

University of Wollongong - APAC Accreditation assessment summary report

Higher education provider	University of Wollongong
Name of the Psychology AOU	School of Psychology
Standards version	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
Purpose of assessment	Re-accreditation (5 yearly cycle)
Programs and level of study assessed	Bachelor of Psychological Science (Level 1) Bachelor of Science (Psychology) (Level 1) <i>*in teach out</i>
Campus	Singapore
Date of site visit	26 - 29 April 2022
Date of APAC Board Determination	11 October 2022
Accreditation start date	1 January 2023
Accreditation end date	31 December 2027

Background and overview

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) last reviewed the University of Wollongong's (UoW) Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2 Honours and Graduate Diploma, Level 3 and packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical Masters and Doctorate programs for the purpose of re-accreditation in 2017. This report concerns only the UoW's Level 1 programs delivered in partnership with the Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) based in Singapore; please refer to the separate report for the programs offered online and taught at the Wollongong campus.

At the time of the 2017 review, the Level 1 programs were accredited without conditions.

The APAC Assessment Team considered the School's 104 page self-review and attached appendices against the *Accreditation Standards*. Following the Assessment Team Zoom conference held on 3 March 2022, additional information was requested and received from the School, including:

- student to staff ratio (SSR) calculations for all programs
- benchmarking reports for the suite of programs
- access to *appendix 35* submitted as part of the submission documentation
- a copy of the *Teaching and Assessment: Subject Delivery Policy*

The APAC Assessment Team conducted a virtual site visit on 26 - 29 April 2022. During the visit, the Assessment Team interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Head of School
- Executive Dean
- Deputy Head of School (Teaching & Learning)
- Director, Academic Programme Development and Management
- Assistant Director, Higher Education
- SIM Academic Program Director
- Learning & Teaching Committee
- Level 1 (100-level, 200-level and 300-level) Program Coordinators
- Level 1 (100-level, 200-level and 300-level) Subject Coordinators
- Level 1 sessional academic staff

- Level 1 current students
- Professional staff
- School Assessment Committee

During the virtual site visit, the Assessment Team was provided with additional information, including:

- clarification around the information provided in the SSR calculations
- a variety of examples of remediation plans and how they are implemented

The findings in this report are based on the Assessment Team's evaluation of the material outlined above and interview evidence at the time of the virtual site visit.

Key findings

The School of Psychology (School) is embedded within the Faculty of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (Faculty). The School has a long-standing history of providing contemporary research-led psychology education with a strong focus on the scientist-practitioner model and evidence-based curriculum. The evidence gathered by the Assessment Team indicates that the Level 1 programs empower students with the knowledge, skills and competency in psychology education and research academic. The Assessment Team noted the UoW and SIM upcoming contractual review for the Level 1 Singapore-based programs in early 2023.

The evidence confirms that appropriately qualified SIM academic staff members deliver lectures and tutorials for the first and second year components of the programs in collaboration with UoW based Subject Coordinators. Further, lectures and content within the third year component of the programs are delivered by UoW based academic staff members with tutorials being conducted by the SIM teaching team. The Assessment Team noted that historically, UoW academic staff regularly travelled to the SIM campus to deliver lecture content in person. However, due to travel restrictions in place as a result of COVID-19, all third year lecture content was consequently delivered online. The Assessment Team heard plans to reinstate travel to the Singapore campus to deliver third year lecture content in a block model. It was evident that the operational and strategic relationship between UoW and SIM is well coordinated and established resulting in a strong and collaborative approach to deliver the program content and support student achievement of the *Level 1 Foundational Competencies*.

The Assessment Team gathered evidence that the cohesive culture and strong lines of communication displayed amongst staff is commendable. There was some evidence of authentic and high-quality teaching content related to cultural responsiveness throughout the programs and the Assessment Team heard plans to further develop and integrate content and assess competency. Additionally, it was evident that students develop good foundational knowledge and understanding in research ethics in their studies.

The Assessment Team heard a range of views that the online learning environments and teaching facilities are fit-for-purpose. The School's recent establishment within a consortium of education providers to undertake systematic external benchmarking exercises was noted and it was evident that appropriate mechanisms exist to ensure sufficient external input into the design and ongoing management of the Level 1 programs.

The Assessment Team identified some shortfalls against the *Accreditation Standards* and areas for further quality improvement. The School is encouraged to review its unit outlines to ensure accurate and consistent details is represented in relation to the APAC graduate competencies, assessment requirements and marking criteria. It is also recommended that academic staff are provided with guidance and clarity around moderation processes and a consistent approach is taken to disseminate unit information to students.

The Assessment Team identified several commendable areas. The School is commended for its collegial and cohesive approach displayed amongst academic staff and the programs' strong emphasis on the scientist-practitioner model and its strong integration of research-led curriculum and teaching.

APAC Board determination

That the following programs at the University of Wollongong are re-accredited until **31 December 2027**:

- **Bachelor of Psychological Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Singapore)
- **Bachelor of Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Singapore) **in teach out*

Subject to the following conditions:

By **31 January 2023**:

1. To ensure that Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.2 is met, the School is to provide an update and evidence demonstrating systematic and ongoing benchmarking, including the progress and outcomes of external benchmarking activities.
2. To ensure that Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.8 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the School is to provide evidence demonstrating that cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, is sufficiently taught, integrated and appropriately assessed as a required learning outcome.

As a monitoring requirement, the School is to provide an update on the progress and outcomes of the external benchmarking exercise as part of the 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026 annual reports.

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 programs.

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

1. provides academic staff with guidance and clarity around moderation processes.
2. ensures that a consistent approach is taken to disseminate any unit-related information and announcements to students.

Commendations

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

The Assessment Team have made the subsequent commendations following the evaluation of the programs. The School of Psychology at the University of Wollongong is commended for:

1. its collegial and cohesive approach displayed amongst the staff.
2. its strong focus and emphasis on the scientist-practitioner model and its strong integration of research-led curriculum and teaching.