

School of Psychology
Counselling & Psychotherapy

Master of Professional Psychology
Course Information Handbook
2023

Course Code: PY093

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Welcome to The Cairnmillar Institute

Congratulations on your success in obtaining a place in the Master of Professional Psychology degree. This course information handbook addresses many aspects and requirements of the course. It should be read in conjunction with the following:

- [Placement Information Handbook](#)
- [Unit Outlines](#)
- [Policies and Procedures](#)

These resources provide all the information you need to successfully navigate your way through the different components of the course. If you find anything missing from these handbooks, please let us know.

The Cairnmillar Institute and staff wish you an enjoyable and rewarding professional experience.



Professor Louise Roufeil
Head of School



Kelly Watt-McMahon
Course Coordinator, Master of Professional Psychology

The Cairnmillar Institute

The vision of the Cairnmillar Institute is to be globally recognised as a centre for psychological treatment, higher education, community education and research in the fields of Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy. The Institute is an Australian Health Promotion Charity and non-profit body.

Our aim is to offer relevant programs and services tailored to our professional and client community needs. The service growth and regional reach of Cairnmillar is underpinned by our values of respect, integrity and professionalism and a focus on quality and standards. Connection with business partners and community, and a focus on quality is critical to our business development and will directly enhance our client and student experience. We also aim to strengthen our contribution to the body of research that informs community in practice, and education.

Master of Professional Psychology

The Master of Professional Psychology prepares selected psychology graduates who have successfully completed an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) accredited fourth year course in psychology, to gain the knowledge and skills to meet the core capabilities and attributes required to practice as a psychologist. The eight competencies comprise the capability to research, analyse, articulate, synthesise, and practice psychology as a systematic body of knowledge. Students learn a range of evidence based psychological assessments, therapies and interventions, and gain professional experience through supervised practice.

The aim of the course is to provide a general education in the professional practice of psychology as the 5th year of the 5+1 pathway to registration as a psychologist, such that the graduate provisional psychologist is eligible to register with the Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency (AHPRA) as a 6th year Intern.

Entry Requirements

Applicants must have successfully completed an APAC accredited fourth year course in psychology, and be eligible to hold provisional registration as a psychologist with the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA). Upon commencing the course, students must apply with PsyBA for provisional registration as a psychologist, and provide copies of a current Police Check and Working with Children Check. International students must have an IELTS score of 7.00 with a minimum in each band of 7.

Duration of the Course

This course is designed to be completed in one year full-time. In exceptional circumstances, it is possible to complete the course part-time. For further information about the part-time course structure and your eligibility, please contact the Course Coordinator.

Graduate Learning Outcomes

Students who satisfactorily complete this course will have achieved advanced knowledge and skills in the following areas of study:

1. Knowledge of the discipline

- (a) Apply core professional psychology principles across a range of settings
- (b) Assess and diagnose a variety of client presentations with reference to the current DSM
- (c) Interpret current literature and research regarding psychological issues and disorders, to formulate appropriate assessments and interventions.

2. Ethical, legal & professional matters

- (a) Apply knowledge of the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics as well as relevant legislation that informs current professional practice
- (b) Apply ethical principles in simulation and in professional practice.

3. Psychological Assessment and Measurement

- (a) Develop knowledge of a broad range of assessment measures and understand the theoretical frameworks and psychometric properties that support their empirical validation, and knowledge of appropriateness to assessing particular presentations and disorders
- (b) Administer, score, interpret and write up specific assessment batteries.

4. Intervention strategies

- (a) Apply understanding of a select range of empirically validated interventions suitable for use with adults and children
- (b) Show ethical application of treatments in simulation and placement practicum, including their evaluation.

5. Research and evaluation

- (a) Apply knowledge of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods in professional psychological practice
- (b) Conduct a high quality needs analysis in a psychological treatment or psychosocial support setting, and recommend an implementable solution.

6. Communication and Interpersonal Relationships

- (a) Utilise effective and efficient written and oral communication skills
- (b) Relate appropriately to clients and professionals across academic and clinical settings.

7. Working within a Cross Cultural Context

Develop an understanding of culturally sensitive psychological practice, and demonstrate competence in working with clients from diverse backgrounds where placement settings allow.

8. Practice across the Lifespan

Develop knowledge of age appropriate psychological assessments and interventions, and where possible apply this in placement settings.

9. Reflective practice

Apply reflective self-practice and the ability to implement constructive feedback in order to improve clinical practice.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the Master of Professional Psychology course are eligible to be employed as a provisional psychologist, and in a range of other fields such as community services or counselling. After completing a 6th year Internship as a provisional psychologist, the graduate qualifies to register as a Psychologist with AHPRA.

More information about [career pathways](#) can be found on myCMI.

Professional Recognition

The Master of Professional Psychology is an APAC accredited fifth year degree that has been designed specifically to meet APAC and Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA) guidelines for such courses. Graduates are eligible to register as a provisional psychologist 6th year Intern with AHPRA, to complete the requirements of the 5+1 pathway to general registration as a psychologist

More information about professional registration can be found on myCMI: [Professional Registration FAQs](#) on myCMI.

Course Structure & Credit Points

This course has been designed to be completed one year full time.

The full-time course structure is as follows:

Semester	Unit Code	Unit Title	Credit Points
1	MPP501	Professional Practice Issues	12.5
1	MPP502	Foundations in Psychological Assessment & Psychopathology	12.5
1	MPP560	Practicum & Supervised Placement 1	25
2	MPP503	Advanced Skills in Psychological Assessment & Psychopathology	12.5
2	MPP504	Psychological Treatment Models	12.5
2	MPP550	Applied Research for the Practising Psychologist	12.5
2	MPP562	Practicum & Supervised Placement 2	12.5

Course Details: 100 credit points

Coursework: 50 credit points or 50% of the course

Practical Placement: 37.5 credit points or 37.5% of the course

Research: 12.5 credit points or 12.5% of the course

Prerequisite Unit/s:

MPP501 and 502 must be completed along side or prior to MPP560

MPP502 is a prerequisite to MPP503

MPP560 is a prerequisite to MPP504

MPP560 and MPP562 are progressive units

(see ['Progressive Units'](#) on my.CMI for an explanation of progressive units)

Coursework Units

Each of the units of study are detailed below. Please note students must pass all units before being eligible to graduate.

- **MPP501 (Professional Practice Issues)**

This Unit explicates the frameworks, guidelines, and competencies that a provisional or general psychologist needs to be versed in to practice in a professional, ethical and legal manner. Challenges associated with privacy and confidentiality, duty of care, protection of the public and other complex and sensitive professional practice issues are all canvassed. In that context, the unit requires the student to undertake a critical examination of case studies of professional situations and ethical dilemmas in contemporary psychological practice.

The Unit's primary theme is that legal, ethical and practice issues are inextricably linked. The sound practitioner has an ongoing awareness of these dynamic concerns and a current knowledge of the legislation, guidelines and practice standards that inform decision making about them.

- **MPP502 (Foundations in Psychological Assessment & Psychopathology)**

As a foundational Unit, MPP502 familiarises students with standardised and non-standardised assessments, expands knowledge of assessment and diagnosis in high prevalence mental health disorders, and develops skills in assessment selection. The initial 6 weeks of the Unit focuses on conducting initial assessments and introduces students to the

Weschler ability, achievement, and memory assessments. Additionally, students develop competency in the administration and scoring of the WISC-V and begin to learn how to interpret ability and achievement tests in order to write a psychoeducational report. During the second 6 weeks of the Unit, students build their knowledge of commonly occurring mental health disorders such as Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Disruptive, Impulse-Control, Conduct Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, and Depressive Disorders. Discussions of disorders centre on assessment, diagnosis, and an introduction to common interventions, including psychopharmacology. Cultural and lifespan considerations are embedded across all aspects of the unit, with students asked to consider these in relation to assessment, diagnosis, and intervention.

- **MPP503 (Advanced Psychological Assessment & Psychopathology)**

Advanced Skills in Psychological Assessment and Psychopathology (MPP503) builds on the knowledge gained in MPP502, with a focus on more complex areas of psychological assessment related to psychopathology through the lifespan. The unit provides students with a knowledge of assessment tools and approaches important both in diagnosis and measuring the impact of illness on functionality and quality of life. Students will be introduced to a range of disorders with a primary focus on assessment tools and diagnostic considerations related to the specific disorders. Reference to psychopharmacology and specific interventions for disorders are made with links back to those empirically based therapies covered in MPP504. The unit also provides students with skills and experience to communicate their findings to their clients and to other health professionals. The unit explores mental disorders within a biopsychosocial framework throughout, with consideration to the individual beyond the illness and as an active partner in the therapeutic process.

- **MPP504 (Psychological Treatment Models)**

This Unit aims to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of psychological treatment models and related practices. More advanced applications of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) will be covered, including CBT for anger, behavioural interventions, skills training, case formulation, and treatment planning. Students will also be given a grounding in Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT), including theory and application in treatment and case formulation. The unit also covers an introduction to trauma-informed practice, and content on treatment evaluation and evolving case formulation. Assessments are predominantly applied in nature.

- **MPP550 (Applied Research for the Practising Psychologist)**

Research is at the centre of psychology, both from an academic standpoint and from a clinician standpoint. From systematically identifying the need for a new intervention, to the methods used to align intervention development with relevant theories and models, to the formal evaluation of both the effectiveness of the intervention, and the ability for clinicians to accurately implement or conduct the intervention. This unit looks at each of these aspects of the intervention development cycle, focusing on the methodologies and statistics used at each stage, how they are reported, and importantly, how you (as a consumer of research) can interpret these findings in a meaningful way to inform your own practice. Having said this, the unit is not a quantitative study into the aetiology of a psychological disorder, nor do we focus on describing treatment options or treatment planning for specific clients in any great detail. Rather, our attention will be focused on the research around intervention development. This unit contains a major research assessment, labelled the 'Needs Analysis'. The Needs Analysis affords you the opportunity to apply your newfound knowledge of intervention development to identify an area of need in your MPP placements, review the literature around your identified need, and propose a research-informed solution. This will require you to begin collecting evidence early around your need, which may involve observations, anecdotal reports from stakeholders, administration documentation or procedures, non-confidential statistics such as admission rates, or other detail.

- **MPP560 (Semester 1 Practicum & Supervised Placement) & MPP562 (Semester 2 Practicum & Supervised Placement)**

These units are progressive or linked units. They comprise the 300 hour practicum component, which runs across Semesters 1 and 2 and includes an agency placement of two days a week over approximately five to six months, with 40 hours of individual and group supervision, and an experiential workshops and simulated learning component. The latter occurs predominantly at the beginning of MPP560 prior to placement commencement, and provides foundational learning in core competencies required for placement, such as understanding the role of a provisional psychologist, the use of supervision, working with children and families, counselling microskills, clinical interviewing, case note and assessment writing, risk assessment, and foundational learning in cognitive behavioural therapy and play therapy. Students are required to satisfactorily complete certain application-based assessment tasks in order to be approved to commence placement in the second half of MPP560. In MPP562, introductory workshops are also offered in a range of treatment models, to provide a foundational understanding and resources for further learning. Students are required to submit a video recording and a case report in MPP562, as hurdle requirements.

With regard to placement, early in the year students are offered a choice of suitable placement agencies from which to choose preferences and apply. Students are usually required to interview for a placement opportunity. Support is provided in writing cover letters, and in obtaining a placement in time to commence after the mid-Semester break. Placements complete around mid-Semester 2. They commence with a Structured Observation Placement (SOP), which is a two-week orientation to the placement agency, to assist students to gain knowledge of placement protocols and the agency expectations. This is largely in reference to administrative, educational, organisational and supervision matters. Once the SOP is completed, the student can begin working with clients.

Each student receives 20 hours of individual supervision (weekly) and 20 hours of group supervision (fortnightly) while on placement, from Cairnmillar board-approved supervisors.

Students should also refer to the relevant **Unit Outlines** located on [Canvas](#)

Placements

For information regarding placements, please refer to the [Placement Information Handbook](#).

Enrolment Conditions

See also: [Enrolment Conditions](#) on myCMI for a copy of the current enrolment conditions. You must agree to the conditions of enrolment every time you enrol in a unit of study.

Attendance

It is an expectation that students will attend all classes*. If you anticipate being absent, please advise your Unit Coordinator via email. Planned absences of several weeks should also be discussed with your Unit Coordinator. Students who miss more than three classes, should make an appointment to discuss their attendance with the Unit Coordinator.

Note: In accordance with national and state recommendations for social distancing due to COVID-19, we consider classes* to include to include synchronous online activities such as tutorials and lectures held in online platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

Online Etiquette

Students are expected to comply with the Cairnmillar Institute's policies and regulations concerning etiquette during online classes, webinars, and in their electronic communications including the TLP008 Student Social Media policy and FSP002 Discrimination Bullying Harassment Policy. All Policies and Procedures can be found [here](#).

Submission of Written Work

All written assessment tasks must be prepared in [Microsoft Word](#) and submitted via [Canvas](#). Please refer to the Unit Outlines on [Canvas](#) and the [Assessment Style Guides and Formatting](#) guide on myCMI for more information on written assignment requirements.

Referencing & Style Guidelines

The referencing and format for all assignments must be in APA 7 style. Please see [APA Style Referencing](#). Case reports/studies require client anonymity and confidentiality.

See also [Assessment Style Guides and Formatting](#) on myCMI.

Assessment Grades & Records

Final results for each unit will be calculated, then published on the [Paradigm Enrolment Portal](#) by the relevant results [publication date](#). See [myCMI](#) for information on [results publication](#).

Extensions

An extension may be granted for assignments where there is evidence of unexpected disruptions in the student's available work time. Extensions must be applied for and approved in accordance with the Assessment Policy and Procedures and any other published procedures found on the School website. Applications must be made via the appropriate [form](#) before the due date and submitted to the [Unit Coordinator](#). An extension is valid only after it has been approved by the [Unit Coordinator](#).

See [myCMI](#) for more information on how to apply for an [assignment extension](#).

Special Consideration

Special consideration may be granted in situations where an extension is not possible, such as an exam or in-class work that has been missed. You should first discuss your situation with your [Course Coordinator](#) before applying. Please see the Assessment Policy and Procedures found on the School website for more information. Please see [myCMI](#) for how to apply for special consideration.

Word Limit

Students must adhere to the word limits provided in Unit Outlines and Assessment Guides. Please refer to your Unit Outlines on [Canvas](#) for information regarding word limits for each assessment task.

Late Submissions

The penalty for late submissions is 5% per day (including weekends and non-business days), for a maximum of seven (7) days (i.e., maximum late penalty deduction possible is 35%). Work handed in more than one week late will not normally be marked and a fail result will be recorded. No assignment will be accepted once the results for that assignment have been published.

Tasks that are required to be completed and/or submitted in-class, such as class presentations must be submitted on the date of the class presentation unless a student has

been granted special consideration. The penalty for late submission or non-submission of in-class tasks is usually 100% of the mark.

See also: [Late Assessment Submissions](#) on myCMI.

Samples of Work

Samples of student work may be taken for purposes of course accreditation. In all cases anonymity will be preserved. If you object to your work being copied for this purpose you must advise the Unit Coordinator when submitting assignments.

Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process where a student may be granted credit or partial credit towards a qualification in recognition of previous study, skills or experience.

See [myCMI](#) for more information on how to apply for RPL or credit transfer.

Marking Scales & Grade Definitions

You can view Cairnmillar's [grade-mark schema](#) on myCMI.

Academic Integrity

Breaches of academic integrity are serious academic offences. It is the responsibility of all students to access, read, and familiarise themselves with the Institute's [Academic Integrity and Student Conduct Policy and Procedures](#). See [myCMI](#) for more information about [Academic Integrity](#) at Cairnmillar.

All students must complete an Academic Integrity Module and Quiz on Canvas prior to beginning classes at Cairnmillar. Please see [here on myCMI](#) for more details.

Course Progress

Please see '[Academic Integrity and Progress Review Hearings](#)' on myCMI for detailed information on Cairnmillar's academic integrity and progress procedure.

Policies & Procedures

It is the responsibility of all students to access, read, and familiarise themselves with the Institute's Policies and Procedures. These are published on our [school website](#). Detailed supporting information, guides and forms can be found on the student website, [myCMI](#).

Copyright

There are copyright laws that we need to be aware of and adhere to. Please see the [Australian Copyright Council's](#) website for full information on this topic.

Professional Standards

You must have a thorough knowledge of the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics document. It is reviewed and updated regularly, and it is essential to remain abreast of any changes that are recommended.

A full copy of the current edition of the [Code of Ethics](#) can be obtained on the [APS website](#).

Student Support, Counselling, & Wellbeing

Counselling & Support for Students

Please see [‘Counselling for Students’](#) on myCMI

Academic & Writing Support for Students

Please see [‘English and Academic Writing Support’](#) and [‘APA Support and Study Skills’](#) on myCMI

Other Support Services

A searchable list of other support services can be found on myCMI. See: [Support for Students](#)

Tuition Fees and FEE-HELP

Information regarding the payment of fees can be obtained from myCMI and our public website. Tuition fees and conditions are published on our website, see [Tuition Fees](#). Please see [Fees and FEE-HELP FAQs](#) on myCMI for more information.

Termination of Enrolment

Cairnmillar reserves the right to terminate a person’s enrolment in a course if the student:

- fails to meet the complete assessment task requirements or breaches the Institute’s privacy and ethical conditions
- exceeds the maximum or negotiated time for completion of the course, or
- other conditions as specified in the [Enrolment Conditions](#).

See [myCMI](#) for details on Cairnmillar’s [Academic Progress](#) procedure.

Graduation

To be eligible to have the relevant qualification awarded, a student must:

- comply with all the Institute Policies and Procedures;
- pay all relevant fees and charges;
- complete all requirements prescribed for the course of study at least at a PASS level;
- have all placement documentation up to date, signed off, and uploaded to myPlacement;
- submit the relevant intention to graduate form by the due date.

The appropriate awards are given on satisfactory completion of the course. These are presented at a special annual ceremony or given (posted) directly to students for a fee.

For more information see: [Completion and Conferral on myCMI](#)

Library Services

The Library at the Cairnmillar Institute is a specialist library resource, aimed at supporting the work of the Institute, focusing on the curriculum, teaching, research, and clinical requirements of the students, academic staff, clinical staff, and researchers. Appointments about Library and research skills can be made through the [Library](#).

Please visit the [Library](#) page on myCMI for more information.

Office 365

All students have access to [Office 365](#) while studying at Cairnmillar. Your Office365 account includes free access to Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook (student email), and much more.

Students also have access to 1TB of OneDrive storage. Find more information on [Office 365](#) on myCMI.

Student Email and Canvas Announcements

Students are provided with a Cairnmillar student email and are required to check this account regularly while enrolled. See: [Accessing your Cairnmillar Student Email on myCMI for full details.](#)

Students should also regularly check or sign up for email [reminders on Canvas Announcements](#) and review the regular [Student Newsletter](#).

Computer & Printer Access

Each student has their own personal [OneDrive](#) account which can be accessed across any computer.

Please see '[Computer Access at Cairnmillar](#)' for more information.

Please see '[Printing/Copying at Cairnmillar](#)' on myCMI for more information.