

MSc Occupational Science Programme Specification

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/occupational-science/>

Academic Year:	2022/23
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Target Award:	Degree of Master of Science in Occupational Science [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications Level 7]
Interim/exit awards:	Postgraduate Diploma; Postgraduate Certificate [FHEQ Level 7]
Subject Benchmark:	Health Studies (QAA 2019)
Admissions:	September
Mode of Study:	12 months Full-time only

Please note: This programme specification has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them. Upon commencement of the programme, students will receive further detail about their course and any minor changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.

Minor Modifications Schedule

1. September 2021: Specification reapproved
2. May 2022: Annual changes for 2022/23 academic year. Specification reformatted and made accessible

Introduction

Occupational Science is the scientific study of humans as occupational beings (Yerxa et al 1989; Wilcox 2001); it enables the study of traditional populations, using an occupational approach, such as those with chronic health conditions, disease, and disability, as well as populations which society may deem diverse or those on the fringe of population groups. Such populations often experience occupational injustice because of health/disability, race, gender, age, socio- economic issues, religion/beliefs, or because of occupational choices which include roles and lifestyle choices.

Occupational injustice occurs when a person is denied, excluded, or deprived of opportunities to pursue, engage, and participate in meaningful occupations, or when occupations and lifestyles are imposed on someone which adversely affect their physical and/or emotional health. Occupational injustice can occur because of illness and disease which leads to disability, or when environmental or societal barriers preclude people from opportunities to engage in occupation or can be because of socio- economic aspects which restrict opportunities for people and populations to have meaningful quality of life.

This exciting and innovative Master's program will enable students to critically explore the occupational barriers that prevent people and populations from engaging in activities,

roles, and in having a place in society. It will support students to identify solutions that enhance health, wellbeing, occupational participation, and occupational performance of people at an individual and societal levels. The program ensures that the focus of students understanding is on the value of engagement and participation in occupation to support good health and wellbeing and in enabling people to do the things that they want, and have, to do. The graduate from the program will therefore be passionate in making a difference to people and populations wellbeing and occupational ability, and ensuring people have meaningful occupational identity and purpose. Students applying to the program will be motivated to address aspects of deprivation and injustice which prevent occupational opportunities for people and populations.

Students are welcome on the program from a variety of professional backgrounds and disciplines. The construction of learning within the program will individuals to align the knowledge and skills gained from the program, to address areas of interest and professional discipline. This program is of relevance to students who wish to study at MSc level a specialist subject that has practical applications and will be of interest to people who have humanities, occupational therapy, public health, social work, political, charity, non-government organisation, environmental and sustainability backgrounds.

Graduates from the program will be able to apply a range of evidence-based innovative and entrepreneurial interventions to address occupational injustice and the challenges of participation. They will have the knowledge, skills and understanding to address occupational issues by working with individuals, groups, communities, and populations to address political, environmental or sustainability challenges that can cause inequalities and barriers to participation. Graduates will have a sound understanding of occupation and its application to phenomena, populations, communities, cultures, environments, disorders, disabilities, and illness to support and guide the development of their future careers and practice. Graduates exiting the program will have the knowledge and skills to embed occupational science into their practice and employment to improve health, wellbeing and participatory opportunities for people and populations. The graduate from this program will be research active, using acquired skills to implement interventions that address inequalities and inequities for people and populations. They will be able to use research outcomes for transforming and influencing others through publications and direct practice provision.

Graduates will be equipped to enter a range of employment destinations. Contemporary health and wellbeing agendas in the UK and Worldwide are focused on improving health at individual and community level. The contemporary health focus is now on encouraging people to be active participants in addressing and maintaining their health and wellbeing through engagement in life enhancing activities, development of skills and resources to support participation and, through the application of social participatory action research. The qualification of MSc in Occupational Science will be an asset in gaining employment. The graduate will be able to use occupation as a vehicle and lens to address issues relating to health and wellbeing, providing sustainable opportunities for people to become active participants in their own lives, using transformative health and wellbeing initiatives. Through interventions at both local, public, national and international levels graduates can become leaders in establishing services that promote social inclusion, participation and socially just participation.

Programme Aims

Postgraduate Certificate

This program aims to develop an advanced and complex understanding of the impact of people, environment and society on the occupational capacity, health and wellbeing of populations, communities, cultural groups, disorders, disabilities and illness.

Postgraduate Diploma

Develop an advanced and critical understanding of research design, its application to the construction of feasible and acceptable investigations and the dissemination of findings to different audiences and media.

Degree of Master

For a Master's dissertation the student will demonstrate a critical understanding of the theoretical constructs which underpin research and the application of findings to enhance practice, client outcomes, health and wellbeing and the understanding of phenomena, populations, communities, cultural groups, disorders, disabilities and illness as they relate to occupation.

Programme Learning Outcomes

For the FHEQ Level 7 Postgraduate Certificate award eligible students will be able to:

1. Engage in critical enquiry and the generation of original insight, understanding and models of explanation (formulation) regarding the impact of illness, disability, environment and society on the occupational performance, choice, identity, participation, health and wellbeing of individuals, groups and communities.
2. Present interventions at individual, group and or societal level to reduce social inclusion and to promote occupational performance, choice, identity, participation, health and wellbeing of individuals, groups, and communities.
3. Apply in depth, critical understanding of theory, knowledge and interpretive tools to service delivery and population(s) that are of specific interest to the student within assignment. Demonstrate real-world (practical) application of occupation science to promote occupational performance, choice, identity, participation, health and wellbeing of individuals, groups, and communities.

For the FHEQ Level 7 Postgraduate Diploma award eligible students will additionally:

4. Demonstrate critical understanding of research design, including research philosophy, methods, analysis, ethics, bias, limitations and dissemination.
5. Demonstrate application of research methods to the construction of a feasible and acceptable research proposal.

For the FHEQ Level 7 Degree award of Master eligible students will additionally:

6. Critically evaluate different methods of research that can be applied to the understanding of chosen subject area.
7. Demonstrate original enquiry and insight into how processes enable and enhance occupational performance within chosen subject area.
8. Demonstrate the systematic and creative application of occupational theory, frameworks, models and tools of enquiry to explain health, well-being, participation, occupational function and dysfunction of people and populations within a chosen subject area.
9. Systematically and creatively identify appropriate approaches to deal with the complex relationships between people, phenomena, populations, communities, cultural groups, environments, disorders, disabilities and illness in the development and promotion of services that enable occupational opportunity and meaningful engagement.

Programme Structure

Each core MSc Occupational Science programme module has a specific focus and can be started independently. That is, they do not need to be completed in order, **except** for the Dissertation module for which you must have completed RES7016-C first before starting.

Stage 1 - Postgraduate Certificate (60/70 credits)

Core module	Core module	And either of options:
Frameworks, Models, Theories and Tools of Enquiry for the Occupational Scientist (20 credits)	Understanding and Promoting Social Inclusion and Participation through the lens of Occupational Science (20 credits)	Social Science based module (20 credits)
		Or
		Health Studies based module (30 credits)

Student must complete one or both Occupational Science modules and either a Social Science/ Public Health module at 20 credits or a Health Studies module at 30 credits to be eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate award.

Stage 2 - Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits)

Core module	Core module	Core module	Optional choice	Optional choice
Frameworks, Models, Theories and Tools of Enquiry for the Occupational Scientist (20 credits)	Understanding and Promoting Social Inclusion and Participation through the lens of Occupational Science (20 credits)	Research Methods and Data Analysis (30 credits)	Social Science based module (20 credits)	Health Studies based module (30 credits)

Students must complete at Postgraduate Diploma both Occupational Science modules at 20 credits, a Social Science/ Public Health module at 20 credits, a Health Studies module at 30 credits and Research Methods and Data Analysis at 30 credits.

Stage 3 - Degree of Master (180 credits)

Core	Core	Core	Option	Option	Core
Frameworks, Models, Theories and Tools of Enquiry for the Occupational Scientist (20 credits)	Understanding and Promoting Social Inclusion and Participation through the lens of Occupational Science (20 credits)	Research Methods and Data Analysis (30 credits)	Social Science based module (20 credits)	Health Studies based module (30 credits)	Dissertation (60 credits)

Students seeking the MSc degree must complete at Master's level a Dissertation in Occupational Science at 60 credits.

Curriculum

Social Science or Public Health (SP) options are **20 credits** and studied in **Semester 1** if chosen. **Health and Care Studies (HC)** options are **30 credits** and studied in **either Semester 1 or Semester 2** if chosen. Please note: The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme approval, monitoring and review processes.

Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma Optional Modules

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	FHEQ	Module Type	Credits
Sem 1	DEM7013-C	Critical perspectives on dementia; a rights-based approach	7	HC Option	30
Sem 1	DEV7003-B	Issues in Development Theory	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	LEM7031-C	Health and Social Care Leadership	7	HC Option	30
Sem 1	NUR7052-B	Health Promotion in Practice	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	NUR7053-B	Introduction to Public Health	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	PES7048-B	Security and Development in Fragile and Conflict- Affected Areas	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	PES7065-B	Social-Ecological Systems and Crises: Concepts, Cases, Contestations	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	PSY7010-B	Cognitive Psychology	7	SP Option	20
Sem 1	PSY7011-B	Social Psychology	7	SP Option	20
Sem 2	LEM7032-C	Managing People in Health and Social Care	7	HC Option	30
Sem 2	NUR7020-C	Advanced Communication Skills	7	HC Option	30

Postgraduate Certificate Core Modules

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	FHEQ	Module Type	Credits
Sem 1	OCT7000-B	Frameworks, Models, Theories and Tools of Enquiry for the Occupational Scientist	7	Core	20
Sem 2	OCT7001-B	Understanding and Promoting Social Inclusion and Participation through the lens of Occupational Science	7	Core	20

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Occupational Science if they have successfully completed at least 60 credits (2 core modules and 1 option) and achieved the award learning outcomes. **The award of Postgraduate Certificate does not confer eligibility to register with the NMC/HCPC.**

Postgraduate Diploma Core Modules

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	FHEQ Level	Module Type	Credits
Sem 1	RES7016-C	Research Methods and Data Analysis	7	Core	30
Sem 1 or Sem 2	any	Additional Optional Module from list above	7	Option	20/30

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Occupational Science if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits overall (3 core modules and 2 options) and achieved the award learning outcomes. **The award of Postgraduate Diploma does not confer eligibility to register with the NMC/HCPC.**

Degree of Master Core Modules

The Dissertation module is worked on during the spring (Semester 2) and summer (Semester 3) periods.

Study Period	Module Code	Module Title	FHEQ Level	Module Type	Credits
Non-Standard Academic Year	RES7008-E	Dissertation	7	Core	60

Students will be eligible for the award of Degree of Master if they have successfully completed 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes. **The award of Degree of Master does not confer eligibility to register with the NMC/HCPC.**

Learning and Teaching Strategies

The teaching, learning and assessment elements in the program enable students to develop knowledge of occupational science, to study humans as occupational beings. Thus, teaching and learning strategies are designed so students can develop theoretical

understanding and critical thinking in applying research and evidence, to address the causes of occupational dysfunction and occupational injustice, relevant to their own discipline/area of employment.

Personal and Professional

The program will develop students to become occupational scientists, able to understand that engagement in, and performance of, occupation is central to people's identity, defining them as people and their place, their belonging, in the world. Students will be passionate to address barriers that prevent individuals and populations from engagement in, and performance of, occupations, and in desires to enable people and populations to have occupational identity and purpose.

Teaching and learning activities will encourage and support students to critically review the occupational aspects of people and populations in order to understand how these relate to engagement, participation and occupational identity. Students will be encouraged to read widely on aspects from occupational science, humanities, sustainability, and environmental studies, and to refer to their own professional paradigms, to evidence, in assessments, their synthesise of theoretical and conceptual aspects and provide proposals for contemporary and viable interventions which will address aspects such as occupational dysfunction and occupational injustice. Assessments will enable students to have optionality in focus, enabling alignment of learning outcomes to real world issues that are situated within their own discipline.

Research and independent study

Students will be supported to develop and utilise their research knowledge and skills and encouraged to publish their dissertation thus adding into the occupational science research/evidence and literature nationally and internationally.

Via research activities in the core dissertation module students will be encouraged to work with business and communities to explore opportunities for making a difference to peoples' lives and wellbeing.

Students will develop the skills to be research knowledge and research active, with research led teaching a strength of the program, and module learning outcomes directing students to attain competence in research. For example, students will learn about research from engagement in core modules but all teaching on the program is informed by the University's Learning Teaching and Student Experience Strategy and the University and Faculty core values, which ensure teaching and learning is Research Informed, Reflective, Adaptable, Inclusive, Supportive, Ethical and Sustainable.

Through research led teaching, learning and assessment activities students will gain the knowledge and skills to confidently communicate complex ideas and solutions, demonstrating entrepreneurship, leadership and advanced management and communication skills.

Staff expertise and student experience

Academic staff delivering teaching and learning events have expertise and published credibility already in the field of occupational science and will support students on the program to publish program research/dissertations, thus adding to the expanding base of occupational science. Research informed teaching is a strong aspect of this program and students are encouraged to not only refer to reading lists for modules, but to critically review evidence and research pertaining to their discipline and occupational science to successfully meet the program learning outcomes.

The reputation of the Bradford Occupational Therapy undergraduate programme currently (2021) ranked 3rd in the UK ¹ demonstrates the well-established reputation for high levels of teaching, learning and assessment, with particular note of the innovation and entrepreneurship elements embedded in the undergraduate provision. These quality aspects of teaching, learning, assessment, and support to students, along with and innovative curriculum content, will be provided within the MSc in Occupational Science.

The postgraduate program will expect students to take responsibility for their own learning as they develop their academic, knowledge and core skills, but each student will have a Personal academic tutor who can sign post and support students in development of academic skills, with further support available from modular leads.

Curriculum Delivery

Delivery of the curriculum will include face-to-face on-campus delivery, which will be supported by online learning. Modules are delivered via lectures, seminars, tutorials. Tutorials may be online or on campus, involving smaller student groups that may be grouped according to the topics or module thereby allowing more discussion and reflection on topics presented in lectures or from self-directed study activities. Tutorials may also be constructed for specific assessment advice and information.

Seminars may be online or on campus and involve experts in the field associated with the module learning outcomes providing fantastic information and opportunities for discussions and application of knowledge to skills in naturalistic settings. Although some aspects of the programme will be delivered online, this is not a distance learning programme. Students will be required to attend teaching and learning activities on campus throughout the duration of their programme.

Student ownership and choice of study

All students will be enrolled and engage in an induction program; this will include meeting with the program lead to plan their individual program of study. This will allow consideration of the choice of optional modules as well as planned attendance to core modules. Optional modules are available from across the University's portfolio of Level 7

¹ See <https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/leaguetables/rankings/occupational-therapy> (accessed 26 April 2022)

modules, with core modules including two Occupational Science modules, an Introduction to Research module, and final Dissertation element.

Students also have options in tailoring their learning to enhance career development and areas of interest and attainment, allowing choice of Certificate, Diploma or Master's level qualification pathways. To complete at Postgraduate Certificate of study a student requires 60 credits, at Postgraduate Diploma 120 credits and at MSc level 180.

Assessment Strategy

This program facilitates assessment options to allow students to demonstrate a range of skills to meet learning outcomes. Assessments are designed to support the meaningful application of learnt content to practise. Learning will be assessed against the learning outcomes and program aims through the use of a range of different assessment techniques which may include one or more of the following approaches:

- Written assignment
- Viva
- Seminar
- Presentations
- Portfolio

Assessment Regulations

This Program conforms to the standard University Postgraduate Assessment Regulations which are available at the following link: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/regulations/>

Admission Requirements

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond.

All applicants should have a GCSE English Language qualification (or equivalent) at Grade C/4. For students for whom English is not their first language, the standard University English proficiency requirements apply - to have achieved IELTS **6.0** or above, with no subtest less than 5.5: www.brad.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/

The standard entry requirements for the program are as follows:

- Applicants should have either an undergraduate Honours degree (BA/BSc or equivalent) in a relevant discipline. This can include Occupational Therapy or a social or applied sciences subject but must be at a 2:2 classification or above.
- Applicants who have already achieved a Master's qualification (MA/MSc) or equivalent are also welcome to apply. Candidates with appropriate PG qualifications will have their qualifications mapped to ensure the learning outcomes are mapped from the achieved qualification to the Master's program.

- Applicants who do not have a degree but who have relevant professional working experience or alternative qualifications are considered on a case-by-case basis. Please contact AdmissionsHealth@bradford.ac.uk to discuss this.

The University welcomes applications from all potential home and international students. Students applying to the program will be required to be situated in the UK and able to travel to attend on campus teaching and assessment. International applicants should check their country page on the University website for details of equivalent qualifications: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/international/country/>

Applicants are not required to be registered with the HCPC/RCN or other professional regulators as there are no clinical placements on the program.

Access

Applications are particularly welcomed from returners to study aged 25 or over at the start of the programme, armed forces families, carers and care leavers, refugees and asylum seekers, and Romani or Traveller families.

All students are offered screening from the Disability Service on entry to the programme to aid identification of any specific learning difficulties. Students will gain access to information which will provide specific study support. Disabled students' applications are considered on the same grounds as all students. Applicants may wish to check with our Disability Service before applying by visiting: www.bradford.ac.uk/disability/before/

Recognition of Prior Learning

The University welcomes applications from all potential students and most important in the decision to offer a place is our assessment of a candidate's potential to benefit from their studies and of their ability to succeed on this particular programme. Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience.

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme: www.bradford.ac.uk/teaching-quality/prior-learning/

Please note: this information relates to the contemporary recruitment cycle when this document was published. It may be different for the current cycle. To check the entry tariff in effect, visit the course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/occupational-science/>
