

Swinburne University of Technology - APAC Accreditation assessment summary report

Higher education provider	Swinburne University of Technology
Name of the Psychology AOU	Department of Psychological Sciences
Standards version	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
Purpose of assessment	Re-accreditation (5 yearly cycle)
Programs and level of study assessed	<p>Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Professional) (Psychology and Forensic Science) (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Professional) (Psychology and Psychophysiology) (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science) (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Business (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Media and Communication (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Science (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology) (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Business (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Media and Communication (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Science (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Bachelor of Applied Innovation (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Bachelor of Criminal Justice and Criminology (Level 1)</p> <p>Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Level 1) <i>*3-year bridging</i></p> <p>Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) (packaged Level 1 and 2)</p>

	<p>Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Honours) (Level 2)</p> <p>Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Advanced) (Level 2)</p> <p>Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology) (packaged Level 3 and 4)</p> <p>Doctor of Psychology (Clinical and Forensic Psychology) (packaged Level 3 and 4)</p> <p>Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology) (packaged Level 3 and 4)</p> <p>Graduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology (Level 4)</p> <p>Programs in teach out:</p> <p>Bachelor of Behavioural Studies (Psychology) (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Social Science (Level 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology) (Level 1)</p>
Campus	Hawthorn, Swinburne OUA, Swinburne SOL
Date of site visit	16 - 19 May 2023
Date of APAC Determination	30 October 2023
Accreditation start date	1 January 2024
Accreditation end date	31 December 2028

Background and overview

Swinburne University of Technology's (Swinburne) psychology programs were last reviewed for the purpose of re-accreditation by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) in 2018 and included:

- Level 1 three-year sequence
- Level 1 Graduate Diploma bridging
- packaged Level 1 and 2 four-year sequence
- Level 2 fourth year
- Level 3 fifth year
- packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical, and combined Clinical and Forensic psychology
- Level 4 sixth year Forensic psychology postgraduate bridging.

At that time, the undergraduate and postgraduate programs were delivered face-to-face at the Hawthorn campus and online via Open Universities Australia (OUA) and Swinburne Online (SOL).

The Level 4 sixth year bridging Graduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology program delivered at the Hawthorn campus was accredited without conditions. The Level 3 fifth year program was under-developed at the time of the assessment and was not reviewed for accreditation. Conditions were imposed on the remaining Level 1 undergraduate and bridging, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2 and packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical and combined Clinical and Forensic programs. Following the re-accreditation review, all outstanding conditions were satisfied, and the suite of programs has been accredited without conditions since 2019.

In 2019, the Department of Psychological Sciences (Department) submitted an application for accreditation for the Level 2 Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Honours) program to be delivered at the Hawthorn campus. At the time of the review, the program was accredited subject to two conditions against new requirements in the 2019 *Accreditation Standards*. The outstanding conditions were satisfied in 2021, and the program has been accredited without conditions since then.

In 2020, the Department submitted an application for accreditation for the Level 2 Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Advanced) program to be delivered online. At the time of the review, the program was accredited subject to six conditions. Subsequent to the initial review, a monitoring site visit was conducted in June 2021 and the program remained accredited subject to three conditions. Following this review, the outstanding conditions were satisfied in 2022, and the program has remained accredited without conditions.

The APAC Assessment Team considered the Department's accreditation submission and appendices against the *Accreditation Standards*. Following the Assessment Team conference held on 6 April 2023, subsequent information was requested and received from the Department, including:

- CVs for all academic staff
- all units outlines
- clarification on where ethics and ethical practice is taught and competence is assessed prior to students commencing placements
- evidence of processes for purchasing and replacing teaching and test library resources and equipment
- documentation, system or evidence that the Department utilises to record and track the different types of clients that students work with on internal and external placements
- evidence demonstrating the types of clients the students have during their placements
- clarification around the second exam question for PSY10008 Fundamentals of Psychology as referred to on page 107 of the submission documentation (noting that the same example of question appears twice), and
- details of how Swinburne ensures that fair, transparent and equitable processes are in place to promote and support the admission, progression and completion of studies by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The Assessment Team conducted a site visit on 16–19 May 2023 at the Hawthorn Campus and the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science. During the site visit, the Assessment Team interviewed a range of individuals in person and via Zoom, including:

- Dean, School of Health Sciences
- Chair, Department of Psychological Sciences
- Deputy Chair, Department of Psychological Sciences
- Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2, packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 Course Directors
- Director, Centre for Forensic Behavioural Sciences
- Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2, packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 Unit Convenors and Unit Coordinators
- Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2, packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical Psychology permanent and sessional academic staff
- Packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 Forensic Psychology permanent academic staff
- Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2, packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 current students

- Level 1, packaged Level 1 and 2, Level 2, packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 recent graduates
- Swinburne Psychology Clinic Director and Deputy Director
- Swinburne Psychology Clinic Coordinators
- Packaged Level 3 and 4, and Level 4 programs internal and external Clinical and Forensic Placement Supervisors
- Academic Support Officer
- Manager, Academic Services
- Director, School Operations
- Student and Programs Progress Review Coordinator
- Associate Dean Education – Health Sciences
- Deputy Head of AOU
- Academic Director (SOL)
- Manager, Academic Partnership
- Swinburne Indigenous Psychology Committee members

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

- progression plans for the Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Advanced) students enrolled in Teaching Period 1 2023, and
- samples of student logbooks.

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

Key findings

The Department delivers a range of scientific and research-focussed educational programs in psychology. The site visit evidenced the Department's commitment to training competent psychologists that benefit the local communities. There is a sense of a strong, collegial, and supportive relationship between academic and professional staff and students, and interviews confirmed that students feel well supported by the Department throughout their studies. A strong leadership team provides effective mentoring and support across the programs, as detailed by multiple interviewees.

During the site visit, the Assessment Team gathered evidence indicating that the undergraduate programs are well managed and coordinated. Academic staff demonstrated great passion and commitment to support the student cohort and to provide an excellent student experience. Interviews confirmed that overall, students have a positive experience during their studies. For the postgraduate programs, students spoke highly of the quality of education and training received and supervisors indicated that students are well trained and competent to practice.

The Department's commitment to the core value of public safety was evidenced across the programs and clearly communicated to students, staff, supervisors and clients. However, there are some areas for development to ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place for students to practise safely, particularly when working with clients in the Swinburne Psychology Clinic (Clinic).

While the evidence indicates that most of the graduate competencies are sufficiently taught, articulated and appropriately assessed as required learning outcomes across the suite of programs, the Assessment Team identified some gaps relating to *Foundational Competency 1.5* (interpersonal skills and teamwork) within the Level 1 and Level 1 component of the packaged Level 1 and 2 programs.

Students receive well developed education related to cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, across the suite of programs. However, further development is required to ensure that students in all programs are appropriately assessed on this competency.

The Assessment Team identified several commendable aspects of the programs. The Department is commended for establishing the Swinburne Indigenous Psychology Committee (SIPC) and for encouraging collaborative and non-judgemental engagement and contribution from staff and Indigenous students into the design and management of the programs. Further, the assessment team noted the particularly good coverage of ethics, ethical practise, and professional conduct within the submission, specifically for the Level 2 programs. Students were well informed about grievance policies and procedures available within the Level 1 and Level 1 component of the packaged Level 1 and 2 programs. Finally, the external placement providers of the packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical programs were complimentary and noted the strong and responsive working relationship with the Department.

During the site visit, staff members recognised the Head of Department as an exceptional leader who provides effective mentoring and support for the academic teaching team. Multiple interviewees spoke highly of the Head of Department's support, responsiveness, and commitment. The Assessment Team noted that the Department is in the process of recruiting additional academic staff to support the delivery of the programs.

The Department is also commended on the clear structure of the submission regarding presentation of curriculum and assessment mapping.

The Assessment Team identified several opportunities for quality improvement. It is recommended that the Department continue and extend their partnership with SOL staff within the Level 1 programs to match the support and training offered to the broader Department staff. Specifically, the Department has provided a range of professional development to Swinburne staff to increase their engagement and teaching skills in Indigenous space, however it was not clear that SOL staff received the same professional development or opportunity to be involved in and benefit from SIPC. Further the Department is encouraged to expand SIPC's engagement, as appropriate, through existing partnerships, as with the Moondani Toombadool Centre. Also, it is recommended that the Department explores opportunities to develop an efficient process to provide students with constructive feedback on assessments within the Level 1 programs delivered online to manage student expectations around marking and remarking.

APAC determination

That the following programs at Swinburne University of Technology are re-accredited without conditions until **31 December 2028**:

- **Bachelor of Psychological Sciences (Honours)** (Level 2) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Graduate Diploma of Psychology (Advanced)** (Level 2) (Campus: Swinburne SOL)

That the following programs at Swinburne University of Technology are re-accredited until **31 December 2028**:

- **Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Psychological Sciences** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Professional) (Psychology and Forensic Science)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Professional) (Psychology and Psychophysiology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Business** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Media and Communication** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Forensic Science)/Bachelor of Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Business** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Media and Communication** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Health Science (Psychology and Psychophysiology)/Bachelor of Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Psychological Sciences** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Psychological Sciences** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn, Swinburne/SOL)
- **Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Bachelor of Applied Innovation** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Psychological Sciences/Bachelor of Criminal Justice and Criminology** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Graduate Diploma of Psychology** (Level 1) (Campus: Swinburne SOL) **3-year bridging*
- **Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)** (packaged Level 1 and 2) (Campus: Hawthorn)

- **Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical Psychology)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Doctor of Psychology (Clinical and Forensic Psychology)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)** (packaged Level 3 and 4) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Graduate Diploma in Forensic Psychology** (Level 4) (Campus: Hawthorn)

That the following programs in teach out at Swinburne University of Technology are re-accredited until **31 December 2028**:

- **Bachelor of Behavioural Studies (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Swinburne OUA)
- **Bachelor of Psychological Sciences** (Level 1) (Campus: Swinburne OUA)
- **Bachelor of Social Science** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn)
- **Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)** (Level 1) (Campus: Hawthorn, Swinburne SOL)

Subject to the following conditions:

For the Level 4 Forensic program

By 31 December 2023:

1. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criteria 1.4 and 1.10 are met, the Department is to provide evidence demonstrating that effective and robust processes are in place to ensure that students undertaking a placement at their workplace have access to appropriate supervision, and support policies are in place to manage concerns raised by students.

For the packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical, Clinical and Forensic, and Level 4 Forensic programs

By 31 December 2023:

1. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the Department is to provide evidence demonstrating that cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, is appropriately assessed as a required learning outcome (related to criterion 3.8).

For the Level 1 and the Level 1 component of the packaged Level 1 and 2 programs

By 30 April 2024:

1. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.2 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1 and 5.2 are met, the Department is to provide evidence demonstrating that *Foundational Competency 1.5* (interpersonal skills and teamwork) is sufficiently and appropriately assessed as a required learning outcome.

As a monitoring requirement for the packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical, and Clinical and Forensic programs, the Department is to provide by **31 December 2023**:

1. a range of samples of completed student assessments, and the marking rubrics/criteria demonstrating that the application of the principles of inter-professional learning and practice is appropriately assessed as a required learning outcome within *PSY60006 Foundations of Health Psychology* (case study) and *PSY60003/80099 Child Psychopathology and Assessment /Forensic Psychology: Children and Families* (being retitled to *Psychological Practice with Children and Adolescents*) (case study).

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

	Level 1	Level 1 and 2	Level 2	Level 3 and 4 Clinical	Level 3 and 4 Clinical & Forensic	Level 4 Forensic
Domain 1: Public safety	Standard Statement 1: Public safety is assured					
	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is substantially met
Domain 2: Academic governance and quality assurance	Standard Statement 2: Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective					
	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is 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	Standard is substantially met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met
Domain 4: The student experience	Standard Statement 4: Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support					
	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met	Standard is met
Domain 5: Assessment	Standard Statement 5: Assessment is fair, reliable and valid					
	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is met	Standard is substantially met	Standard is substantially met	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.

It is recommended that the Department of Psychological Sciences at Swinburne University of Technology:

1. provides more support and extend further communication with SOL staff within the Level 1 programs, specifically around increasing their engagement and their teaching skills in Indigenous space, their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and using Indigenous pedagogy in program delivery to ensure that staff are fully supported in engagement, teaching and professional development.
2. explores opportunities to develop an efficient process to provide students with constructive feedback on assessments within the Level 1 programs delivered online to manage student expectations around marking and remarking.
3. expand SIPC's engagement, as appropriate, through existing partnerships, as with the Moondani Toombadool Centre.

Commendations

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

The Department of Psychological Sciences at Swinburne University of Technology is commended for:

1. its establishment of the SIPC and for encouraging engagement and contribution from Indigenous students into the design and management of the programs
2. the clear structure of the submission regarding presentation of curriculum and assessment mapping and particularly good coverage of ethics, ethical practise and professional conduct, and protection of the public within the submission, specifically for the Level 2 programs
3. its strong communication regarding the grievance policies and procedures available to ensure that students within the Level 1, and Level 1 component of the packaged Level 1 and 2 programs have a clear understanding of the complaint-handling process
4. the robust and efficient arrangements in place to manage and oversee the external placement components of the packaged Level 3 and 4 Clinical programs, including the positive feedback received regarding the strong and responsive working relationships with external placement organisations.