

Study Abroad and Exchange – Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences

If you are a student at the University of Melbourne, would like to take a psychology subject at an overseas institution and have it credited towards your degree, this subject needs to be assessed. Who assesses it depends on what type of credit you are seeking.

If you would like credit for breadth or non-specific elective credit, the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences (MSPS) does not assess your subjects. Instead, the Program Director of your Bachelor course will assess these, so this document does not apply to you. However, if you would like credit for a major or minor in psychology, this document does apply to you, so read it carefully!

If you would like to take a psychology subject at an overseas institution and have it credited towards your major or minor in psychology, this subject needs to be assessed by the MSPS to ensure that it is of the same standard as one of our level 3 elective subjects. To have a subject assessed, please fill out the Overseas Subject Assessment Application form at the end of this document.

If you wish to complete a psychology major accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC), it is strongly advised that you do NOT take any of your psychology subjects abroad. The reason for this is we cannot guarantee that APAC will consider that subject to be acceptable. Our assessment guarantees only that we will consider it APAC accredited for our fourth year/Honours and Master of Psychology programs.

In addition, if you complete an approved third-year psychology elective subject(s) overseas and your result for that subject(s) may be formally recorded on your University of Melbourne record, that result may be converted to the University of Melbourne grading scale. As different institutions grade differently, this may have a negative impact on your eligibility for fourth year/Honours and Master of Psychology study at the University of Melbourne.

If you apply for fourth year/Honours or Master of Psychology study at the University of Melbourne, it is your responsibility as part of the application process to:

- **Ensure you have provided your overseas study transcript; and**
- **Request your overseas study result(s) be taken into consideration when your selection score is calculated**

We therefore recommend that during a period of Study Abroad and Exchange (SAEX) overseas you complete subjects other than psychology (Options 1a and 1b). If you choose to disregard this advice and study psychology abroad, how you can do this while still completing an APAC accredited major in psychology in three years is explained below (Option 2).

Regardless of what major you are taking, a psychology subject taken as SAEX can count towards your University of Melbourne degree only if it is approved as being of the same standard to one of our third-year elective subjects as indicated [here](#).

Option 1

This is the recommended option. Take your overseas subjects in a discipline other than psychology. We would recommend that you do this in semester 2 of your second year (Option 1a) but you could also do this in semester 1 of your second year (Option 1b). Below, we explain how a student completing an APAC accredited 125 point psychology major could do this.

Option 1a

Taking overseas subjects in disciplines other than psychology in semester 2 of your second year.

First Year	Semester 1	PSYC10003 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 1			
	Semester 2	PSYC10004 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 2			
Second Year	Semester 1	PSYC20006 Biological Psychology	PSYC20008 Developmental Psychology		
	Semester 2	Study Abroad/Exchange			
Third Year	Semester 1	PSYC30013 Research Methods for Human Inquiry	Psychology Third-year Elective 1		
	Semester 2	PSYC30021 Psychological Science: Theory & Practice	Psychology Third-year Elective 2	PSYC20007 Cognitive Psychology	PSYC20009 Personality and Social Psychology

Option 1b

Taking overseas subjects in disciplines other than psychology in semester 1 of the second year.

First Year	Semester 1	PSYC10003 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 1			
	Semester 2	PSYC10004 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 2			
Second Year	Semester 1	Study Abroad/Exchange			
	Semester 2	PSYC20007 Cognitive Psychology	PSYC20009 Personality and Social Psychology		
Third Year	Semester 1	PSYC30013 Research Methods for Human Inquiry	Psychology Third-year Elective 1	PSYC20006 Biological Psychology	PSYC20008 Developmental Psychology
	Semester 2	PSYC30021 Psychological Science: Theory & Practice	Psychology Third-year Elective 2		

Option 2

This option is NOT recommended and may result in serious adverse consequences. Here, a student would take psychology subjects as part of their overseas study experience. If this is done, it should be done in the second semester of the second year. Below, we explain how a student completing an APAC accredited 125 point psychology major could do this.

First Year	Semester 1	PSYC10003 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 1			
	Semester 2	PSYC10004 Mind, Brain & Behaviour 2			
Second Year	Semester 1	PSYC20006 Biological Psychology	PSYC20008 Developmental Psychology		
	Semester 2	Study Abroad/Exchange including subjects equivalent to 2 Psychology Third-year Electives			
Third Year	Semester 1	PSYC30013 Research Methods for Human Inquiry			
	Semester 2	PSYC30021 Psychological Science: Theory & Practice		PSYC20007 Cognitive Psychology	PSYC20009 Personality and Social Psychology

If you choose option 2, you would be responsible for providing information to verify that the proposed subjects are equivalent to our third-year elective subjects. Each subject must meet the strict eligibility criteria as detailed below.

How similar do Study Abroad and Exchange subjects have to be to University of Melbourne psychology subjects in order for the subjects to be approved for credit?

Overseas subjects can be approved for credit if they are considered equivalent to the level and commitment of a third-year level elective subject as part of the **APAC accredited 125 point psychology major**, regardless of whether the student is taking an APAC accredited major or not. There does NOT have to be a match in the syllabus content but credit will only be given for subjects that meet the following criteria:

- 1) The subject must be taught by a department/school of psychology with an official psychology major/degree, OR a subject taught in another department that can be completed as part of that institution's psychology department's major.
- 2) It cannot be a "laboratory-based" subject, a "seminar" subject or an "independent-study" subject. It must have a lecture stream.
- 3) It cannot be listed as a "student-run" subject.
- 4) The level of the subject should be equivalent to Melbourne third-year electives. It will generally be considered equivalent if it is labelled "Elective", "3rd year", "Tier III", "Advanced", "Upper division" or something similar. **For our purposes, it is sufficient if the subject code indicates that it is a third-year subject.** If it is not labelled as such, to be counted as equivalent to our third-year electives, it must not be:
 - a. labelled or have a course code that indicates that it is anything other than a third-year subject; or
 - b. titled "Introduction to psychology", "General psychology", "Mind, Brain and Behaviour" or similar.
- 5) Unless it is explicitly labelled as "advanced", it must not duplicate one of our second year subjects (i.e. it must not be labelled "Cognitive Psychology", "Cognitive Science", "Biological Psychology", "Developmental Psychology", "Social Psychology", "Personality Psychology" or "Individual Differences", or primarily focus on this material).
- 6) It cannot be equivalent to our third-year core subjects which means it cannot be labelled "Research Design", "Research Methods", "Data Analysis", "Statistics for Psychology" or similar, or be primarily focused on these topics.
- 7) It must not duplicate any elective that you have taken.
- 8) It must be assessed and receive a result, "letter grade" is fine; it must not simply be a pass/fail subject.

- 9) The subject must have the equivalent of at least 36 contact hours (including both lectures and tutorials/lab classes/practicals).
- 10) It must have at least the equivalent of 4,000 words of assessment. (One hour of exam = 1000 words, 10 minutes of oral presentation = 1,000 words, 15-20 group presentation = 1,000 words)
- 11) It can be taught as an intensive.
- 12) On your return, you may not take any third-year electives that duplicate your overseas subjects.

Failure to take account of the points above may mean that APAC could subsequently declare your degrees not APAC accredited.

What is the application process?

Step 1

Complete the internal University of Melbourne application to participate in a study abroad or exchange program via the [Study Overseas website](#).

Step 2

Obtain the detailed syllabus information (which may involve emailing the subject coordinator at the overseas institution), complete the MSPS Overseas Subject Assessment Application (see below) **for each subject** in which you wish to enrol and email both the syllabus information and completed form to the Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences at:

StudyAbroadExchange-psych@unimelb.edu.au

In the subject field of the email include your full name, your student ID and your University of Melbourne degree name.

Step 3

Once your subjects have been approved by Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences, you will then need to enter the details of the approved subject in the online Melbourne Global Mobility Overseas Study Planner form. Once you have completed the Overseas Study Planner form, the subject evaluation status will be updated as per the MSPS Overseas Subject Assessment outcome.

Overseas Subject Assessment Application

Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences

Please complete a separate form for each subject

Student Name: _____

Student number: _____

Date: _____

Are you studying psychology as a major or as minor in psychology? YES , NO (circle one)

If no, do not fill out this form (refer to page 1).

Current year of study (1st, 2nd, 3rd): _____

Proposed semester/date of overseas study: _____

Proposed host institution: _____

Potential subject:

Subject code	Subject title	syllabus provided?

	Value	Units ¹	Semester load ²	% of semester load		
Credit					Is this at least 1/4 of a full semester load?	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ Use the words in the syllabus, e.g. "points", "credits", "ECTS"...

² This is what the host institution defines a full semester load to be (e.g. 16 credits)

	Lecture	Tutorial/laboratory	Seminar	Total		
Hours					At least 36 contact hours?	<input type="checkbox"/>

Contact hours include all lecture hours, tutorial hours and seminar hours, even when a component is not mandatory.

Assessment	Hours	Words	% of total assessment
Written exam ¹			
MCQ exam ¹			
Class test			

Essay ²			
Lab report ²			
Participation			
Other			
Total ³			

¹ If not an invigilated exam, put in “class test”

² If not marked by academic, use “other”

³ Total % must equal 100

Please confirm that there is at least the equivalent of 4000 words of assessment.

One hour of exam = 1,000 words, 15-20 minutes of group presentation = 1,000 words, 10 minutes of oral presentation = 1,000 words, 1 page single-spaced of an assignment = 500 words, 1 page double-spaced of an assignment = 250 words.

Hour Brief statement of lecture topic¹

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¹ Use key concepts like “Anxiety”. Do NOT include in class “Exam”. Please note that your subject MUST have a lecture stream. If it does not have a lecture stream it is automatically not eligible.

Please list the Melbourne School of Psychological Science subjects to which this subject is most similar. State “None” if no MSPS subjects are similar to this SAEX subject.

Subject Code and Subject Name

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Please note the SAEX subject may not duplicate the content of any of the core MSPS third-year subjects. Additionally, if it duplicates the content of any of the MSPS second year subject it must specifically be labelled as “advanced” to be eligible.

Please tick this box to confirm that your overseas subject satisfies this constraint.

Please tick this box to confirm that this subject is not classed as introductory, elementary or basic.

Please tick this box to confirm that you have not taken any third-year elective that duplicates the contents of this overseas subject.

Please tick this box to confirm that, after you return, you will not take any third-year elective that duplicates the contents of this overseas subject (if approved).

Finally, please tick this box to confirm that you understand that if you take this overseas subject in place of one of the MSPS third-year electives it is possible that APAC might then decide that your major can no longer be accredited.

NOTE

These guidelines will help you determine whether or not MSPS should consider this overseas subject as equivalent to one of the third-year electives at Melbourne, the suitability of the subject for credit to your Melbourne degree, however, is up to the academic judgment of the SAEX Co-ordinator in MSPS.

What is a good example of a psychology subject that I could do overseas?

To obtain a list of overseas tertiary institutions that are existing exchange partners or are approved as study abroad destinations by the University of Melbourne, please go here:

<https://students.unimelb.edu.au/study-overseas/explore-study-programs/semester-and-year-long-programs>

This website lists more than 200 exchange partners, for example. Many of these offer psychology subjects that are of the same standard as our third-year electives.

For example, one of the exchange partners is Boston College. For this institution, the [brochure page for Boston College](#) tells us on the Credit Load tab that 15 credits at Boston is considered equal to one semester at Melbourne, that is 50 points. A quick internet search lists the psychology subjects offered by this institution. Fortunately, we find that the syllabus for one of these subjects, *Abnormal Psychology*, happens to be online. This syllabus contains all the information that we need to fill-out the *Overseas Subject Assessment Application* form. In particular, it states that the subject is worth 4 credits, so is considered equal to a quarter of a full load, that is 12.5 points. Furthermore, it is not a first-year subject, does not duplicate the content of any of our second year subjects, has at least 36 contact hours and at least 4,000 words of assignment. As such, it is likely to be deemed suitable to meet the requirements for a third-year elective.

Tips

- 1) In this case, we were lucky that the syllabus was posted online. Typically, you will need to contact the overseas subject coordinator to obtain a syllabus. Please allow sufficient time for this to happen.
- 2) If the overseas institution operates on a trimester system or if student typically takes more than four subjects per semester, you will probably need to take two overseas psychology subjects to equate to one of our third-year electives as any one subject may not have sufficient contact hours or assessment.
- 3) It is your responsibility to obtain all the information to complete the *Overseas Subject Assessment Application* form. If you cannot obtain this information, we cannot assess whether the subject(s) equate/s to one of our third-year electives.
- 4) Be sure to attach the syllabus from each overseas subject to the *Overseas Subject Assessment Application* form to aid us in evaluating the subjects.
- 5) Remember, we need to assess the overseas subject for equivalence only if you wish to apply for credit towards a major or minor in psychology.