Institute you will find a lively and stimulating atmosphere with excellent computing and technical support in which to develop your knowledge of social psychology. Located as we are in one of the world's leading institutions of the social sciences brings the benefits of exploring the links between social psychology and other neighbouring disciplines and the privilege of a world-class library. A sophisticated multimedia laboratory provides MSc Social Psychology students with the option of drawing on sound and image, as well as text, as sources of research data. The Institute also has special audio and video facilities for conducting and recording individual and group interviews.

## **MSc Social and Cultural Psychology Programme Details**

### Term Dates

Session 2006 - 2007

Michaelmas Term: Monday 2 October 2006 - Friday 8 December 2006

Lent Term: Monday 8 January 2007 - Friday 16 March 2007

Summer Term: Monday 23 April 2007 - Friday 29 June 2007

Although the MSc programme runs for a full calendar year, formal teaching is usually completed by the end of the Lent Term. Examinations are held in May to early June and the research report is due towards the middle of August. Results are then published by the School in November.

In general, the majority of courses offered are assessed partly by written examination and partly by coursework.

## Full and Part-Time Study

This programme can be taken either full-time over one calendar year or part-time over two. Most students study on a full-time basis. If one studies part-time it is usual to take one or two of the core courses (*Contemporary Social and Cultural Psychology, and Methods of Research and Quantitative Analysis*) in the first year, with the remaining option(s) in the second year. Work on the *Research Report* can be spread over the two year period. The precise arrangements for which courses are taken in which year can be decided with the Programme Director at the start of the academic session. Those applying for a part-time place should note that (a) places are limited, (b) they should be available to study and to attend courses for approximately 20 hours per week, (c) no alternative arrangements are made for part-time students - they will have to attend at the same scheduled lecture times as full-time students and (d) it cannot be guaranteed that options available for the current session will also be available for the following year.

## Programme Aims

- To provide a high-quality, research-led postgraduate education in social and cultural psychology.
- To qualify you for MPhil/PhD research in the social sciences.
- To provide knowledge of normally two specialist fields of social and cultural psychology.
- To equip you to contribute to the development of pure and applied social and cultural psychology.
- To develop your prior knowledge of psychology, and broaden your knowledge of social and cultural psychology.

## Programme Objectives

At the end of the programme you should be able to:

- Review and critically evaluate theories, concepts and empirical research in areas of social and cultural psychology.
- Understand the relationship between theory and method in social and cultural psychology.
- Understand the debate between competing paradigms in social and cultural psychology.
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of a range of quantitative and qualitative methods for empirical research on societal issues.
- Carry out research projects using a variety of methodologies and transfer research skills to new problems.
- Design, conduct, analyse and interpret a significant social inquiry employing quantitative and/or qualitative methodologies.
- Formulate a plan for research in several stages and keep to the timetable agreed with your supervisor.
- Select and employ the appropriate qualitative research technique for a given research question.
- Select and employ the appropriate applied statistical techniques to analyse quantitative data.
- Conduct interviews in a variety of media and critically evaluate your own performance.

## Programme Curriculum

The MSc programme comprises four course units. The core course and Methods course constitute the central focus of the MSc, providing an advanced understanding of theories, concepts and methods of research. These courses are taught by a team of lecturers. The various option courses allow you to pursue diverse interests in social psychology, permitting a range of specialisms. In the research report you will draw upon the Methods course to conduct original research which develops their particular interests. Full details of each course, including preliminary reading and methods of assessment, can be found on the following pages.

### Seminars

Many courses have a series of seminars linked to the lectures. The seminars are designed to supplement the lectures, by considering both practical, real-world applications of the theories discussed in the lectures, and by scrutinising those theories in more detail. Emphasis will be placed on how the discipline relates to the other social sciences. The locations and times of seminars are available on the LSE website. The seminars are an integral part of the course. They provide a major opportunity for you to raise questions and debate issues, and they also allow for the development of novel ideas which could form the basis of the research project.

The seminar teachers will be available to members of their classes for consultation and discussion for one hour per week during term time.

## MSc Social and Cultural Psychology

### Compulsory Courses:

*Contemporary Social and Cultural Psychology* (1 unit).

*Methods of Research and Quantitative Analysis* (1 unit).

*A Research Report* (1 unit).

### Optional Courses (to the value of 1 unit):

*Representations, Institutions and Communities* (Jovchelovitch) (0.5)

*Cognition and Culture* (Franks) (0.5 unit)

*Social Psychology of Racism, Multiculture and Resistance* (Howarth/Hook) (0.5 unit)

*Social Psychology of Health* (Campbell) (0.5 unit)

*Science, Technology and Resistance* (Bauer) (0.5 unit)

*Evolutionary Social Psychology* (Wells) (0.5 unit)

*Knowledge Processes in Organisations* (Humphreys/Garcia) (0.5 unit)

*Social Psychology of the Media* (Humphreys) (0.5 unit)

*Social Psychology of Gender* (Stockdale) (0.5 unit)

*The Social Psychology of Economic Life* (Gaskell) (0.5 unit)

*Corporate Communication* (Abraham) (0.5 unit)

*Organisational and Social Decision-Making* (Humphreys) (0.5 unit)

*Issues in Organisational and Social Psychology: Organisational Life* (Garcia/Rogers) (0.5 unit)

*Theory and Practice of Organisational Development* (Solomon/Humphreys) (0.5 unit)

Any other paper which is offered in the School at Master's level, subject to the consent of the candidate's teachers.

\* Please note that this listing is subject to change.