

RMIT University - APAC Accreditation assessment summary report

Higher education provider	RMIT University
Name of the Psychology AOU	Discipline of Psychology
Standards version	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
Purpose of assessment	Initial accreditation
Programs and level of study assessed	Bachelor of Applied Science (Psychology) (Level 1)
Campus	Hanoi, Saigon South
Date of site visit	15 - 18 March 2022
Date of APAC Board Determination	15 August 2022
Accreditation start date	15 August 2022
Accreditation end date	31 December 2027

Background and overview

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) last reviewed RMIT University's (RMIT) undergraduate Level 1, fourth year Level 2 Honours and postgraduate packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical psychology programs offered at the Bundoora and Melbourne campuses for the purpose of re-accreditation in 2017. At the time of the 2017 review, the undergraduate and postgraduate programs were accredited with conditions for a shortened period of time as a number of shortfalls against the Standards were identified. Following the review, all outstanding conditions were met and the programs were since accredited without conditions.

This report concerns only the initial accreditation assessment of the Level 1 program offered at the RMIT University's Vietnam (RMIT Vietnam) Hanoi and Saigon South campuses; please refer to the separate report for the programs taught at RMIT University's (RMIT Australia) Bundoora, Melbourne and Online campuses.

The Assessment Team considered the Discipline's 141 page self-review and attached appendices against the *Accreditation Standards*. Following the Assessment Team Zoom conference held on 24 January 2022, additional information was requested from the Discipline for review. Some of the requested additional information was received during the virtual site visit, including:

- an updated student to staff ratio calculator, including details of the staffing profile and any vacant positions currently under the recruitment process
- a variety of de-identified samples of student assessments demonstrating how *Foundational Competencies 1.4 and 1.5* are appropriately assessed within the Level 1 program
- an update on benchmarking including any comprehensive benchmarking plan for all programs
- details of the representation of the *Psychology Industry Advisory Committee* and *Student Staff Consultative Committee*, including any representation of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons
- information regarding seed funding support or research grants for early career researchers

The APAC Assessment Team conducted a virtual site visit on 15 - 18 March 2022. During the visit, the Assessment Team interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Assistant Associate Dean of Psychology
- Associate Dean of Work Integrated Learning
- Associate Dean, School of Applied Health
- RMIT Vietnam and RMIT Australia Level 1 Program Managers

- RMIT Vietnam and RMIT Australia Level 1 Course Coordinators
- RMIT Australia Undergraduate Year Level Coordinators
- RMIT Australia Undergraduate Teaching Committee

The Assessment Team requested further information during the site visit for review that has not yet been received at the time of writing, including de-identified examples of the implementation of RMIT policies and procedures for cases of ethical and professional misconduct by staff students and staff.

The findings in this report are based on the Assessment Team's evaluation of the material and interview evidence gathered at the time of the virtual site visit, as well as information provided in the rejoinder to the draft report.

Key findings

The Discipline of Psychology is embedded within the School of Health and Biomedical Science (School) nested in the STEM College (College). The Discipline identified an opportunity for growth in Vietnam and begun delivering the Level 1 Bachelor of Applied Science (Psychology) program in October 2021. The program was reviewed for initial accreditation as part of the 2022 re-accreditation review and within 12 months of its commencement. The Assessment Team heard the successful uptake into the program and the Discipline's plans to expand its offering of the program to a second Vietnam based campus. At the time of the rejoinder, RMIT sought initial accreditation for the Level 1 program to be delivered at the new Hanoi campus.

The Discipline has a strong focus on providing applied, practical, and scientific and evidence-based education in psychology training and research. The program provides students with the foundational knowledge and skills to progress their studies in psychology. The Assessment Team was impressed by the strong academic governance structures based in RMIT Australia and RMIT Vietnam and the strategic focused leadership that informs the supportive and collegial culture amongst staff with a shared vision for future direction. The Discipline is also recognised for its strong lines of communication amongst the leadership teams, academic and professional staff, as well as the collaboration with staff based at RMIT Vietnam and RMIT Australia. The evidence indicates that RMIT Vietnam staff are well connected and supported and are encouraged to further develop their knowledge in psychology education and refine their skills in teaching and research.

The evidence gathered by the Assessment Team indicated that the program is well established, structured and managed providing students with the essential knowledge and skills to progress through their studies in psychology. There is a good variety of authentic assessment tasks across the programs and a strong range of tools to adequately assess students' knowledge and competence in psychology education. While the evidence indicates that most of the *Foundational Competencies* are sufficiently taught and appropriately assessed as required learning outcomes, the Assessment Team heard that students would benefit from further training and development to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a culturally appropriate and sensitive manner.

The Assessment Team heard that the online learning environments, teaching facilities and resources are fit-for-purpose. There are substantive opportunities for external input into the design and management of the programs and the Discipline has undertaken some benchmarking activities the program.

The Assessment Team identified some shortfalls against the Accreditation Standards and areas for quality improvement. The Discipline should consider providing students with more guidance and information regarding alternative pathway options should they not engage in postgraduate studies in psychology.

The Assessment Team identified several commendable areas. The Discipline is commended for its strong communication and high level of support systems for staff in place, specifically for new staff members and those based in RMIT Vietnam.

APAC Board determination

That RMIT University's **Bachelor of Applied Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hanoi, Saigon South) program is accredited from **15 August 2022** until **31 December 2027** subject to the following conditions:

By **31 January 2023**:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criteria 3.2 and 3.8 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the Discipline is to provide evidence demonstrating that the following competencies are integrated, clearly articulated as a learning outcome, taught and appropriately assessed:
 - i. *Foundational Competencies 1.4 and 1.5 (criteria 3.2, 5.1 and 5.2), and*
 - ii. cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures (criteria 3.8, 5.1 and 5.2).

By **30 April 2023**:

2. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.2 is met, the Discipline is to provide evidence demonstrating systematic and ongoing benchmarking, including the progress and outcomes of external benchmarking activities.

Table 1: Summary of findings regarding each criterion for each Standard

Level 1	
Domain 1: Public safety	Standard Statement 1: Public safety is assured
	Standard is met
Domain 2: Academic governance and quality assurance	Standard Statement 2: Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective
	Standard is substantially met
Domain 3: Program of study	Standard Statement 3: Program of study, design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required graduate competencies
	Standard is substantially met
Domain 4: The student experience	Standard Statement 4: Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support
	Standard is met
Domain 5: Assessment	Standard Statement 5: Assessment is fair, reliable and valid
	Standard is substantially met

Quality improvement suggestions

A quality improvement suggestion refers to an action or a course of actions that should be considered by the education provider to improve the delivery and/or outcomes of the program.

The suggestions are as follows. It is recommended that the Discipline of Psychology at RMIT University:

1. explore options to provide students with further information regarding graduate employability opportunities following the completion of their studies.

Commendations

A commendation refers to a particularly significant achievement by the education provider with regard to the program.

The Assessment Team have made the subsequent commendations following the evaluation of the program. The Discipline of Psychology at RMIT University is commended for its:

1. strong lines of communication and support systems established amongst RMIT Australia's academic and professional staff.
2. commitment and the high level of support and mentorship provided for new academic teaching staff.