

Producing Work Ready Psychology Graduates



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Background

➤ The majority of 3 year graduates from Psychology programs do not go on to become psychologists.

(Cranney et al., 2009)

➤ These graduates need to be work ready and to have considered alternative career pathways.

(Bridstock, 2009)

➤ In today's work environment successful employees need to be:

- Mobile
- Adaptable
- Flexible
- Resourceful

(Arnold et al., 2005)



Research Question

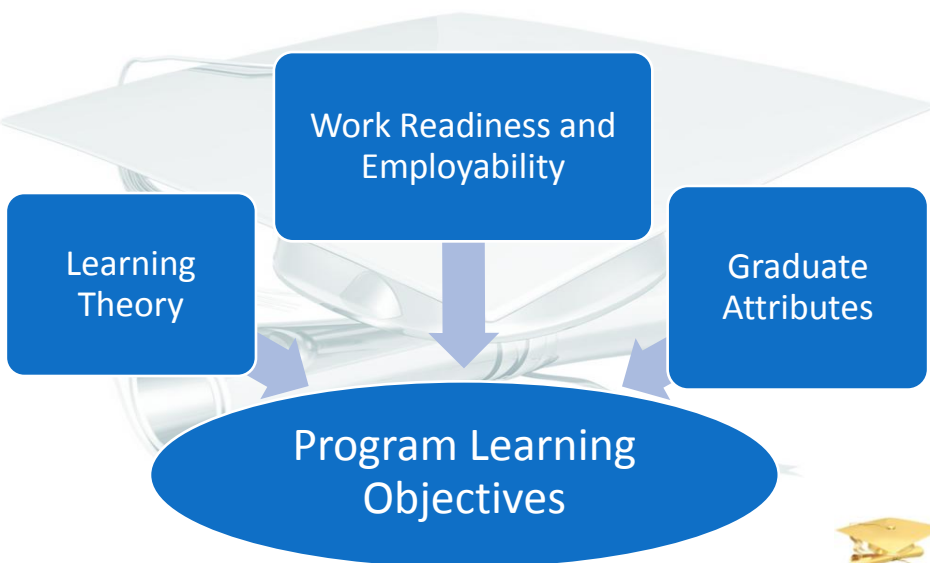
➤ What skills, knowledge, and attributes do our Bachelor of Psychological Science graduates need in order to be work ready?

Research Focus

- Developing a list of program level learning objectives:
 - sequential and cumulative development
 - flexible, capable, and resourceful graduates



Theory & Research



Method

APAC Graduate Attributes

GA 1) Knowledge and understanding of psychology

GA 2) Research methods in psychology

GA 3) Critical thinking skills in psychology

GA 4) Values in psychology

GA 5) Communication skills in psychology

GA 6) Learning and the application of psychology

(Cranney et al., 2009)



Method

➤ Content Analysis

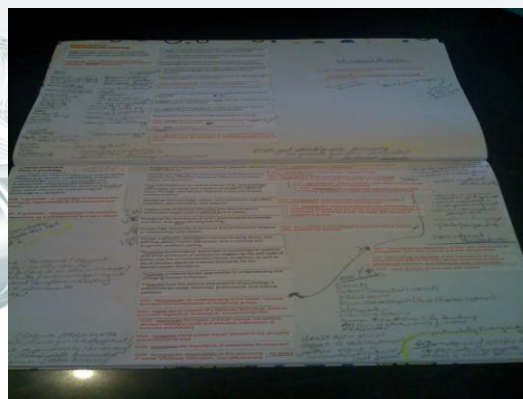
(Schilling, 2006)

➤ UniSA Graduate Qualities

(UniSA, n.d.)

➤ Employer feedback/ expectations

(DEST, 2006; UniSA, 2009)



Method

➤ Project team review & feedback

➤ Teaching and Learning Forum presentation and discussion



Results

APAC
Graduate Attributes 6 & 4

Reflection
Self awareness
Self awareness
Personal development
Life long learning
Integrity
Recognise limitations

UniSA
Graduate Qualities 2 & 4

Weaknesses/ Strengths
Learning styles
Responsibility for learning
Sustaining Intellectual interest
Self directed
Integrity
Recognise limitations
Flexibility/ adaptability

PO1. Personal and professional learning and critical reflection.

A Psychology graduate of UniSA will understand and commit to lifelong learning and critical self reflection, both personally and professionally.



Results

APAC
Graduate Attributes 1 & 6

Demonstrates understanding
Learning and the application of
psychology

UniSA
Graduate Qualities 1

Operates effectively with and upon a
body of knowledge to begin
professional practice

PO2. Knowledge, understanding, and application of psychology.

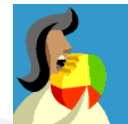
A Psychology graduate of UniSA will understand and apply the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in the core topics of psychology to a variety of contexts (individual, organisational, and social).



Results

PO 3. Research methods in psychology.

A Psychology graduate of UniSA will understand, apply, conduct, and evaluate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis and interpretation, and the appropriate use of technologies.



Results

APAC Graduate Attribute 3

Apply the scientific method
Higher order analysis
Critical thinking
Evaluation
Reasoning
Develop & defend arguments
Creative & pragmatic PS

UniSA Graduate Qualities 1, 3 & 7

Problem solving
Analysis
Synthesis
Creativity
Conceptualise problems
Formulate solutions
Identify limitations

PO 4. Critical thinking and problem solving skills.

A Psychology graduate of UniSA will respect and use critical and creative thinking, sceptical inquiry, and the scientific approach to solve problems related to a range of issues, including behaviour and mental processes.



Results

APAC Graduate Attribute 4

Ethical use of information
Scientific attitude
Use of Code of Ethics & ANPS for
mental health workforce
Contextual influences
Recognise & respect diversity
Impact of privilege, power, &
oppression

UniSA Graduate Qualities 1 & 5

Understanding of indigenous groups
(needs, interests, protocols, &
perspectives)
Personal ethical actions
Social justice issues
Responsibility to the community
Ability to think globally
Cultural awareness (own & others)
Intercultural issues
Apply international standards

PO 5. Values and cultural perspectives in psychology

A Psychology graduate of UniSA will value empirical evidence; tolerate ambiguity during the search for greater understanding of behaviour and knowledge structures; commit to and perform in an ethically, professionally, and socially responsible way; understand the complexity of indigenous, sociocultural and international diversity and issues; and reflect other values that underpin the discipline of psychology.



Results

APAC Graduate Attribute 5

Research report
 Various formats
 Different purpose
 Oral communication skills
 Interviewing skills
 Interpersonal communication
 Sensitivity
 Collaborate effectively

UniSA Graduate Qualities 4 & 6

Oral, written, mathematical and
 visual illiteracies
 Communicate appropriately
 Sensitivity to the audience
 Logical and rationale argument
 Negotiation
 Leadership (organising, planning,
 influencing)
 Build positive relationships
 Working in a team

PO 6. Communication skills in psychology.

*A Psychology graduate of UniSA will communicate effectively in a variety of
 formats; in a variety of contexts; as a leader and effective team member; in
 professional practice and as a member of the community.*



Course Mapping

1) Initial mapping of core courses against Program Objectives

➤ Reviewed Course Information Booklets & course webpages (lectures, tutorial material, assessment documents)

2) Interviewed core course co-ordinators

➤ Fit between assessments/ learning activities/ learning objectives and each program objective

3) Final mapping of each course

➔ compiled yearly maps.



Course Mapping

Program Objectives	Objectives	Assessments	Learning Activities
PO1: Personal and professional learning and critical reflection.			
PO2: Knowledge, understanding and application of psychology.			
PO3: Research methods in psychology.			
PO4: Critical thinking and problem solving skills.			
PO5: Values and cultural perspectives in psychology.			
PO6: Communication skills in psychology.			



Course Mapping

	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
PO1						
PO2						
PO3						
PO4						

Course Mapping

	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyse	Evaluate	Create
PO5						
PO6	Wr					
	Wr					
	Wr					
	Wr					
	Wr					
	Wr					
	Wr					
	Or*	*	*	*		
	Or*	*	*	*		
	Or*	*	*	*	*	
	Or*	*	*	*	*	
	Or*	*	*	*	*	
	Or*	*	*	*	*	*
Or*	*	*	*	*	*	

*Oral discussion with tutorial/ practicals/ lectures.

Mapping Results

- Appropriate 1st & 2nd year sequencing
- 3rd year courses should focus on Applying → Creating
- More focus needed on
 - Critical self reflection
 - Oral communication
 - Group work and interpersonal skills
 - Written skills for different formats and contexts
 - Leadership skills



Current & Future Directions

Enhanced psychology program:

- **Mandatory 1st year course**
 - self reflection and employability skills
 - linked to e-portfolio
- **3rd year placement course**
- **Counselling stream offered & recognised by CASA**
- **Ongoing discussion with multidisciplinary teams**



Questions

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