

---

# Masters Program in Psychology (120 ECTS credits)

Program Description  
Revised 24.08.2020

# Contents

<b>1.0 Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.1 Target group and admission requirements</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.2 Application deadline</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.3 Career opportunities</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>1.4 Language of instruction and examination</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.0 Program objectives</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1 Main objectives</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2 Learning outcomes</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3.0 Organization and structure of the program</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.1 Duration</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.2 Syllabus/literature</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.3 Types of courses and credits</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>3.4 Study abroad</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>4.0 Content of the program</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>5.0 Teaching and learning methods</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>6.0 Examinations and assessment</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>6.1 Basis for assessment</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>6.2 Forms of assessment</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>6.3 Mandatory course requirements</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>6.4 Grading</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>7.0 Courses and course descriptions</b> .....	<b>8</b>

## **1.0 Introduction**

This program description is based on the requirements laid down in Government White Paper No. 27 (2000-2001) "Do your Duty -Demand your Rights: Quality Reform of Higher Education", *Regulations for Academic Studies at UiT and Template for Program Descriptions for the Faculty of Health Sciences*. The program is worth 120 ECTS credits. Successful completion of the program leads to a masters degree in psychology.

### **1.1 Target group and admission requirements**

This program is aimed at students with a bachelors degree in psychology who want to continue their studies of the subject. The program focuses on helping students to develop research skills that will enable them to conduct an independent piece of research. Admission to the masters degree in psychology is regulated by *Forskrift om opptak til universiteter og høyskoler (Regulations for Admission to Higher Education)*. The basis for admission is a bachelors degree in psychology or equivalent with a psychology specialization worth at least 80 credits. At least 20 of these credits must consist of methodology and statistics. A grade average of C in the specialization is the minimum requirement.

### **1.2 Application deadline**

Applicants from Norway or Nordic countries:

The application deadline for Norwegian and other Nordic applicants is 15 April for admission to the autumn semester

Applicants from outside the Nordic countries:

The application deadline for international applicants is 1 December for admission to the autumn semester.

Local admission scheme, application code 3020. The program will start in the autumn semester. There is an orientation week at the beginning of the program and attendance is compulsory. The program is open to 20 students with a goal of filling half the spots with students from Norway and other Nordic countries and half from students outside the Nordic countries.

### **1.3 Career opportunities**

There are good job prospects after graduation. The masters degree qualifies students for PhD programs and other research in psychology. The program prepares students for jobs in research, consultancy, preventive health care, teaching and other jobs where information literacy, critical thinking, communication skills and the ability to work independently are important qualifications. The program is relevant to a variety of jobs in public administration, public health care and education, as well as in the private sector. The masters degree qualifies graduates for teaching positions in upper secondary school if supplemented with the one-year practical teacher education program. The teacher education program at UiT requires students to have 60 credits in a field other than psychology, such as science, social science, a foreign language, etc.

More information about career opportunities is also available on the website of the Norwegian Society for Psychological Science ([www.psykologisk.no](http://www.psykologisk.no)).

In order to advance students' career goals, the masters program has partnered with the UiT Careers Center. Each semester the Center provides useful input to help students consider their future career and apply for jobs (see section 4.0 for further information).

### **1.4 Language of instruction and examination**

All courses are taught in English, but the written assignments and exams may also be answered in Norwegian, Danish or Swedish.

## **2.0 Program objectives**

### **2.1 Main objectives**

In psychology, we study human and animal behavior and experiences and seek to explain these scientifically. Psychology covers a wide range of topics; examples are the neurochemistry of a single cell, people's thoughts and consciousness, the theory of decision making in organizations, and the development of cultures and civilizations. The field of psychology is therefore continually evolving and includes interesting interdisciplinary approaches.

In the Department of Psychology, we use basic and applied research, particularly within the fields of expertise of our staff, to produce competent researchers with good communication skills and knowledge of how to make further progress in the fields represented by the Department.

The masters program thus builds on the broad foundation of the bachelors degree by delving more deeply into traditions, new ideas, methods and analytical tools in psychology, paving the way for students to conduct and communicate independent research.

This presupposes that students master basic skills in information retrieval, reading and interpretation of scientific literature, and understanding of simple research designs and statistical methods, and are also able to present sound arguments in writing using relevant conventions (such as the APA format) and communicate scientific knowledge in writing, orally and visually. Students must be able to work independently, under supervision and in collaboration with others.

Upon completion of the masters degree in psychology, students are expected to be ambassadors for the field of psychology, pursue interesting questions in the field with professional and personal integrity, and communicate results to both professionals and the general public. Students are expected to have a collegial attitude towards the Department, fellow students and others working in the field, and think and act strategically in relation to their career development.

### **2.2 Learning outcomes**

The main work in the masters program is the thesis, which requires the development of specific academic skills through participation in courses and the ability to plan and produce a masters thesis. Emphasis is also placed on the development of work habits that are healthy and effective for the individual student and for peers and colleagues.

The unique collaboration with the Careers Center enables students to learn about relevant job opportunities after graduation and reflect on their abilities as a professional and researcher, and on this basis to communicate their competencies by writing a good CV, searching for jobs effectively and being well prepared for interviews.

More specifically, students with a masters degree in psychology are expected to be able to:

- Critically and analytically assess psychological knowledge production and its basis in research in order to develop new and independent research topics
- Make strategic use of scientific sources, research methods and statistics to design and conduct an independent piece of research in basic or applied psychology
- Draw reasoned conclusions and communicate them, and make suggestions for further scientific work on this basis
- Develop a reflective attitude and act in an ethical manner in line with the core values of psychology (e.g. in compliance with the Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics, the Norwegian Data Protection Authority, and other governing bodies).

- Work independently and in groups to become active, enterprising members of an engaged and healthy scientific community in the masters program, the Department and the field of psychology in general.
- Develop communication skills
  - Written skills: by learning to write scientific texts in the form of an article (the masters thesis), and other types of texts such as applications to attend conferences and applications for funding
  - Oral skills: by becoming confident in giving short and long scientific presentations to different audiences
  - Visual skills: by learning to present research material in the form of slides, posters or other visual media
- Develop general skills that equip them to master career development in a thoughtful and effective way during and after their studies. This will be based on communication skills (see above) and training in career building (with the help of the UiT Careers Center, see section 4.0 below)

## 3.0 Organization and structure of the program

### 3.1 Duration

The masters program in psychology is organized as a full-time program over four semesters (two years). The program is worth 120 credits, i.e. 30 credits per semester.

### 3.2 Syllabus/literature

The syllabus normally consists of about 500-600 pages for every ten credits. The syllabus will contain a great deal of compulsory reading, but also some recommended reading and texts that students choose themselves. The idea behind this is that students will learn to become effective consumers of scientific literature. They will be trained to work independently to critically identify and select relevant literature to acquire the knowledge they need to research their particular topic and to remain well updated in the field over time.

### 3.3 Types of courses and credits

The masters program in psychology consists of three distinct elements: mandatory courses, elective courses and the masters thesis.

**Mandatory courses** are worth a total of 20 credits; these are Psy-3000 Proseminar (10 credits) and Sta-3300 Applied Statistics 2 (10 credits). Students must pass Psy-3000 before they can continue the program.

**Elective courses** enable specialization in topics relevant to the content of the masters thesis. These are worth a total of 40 credits, and at least 20 of these must be in psychology (either in the Department of Psychology at UiT or at another university, e.g. under the study abroad scheme). The Department offers several masters degree-specific courses such as Psy-3012 Working Memory (10 credits), Psy-3018 From Theory to the Practice of Teaching (10 credits) and PSY-3021 Psychology of Experience.

The Department also offers courses that are available to both masters and professional students, such as Psy-3029 Organizational Psychology (10 credits) and Psy-3015 Qualitative Methods (10 credits). The remaining 20 credits may be taken in other departments if approved by the supervisor and if the student is admitted to the department that offers the course. It is recommended that 30 of the 40 credits for elective courses (i.e. those taken after the first semester) be decided in consultation with the thesis supervisor. Elective courses may also include suitable courses from other universities and colleges in Norway and abroad.

**Psy-3900 Masters Thesis** is worth 60 credits and the work is spread over three semesters. The thesis is subject to a written agreement between the student and the supervisor and is controlled by the Masters Degree Committee. There are various pieces of work approved by the supervisor to be submitted every semester.

Table 1: Structure of the program

Semester	10 credits	10 credits	10 credits
1st semester (autumn)	Psy-3000 Research Proseminar	Sta-3300 Applied Statistics 2	Elective course
2nd semester (spring)	Psy-3900 Masters Thesis/ study abroad	Study abroad/elective course	Study abroad/elective course
3rd semester (autumn)	Psy-3900 Masters Thesis		Elective course/ PSY-3900 Masters Thesis
4th semester (spring)	Psy-3900 Masters Thesis		

### 3.4 Study abroad

Students may study abroad in the second semester of their first year, subject to careful planning and preparation, and as part of their second year (their third semester) by agreement with the Masters Degree Committee. The period of study abroad is one semester. Studies abroad are subject to prior approval by the Department.

Applications to study abroad must be submitted to the international coordinator of the Department of Psychology the semester before the planned study period. The student's work for the masters degree is subject to an agreement between the student, the supervisor and the Masters Degree Committee. Therefore, any changes to the normal progression of the program due to e.g. a study period abroad must also be included in the agreement to clarify to the student which class he/she belongs to and which mandatory course requirements must be fulfilled in the semesters following the study period abroad.

## 4.0 Content of the program

The masters thesis forms the core of the program and is supplemented by two mandatory courses in the first semester and four elective courses in the first three semesters.

In the first semester, there is a mandatory introductory course (Psy-3000 Research Proseminar) that provides details of the areas of psychology in which the Department can offer supervision, and of ongoing research programs to which students can link their own research. The other mandatory course is in statistics (Sta-3300 Applied Statistics 2), provided by the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. It gives a basic introduction to statistics, hypothesis testing, and regression and variance analysis.

The elective courses may be taken in the Department of Psychology or other departments (see section 3.3 above). The aim of these courses is to provide a solid foundation either for the student's work on the masters thesis or as a suitable complement to the student's portfolio of subject areas. The subjects offered enable specialization in e.g. biological, cognitive, educational, social or developmental psychology or health psychology.

The Careers Center contributes to the program in various ways, such as the “Arbeidslivsdagene” career days (every autumn), general career guidance (2nd semester), a course in CV writing and job searching (3rd semester) and a course in interview training (4th semester).

## **5.0 Teaching and learning methods**

The masters thesis forms the core of the program, and is supplemented by other course modules worth 60 credits in all.

The various course modules use different teaching and learning methods. Lectures often form the core of the teaching. These are a suitable method to highlight main points, explain concepts, point out relationships and separate examples from the general principles they illustrate. Lectures also present perspectives on theory and research that the texts in the syllabus cannot always provide. In this way, they support the aims to describe, define and explain, but also demonstrate how to develop a scientific approach to the understanding of mental processes and behavior.

Lectures are usually supplemented by mandatory course requirements that provide practice in information literacy skills, written, oral and/or visual communication, collegial guidance and dialogue, observations, data analysis, etc.

The masters thesis (Psy-3900) consists of extensive research under detailed supervision. Empirical research is most common, but theoretical theses may also be written. The aim of any thesis is to demonstrate that the student is capable of conducting and reporting on research at a suitably high level.

The work for a masters thesis based on empirical data will include formulating a research topic, designing an ethically sound study, collecting, recording and/or coding the data, and analyzing and writing the results in accordance with the general rules for publication. The work for a theoretical thesis will vary depending on the research area and topic. The thesis may be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

All topics and research approaches must be agreed in writing with the student’s supervisor.

Masters theses are published in the Munin database at UiT, but the Department of Psychology encourages students to aim to write one or more articles containing the results for publication in scientific journals.

## **6.0 Examinations and assessment**

### **6.1 Basis for assessment**

The purpose of assessment is partly educational and partly to assess student performance. Mandatory work and other requirements and formal examinations assessed by subject teachers or committees will determine whether students have achieved the learning outcomes at a satisfactory level. This is the assessment of student performance. The educational aims are to enhance students’ awareness of their own learning processes, their expertise in the field and their achievement of the learning outcomes of the program. These aims are partly met by formal assessments, which also assess student performance, and partly by informal assessments, organized or not, by teachers and fellow students in connection with mandatory course requirements, seminars, supervision and regular quality assurance meetings.

### **6.2 Forms of assessment**

Each course has separate examinations. The description of each course states the type of assessment used.

The following types of examination are used in the masters program:

- on-campus or take-home examinations
- presentations/short talks

- essays
- major research or literature assignments
- lab exercises/reports
- portfolios

All examinations may be written in Norwegian, Swedish, Danish or English.

### **6.3 Mandatory course requirements**

Examples of mandatory course requirements are compulsory attendance at classes and lab sessions, written work and group work. Some classes are mandatory, either in terms of attendance or particular course requirements. Mandatory attendance will be approved if a student has attended at least 80% of mandatory classes. In courses that include lab exercises, students must take part in the exercises in order to pass the course. In courses that require presentations based on individual or group work, evaluation of the presentation may also be used as a basis for approval. The course coordinator or course teacher assesses mandatory requirements as approved/not approved. The mandatory course requirements must be approved before the final examination of the course can be taken. If they are not approved, the student may not be allowed to sit the examination and the course must generally be re-taken.

### **6.4 Grading**

In general, grades will be awarded from A to E (pass) and F (fail). However, some courses (e.g. Psy-3000) use only pass/fail.

Please also refer to the UiT examination regulations (Forskrift for eksamener ved Universitetet i Tromsø).

## **7.0 Courses and course descriptions**

Only courses in the masters program in psychology are listed below. A more detailed description of content, learning outcomes, and forms of teaching, learning and assessment for each course may be found in the individual course descriptions.

- PSY-3000 Research Proseminar, 10 credits
- PSY-3001 Affective Neuroscience, 10 credits
- PSY-3002 Cognitive Neuroscience, 10 credits
- PSY-3005 Attitudes, 10 credits
- PSY-3006 Elective course in psychology, 10 credits
- PSY-3008 Introduction to Multivariate Methods, 10 credits
- PSY-3009 Developmental Psychology, 10 credits
- PSY-3012 Working Memory, 10 credits
- PSY-3013 Stress and Health, 10 credits
- PSY-3015 Qualitative Methods, 10 credits
- PSY-3018 From Theory to the Practice of Teaching, 10 credits
- PSY-3021 Psychology of Experience, 10 credits
- PSY-3022 Communicate research through film – The Psychology behind research, 10 credits
- PSY-3023 Research Practice in Psychology, 10 credits

- PSY-3024 UiT Autism Seminar, 10 credits
- PSY-3026 Gender and Socioeconomic Inequality, 10 credits
- PSY-3027 Affect and Cognition, 10 credits
- PSY-3028 Cultural and community psychology, 10 credits
- PSY-3029 Organizational Psychology, 10 credits
- PSY-3030 Apply psychology, 10 credits
- PSY-3900 Masters Thesis in Psychology, 60 credits