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PICKING *the* RIGHT
PSYCHOLOGY
SPECIALISATION

Welcoming message.

Choosing a specialisation that suits your interest takes extensive time and effort before coming to the right decision.

The opportunities usually offered by the University of Amsterdam are extremely limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic: accessibility became remarkably confined, creating difficulties for students to gain first-hand information from both professionals and students within the fields of their specialisation. It is out of this lack of opportunities that 020 decided to establish Project Major.

Besides informative events, Project Major entails a series of booklets starting with the biggest courses within the Social and Behavioural Sciences Faculty.

These booklets are composed by students who are currently enrolled at the University of Amsterdam in the course they are writing for.

Within these booklets, one can find the specific characteristics and interests that would help students flourish in their specialisation. Furthermore, the booklets include the exact courses within the discipline, accompanied by the practicalities, such as registration dates and additional study-related specifications. Finally, we provide insights from current students and professionals within the field of the specialisations.

By creating this project, 020 hopes to bridge the gap created by the pandemic to help students make a decision that benefits them the most.

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Brain and Cognition.

Academic and Personal Interests

With the Brain and Cognition specialisation, you will gain insight into human cognition from a neurological perspective, learning about different neural mechanisms and interpreting them through data and experimental analysis. Students going into this specialisation share a particular interest in neuroscience and research in psychology, with a more practical and hands-on approach to psychology and keeping up to date with new investigative methods in neurological research.

The Course

The first part of the specialisation starts with an introductory course to neuroscience that will familiarise you with the brain, its different areas, mechanisms, and neurological phenomena both in humans and other species. Furthermore, the course introduces you to the scientific reading of neurological literature and analysis. You will also follow a more theoretical course of

Perception and Consciousness, where you will learn about different theories and research regarding these two concepts and relating theoretical framework to other brain mechanisms through the neurological methodology. You will also take a course that looks into the cognitive processes behind Memory, Language, and Emotion. The final course you will take in your second year in this specialisation takes on a more practical approach towards brain and cognition with experimental and neuroscientific methods. Here you will take a more in-depth look into research methods in neuroscience, such as fMRI's, EEG's, TMS, as well as into experimental designs and programming using Python.

In your third year, you will take the Methods and Statistics course that prepares you for writing your bachelor thesis. The third year's statistics course in Brain and Cognition works differently from your bachelor's previous statistics courses. You will have a lecture per week and a 2-4 hour tutorial, where you will learn to conduct

specific analyses on programmes such as SPSS, R, Matlab, and Jasp. There is one group assignment (graded with the Dutch grading scale needed a 5.5 to pass) and one individual assignment that will be “pass” or “fail”. These assignments will be based on real-life examples in the field of Brain and Cognition, so you will be using real-life data sets, making the course more applied. The final assessment is an exam worth 50% of your final grade (the other 50% being the group assignments). This will be a purely theoretical exam that assesses your conceptual understanding of the statistical analyses you have covered.

Alongside this course, you will take two 6 EC restricted choice electives. Finally, after completing the statistics course you will write your bachelor thesis on one of the Brain and Cognition specialisation topics. In the Brain and Cognition specialisation, you are also given the option to write your Bachelor Thesis on one of the Clinical Neuropsychology topics, given that there is enough demand for it from both Dutch and international

(students (such that the particular thesis topic can be done in English).

Registration for the Brain and Cognition specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December. In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

In terms of master’s courses, with the Brain and Cognition specialisation, you can go into the Research Methods track or the Brain and Cognition in Society track. Other master’s courses that many students take after this specialisation relate to Cognitive Psychology or Neuroscience.

In terms of career, after a Brain and Cognition specialisation and continuation of this path in psychology, most work involves research and laboratory work, this being clinical research or neuroscientific research, but also in healthcare.

Clinical Psychology.

Academic and Personal Interests

Within the Bachelors of Psychology, Clinical Psychology is the most popular choice between the seven specialisations. This specialisation is dedicated to the study of mental disorders, namely their aetiology, diagnostics, and interventions to understand the causes and underlying mechanisms of these disorders in order to figure out the best rehabilitation methods and treatments. It is the choice for students who have an interest in mental health care and clinical research. Most students who follow this specialisation tend to work as a practitioner in mental health and clinical treatments. Furthermore, a student aiming to pursue this specialisation should

have specific interpersonal skills that will allow them to successfully interact with people in need of mental healthcare, including positive communication skills, empathy, and problem-solving in emotionally stressful situations.

The Course

Clinical Psychology is knowing about different psychological disorders and treatments, learning the skills you need as a practitioner, and understanding how to create and interpret empirical research. These skills include interpersonal skills in therapeutic settings, interview skills, learning how to use diagnostic tools, and conducting different research methods.

The first part of the specialisation consists of five 6 EC courses that aim to give you more of a grasp of what Clinical Psychology consists of, both in theory and practice. The courses include Clinical Interviewing and Diagnostic Skills, Mood, Anxiety & Psychotic Disorders, Addiction and Compulsive Disorders,

Psychotherapy and Therapeutic Skills, Personality and Personality Disorders. In the courses based around different types of disorders, you are expected to distinguish different disorders and critically analyse and evaluate different theories about the disorders and treatment methods. The two courses on interview skills and diagnostics will expect you to be able to have a clear understanding of how to conduct clinical interviews, use diagnostic tools, such as DSM-5, as well as different theories of clinical practice and therapy. All courses taken in this semester are assessed through examinations throughout the semester consisting of multiple-choice and open-ended questions.

The second part of the specialisation revolves around your bachelor thesis, which is done in the first semester of your third year. This semester, you will begin by taking a Research Methods course specifically tailored for your specialisation. For Clinical Psychology, this focuses on analysing the effectiveness of

clinical interventions using statistics (with the program SPSS), as well as methods used in clinical research and how to critically determine if effects found in clinical trials are genuinely significant. After completing this course, you will write your thesis on a topic specifically on your specialisation. Alongside Research Methods and the thesis, you will also take two 6 EC electives from a restricted choice list that include topics in psychology relating to other specialisations as well as Clinical.

Registration for the Clinical Psychology specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December. In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60 ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. For the Clinical Psychology specialisation, you must also have completed the Practical Training Psychological Communication (PTPC) course from the first semester of your

second year. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

Clinical Psychology tends to go into a specific path in healthcare. Students with this specialisation often go into medical practices as psychotherapists or into clinical research to develop new treatments for psychological disorders. A bachelor specialising in Clinical Psychology is often not enough to work as a psychotherapist. Therefore, students following this specialisation usually go into Master's studies and PhD. This narrows down the area of clinical psychology they are in, as well as training to obtain a license to become a clinical psychologist.

Clinical Developmental Psychology.

Academic and Personal Interests

The focus of this specialisation is on the fascinating and versatile psychology of children and adolescents. The study of typical and atypical development is delicate, and therefore it is always done in the context of the family, peers, school, and culture. You will learn how to professionally differentiate between healthy and deviant behaviour and how to facilitate healthy development.

The specialisation prepares you well for any interest you may have from child therapist, school psychologist, research, or intervention-developer, with the added value of practical cases that lecturers bring from their own practical experience to the lectures. Finally, in terms of the educational atmosphere, you can expect to be part of a vibrant and collaborative community where students and teachers get to know each other well.

The Course

You will gain insight into a child's cognitive, social, and emotional development and learn to understand and deal with psychological disorders such as anxiety, ADHD, oppositional disorders, autism, or dyslexia. In practical matters, you learn to diagnose, to prevent and treat and to research on these topics.

You will begin the course by looking into developmental psychology relating to childhood, this being related to development in general, but also clinical development and educational development. You will learn about some diagnostics regarding developmental disorders in children and in terms of the academic section, the focus is mainly related to the Dutch educational system. You will then do the same for adolescence and develop interpersonal relationships in adolescence with, for example, parents and caretakers. To give you more of a practical view of clinical developmental psychology, you will take a clinical skills course where you will learn

about clinical interviews and the particular skills needed to conduct these in a context with children (which differentiates from adult clinical interview skills) and look into psychodiagnostics in children. Furthermore, you will also gain insight into youth intervention methods, especially within an educational context.

In your third year, you will begin with a course on Evidence-Based Clinical Practice (Research Methods). The course's goal is to get the knowledge and skills to bridge the gap between research and practice and learn to collaborate with other students. Every week a different issue or statistical test is explained in a lecture. You are also assigned with a partner with whom you are supposed to work on a practical assignment regarding the lecture material. Additionally, you will have a tutorial in which the assignment questions are discussed and, afterwards, you meet with your partner and take a 30-minute test together, using SPSS. Your grade is calculated based on the best six grades of

the seven weekly tests, which counts for 30% of your final grade. At the end of the block, there is an open-question exam with the contents of the seven weeks. However, SPSS is not examined here. This accounts for the rest 70% of the grade with a minimum of 5.5 required. Alongside this course, you will take two 6 EC electives and, in the second and third block, you will be writing your bachelor thesis.

Registration for the Clinical Developmental Psychology specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December. In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60 ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. For the Clinical Developmental Psychology specialisation, you must also have completed the Practical Training Psychological Communication (PTPC) course from the first semester of your second year. These requirements must be met

and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

In terms of masters', the Clinical Developmental specialisation gives you direct access to Klinische Ontwikkelingspsychologie, Research Methods Track (with a focus on Clinical Developmental), and Developmental & Health Psychology Track. Depending on the chosen minors, one is also eligible for the Clinical Psychology and Clinical Neuropsychology Track. In terms of career, clinical developmental psychologists tend to become child therapists, school psychologists, educational psychologist, or researchers.

Social Psychology.

Academic and Personal Interests

Between all the specialisations offered in Psychology, many consider Social Psychology the broadest specialisation. Still, it is also intensely focused on applying social psychology to society. Social Psychology focuses on intra- and

interpersonal human behaviour, looking specifically into behavioural changes and influences in the social presence of others and social context. In this course, you will study what social factors can influence particular behaviour, look into societally relevant issues, such as sustainability, and how to find possible solutions for these issues using psychology.

The Course

The course begins by looking into the underlying mechanisms of emotion and motivation. Here you will focus on understanding the constructs of emotions and motivation, how specific drives are enhanced or diminished through social influence, how humans can regulate emotions and use emotions to control motivation, and different theories and interventions behind emotion and motivation. You will also have two courses that focus more on group influence and behaviour, regarding attitude and behavioural change, as well as group and intergroup behaviour. These two courses will look more into different theories of social

psychology regarding social norms and attitudes, and group phenomena and identity.

The final part of your second year will be a course on Applied Social Psychology, focusing on sustainability. Here you will learn how to apply the different theories and models you have studied in social psychology to an issue of societal relevance. In this course, you will learn how to look into different interventions and methods to be applied to sustainability and assess current global interventions for this issue and evaluate their effectiveness. Furthermore, you will have the chance to design your own intervention. Sustainability is narrowed down to climate change, which will be a recurring theme throughout this course. You will learn about different factors influencing this problem, such as current public policy and decision-making processes. This part of the specialisation is extremely useful to give students an idea of what fieldwork in social psychology can be like, showing a more practical and

applied side to social psychology, which tends to be theoretical in the study. All courses of the specialisation taken in your second year are assessed through exams, which count for 75% of your final grade, and group assignments that constitute the remaining 25%.

Your third year will begin with a Methods and Statistics course resembling the Scientific and Statistical Analysis course in your second year. This course's primary focus will be on Andy Field's book *Discovering Statistics and using SPSS to conduct correlational and experimental analyses*. The focus of the analyses will be on correlation, regression, moderation, mediation and the different forms of ANOVA, which you should already be familiar with. Apart from lectures, you also have one practicum (tutorial) a week, where you will have three hours to work on an assignment with your group. These assignments consist of different statistical analyses using SPSS, which will later be useful for your bachelor thesis

(which you will write in the second and third block of this semester). Alongside the Methods and Statistics course, you will also take two 6 EC electives. Registration for the Social Psychology specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December.

In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60 ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

Social Psychology leaves your path pretty much open in terms of future careers. In terms of masters', you can follow the Social Influence Track, which looks more into how others and context can influence our behaviour. Another popular track is the Cultural Psychology Track, which

focuses a lot on how cultural differences and similarities can influence behaviour and attitudes. However, to follow this track, you must take the Cultural Psychology elective in your third year. Career-wise, social psychologists can go into diverse fields such as marketing and political campaigns, policy advising, recruitment in organisations, conflict mediation and resolution, social work, and research.

Social Psychology.

Academic and Personal Interests

This specialisation focuses on psychological needs in the workplace and improving productivity and motivation. You will look into factors that influence one's motivation at the workplace, different work styles and types of organisations, management styles, employee productivity, and work satisfaction. This course aims to learn how to improve organisational satisfaction by looking at workers' needs. Work and Organisational Psychology goes hand-in-hand with Business

Studies, thus students who share an interest between business and psychology often find that this course suits them wonderfully.

The Course

The course will teach you about life in an organisation, beginning with recruitment processes and teams. You will learn about human resources management, which will go into recruiting employees, selection processes, and increasing job performance. The focus on teams within an organisation will go into the benefits of groups and teamwork for an organisation, but also for personal motivation and performance, giving you an understanding of different team dynamics and roles in an organisation. There is also a large focus on organisational culture and motivation.

With organisational culture, you will learn more about the structure of an organisation, its hierarchies, leadership, and the different roles each member of the organisation have and how that influences productivity and operations. Furthermore, you will learn

about different workplace interactions and stakeholders who have a crucial role in an organisation's functioning. With leadership, this course looks into the characteristics needed for a successful leader, including personality traits, interpersonal skills, and knowledge of worker needs and values. Finally, with the course on motivation and health, you will gain insight into the physiological demands and drives of members of an organisation that must be met and taken care of to reach adequate job satisfaction and enhance performance.

In your third year, you will take part in the Methods and Statistics course. The methodology component is explicitly tailored to Work and Organisational Psychology. It looks at how research is conducted in the area and specific field and observational research where the researcher may not always have full control. The statistics part will resemble the Scientific and Statistical Reasoning course from your second year. You will only be using the programme

SPSS, focusing on the same analyses from the SSR course with the addition of moderation and mediation analyses that are more specific to work and organisational psychology. You will have weekly assignments for the methodology component that follow from the lectures and reading materials. For the statistics component, you will have weekly practicums where you will practice the analyses in groups. In terms of assessment, you will take two exams (45% each) and then one written assignment, which will be a critical article review (10%). Alongside the methods and statistics course, you will also take two 6 EC electives. In the second and third block of your first semester, you will be writing your bachelor thesis on a Work and Organisational specialisation topic.

Registration for the Work & Organisational specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December. In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60 ECs from

your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

With the Work and Organisational specialisation, you can then follow the Human Resources and Career Management master's track, which will give you deeper insight into working in human resources and organisational training. You can also follow the Coaching and Vitality in Organisations master's track, where you will learn more about health in organisations.

In terms of career, having a Work and Organisational Psychology specialisation can take you into many positions in the corporate and organisational world, within human resources, coaching, training and selection, consultancy, recruitment, and research. The most popular career option in the field tends to be human resources management,

where you look into different workplace interactions and what administrative effect they have on the organisation.

Psychological Methods.

Academic and Personal Interests

The Psychological Methods specialisation is directed towards students interested in data analysis and research in psychology. It is more of a practical than a theoretical specialisation, where you learn about different mathematical models and how to conduct various statistical analyses used in scientific research.

The Course

You will go in-depth into mathematical theories used in psychological research and professional critical research skills. You will start with an introduction to mathematical models and statistical programming, understanding how to use specific mathematical formulas in psychological research and psychometrics. With statistical programming, you will focus on using the program Project R to

conduct frequential statistics. After knowing the basics of psychological statistics, you will dive into latent variable models and their different forms and parameters. Although this specialisation heavily focuses on practically using modelling programs and learning how to carry out different research analyses, you will also take a course on the fundamentals of methodology, learning about different inferential theories and their background. This course has a debate structure where you will look at the methodology in an argumentative manner, being assessed on two written argumentative essays and one oral debate on different research methods and which ones are most appropriate in specific situations. This assessment holds for 30% of your final grade on the fundamentals of methodology course, the other 70% are based on an exam at the end of this module. The specialisation also looks into multivariate statistics both in an inferential context, but also in a research methods context. With multivariate statistics

you will look at different ANOVA's and regressions that you will already be familiar with from the Scientific and Statistical Reasoning course taken in the second year and, then, go into more depth about other more complex models such as the MANOVA and MAN(C)OVA. With Machine Learning, you will look into how these multivariate models are used in machine functioning and technology, putting together all the courses you have taken in the specialisation so far. Finally, you will look into a different statistical approach to frequentism: the Bayesian approach. Here you will understand the main components of Bayesian theory and their roles, be able to conduct Bayesian statistics on R, and argue for the theorem in argumentative written form.

In your third year, you will begin with a course on simulating psychological processes which will put together all the knowledge you have gained in your second year on programming and statistics and use it in

simulation with R. This will be crucial for the writing of your bachelor's thesis as it will put together all the tools and skills you need as a methodologist and researcher. Alongside this course, you will take two 6 EC electives, and in the second and third block, you will write your thesis on psychological methods. Registration for the Psychological Methods specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December.

In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60 ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

The usual path taken using Psychological Methods is into data analysis and research. With this specialisation, you can start a

master's track of Behavioural Data Science or Research Masters in Psychology, which will deepen your knowledge and application of research methods and statistics within psychology. In terms of career, the standard path is into scientific research.

Clinical Neuropsychology.

Academic and Personal Interests

The Clinical Neuropsychology specialisation joins Brain & Cognition and Clinical Psychology together. This specialisation focuses on the link between cognitive functions and mechanisms and behaviour, meaning that you will look into the biological basis of certain behaviours. Unfortunately, this specialisation is currently only offered in Dutch at the UvA.

The Course

The course begins with a module that is shared with the Brain and Cognition specialisation: Perception to Consciousness. As explained in the section on Brain and Cognition, in this course, you

will learn about the theoretical framework on perception and consciousness, as well as the methodology that goes into studying these two phenomena, discussing topics such as “free will” and different mechanisms that go into these types of cognitive functions. With the course of Clinical Neuropsychological Research, you will gain more in-depth insight into cognitive processes and how these relate to neurological and physiological functions and how to investigate them. You will also look into different psychopathological and neurological disorders, looking into their etiologies, comorbidities, different types of interventions, and, of course, diagnostics processes and criteria. For the psychopathology course, you will first focus on the disorders themselves and separately, later on, you will have a course on interventions and one on diagnostics where you will go into details about these processes on the disorders which you will have previously studied, but also on the methodologies themselves of each

component and the theoretical background of each.

In your third year, you will begin with Evidence-Based Clinical Practice (Research Methods). The statistics course consists of a weekly lecture where you will discuss topics such as effect sizes, meta-regression and multilevel analysis. After each class, a weekly assignment is given that allows you to practice with the subject matter. This assignment also prepares you for the weekly partial tests. In these tests, your theoretical knowledge from the articles and lectures is tested, but also your SPSS skills. This course resembles the Clinical Practice course in Clinical Developmental Psychology and Clinical Psychology. The goal is to understand through statistics which types of therapy and intervention are most effective and useful. You will take two 6 EC electives alongside this course, and in the second and third block, you will write your bachelor thesis in Clinical Neuropsychology, where you will be given topics both from Clinical

Neuropsychology (which you will write in Dutch) and from Brain & Cognition (which will be written in English).

Registration for the Clinical Neuropsychology specialisation runs from the 3rd of December to the 15th of December. In order to register for the specialisation, you must fit a couple of entry requirements which include all 60ECs from your first year and a passing grade (5.5) in the Scientific and Statistical reasoning (SSR) second-year course. For the Clinical Neuropsychology specialisation, you must also have completed the Practical Training Psychological Communication (PTPC) course from the first semester of your second year. These requirements must be met and recorded on the university SiS system before the beginning of the second semester (February 2nd).

Popular Career Options

Much of the future master's and career paths are similar to those in Clinical Psychology and Brain and Cognition. However, with greater knowledge of neurological

disorders, much of the research and clinical work you can do in the future relate to psychopathology and neurology. More specifically, with this course, you can go into research and treatment for disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's, as well as looking into cranial trauma (which without the neuropsychology component of the course you would not do) and work closely with the pharmaceutical industry regarding neurological disorders.

Your Third Year.

In your third year, you will take two 6 EC electives in the first block while taking the respective methods and statistics course for your specialisation. Although there are no restrictions as to which elective you can take in relation to what specialisation you are in, there is a limited list of electives for all students, which is as follows:

- Introduction to Sport and Performance Psychology
- Clinical Developmental and Health Psychology

- Consciousness: From Theory to the Clinic
- Stress in Health and Disease
- A Clinical Perspective on Today's Issues
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace
- Introduction to Cultural Psychology
- The Psychology of AI

The goal of these electives is to explore different areas of psychology that you will not look into in your specialisation. However, you are free to choose an elective that goes hand in hand with your specialisation or think would help with future master's tracks

Thesis.

In the second and third block of the first semester during your third year, you will be writing your thesis. At this point, you have done all the courses in your specialisation and can have more of a grasp of what specific topics in your specialisation you are more interested in and directed towards for the thesis. You do not, however, select your thesis topic,

per se. At a bachelor's level, you are given a list of possible thesis topics and questions within your specialisation to choose from and you will work in groups of 6 to 12 other students, depending on the popularity of your chosen topic. You will work on an ongoing project with a professor or researcher at the University who will be your supervisor. Together with your topic group, you will conduct a research project and do the data collection together. However, the writing of your thesis is completely individual.

A concluding remark.

o2o hopes that this booklet has fulfilled its intended purpose in simplifying the decision-making between the various Psychology specialisations.

As both a political party and student-run organisation, we truly believe in a more pragmatic and in-depth approach to picking the right specialisation.

As a party, we hope that we are one day able to push this initiative through the University councils, shifting the responsibilities for this booklet to the University itself.

However, as fellow students, we will fill this gap until that moment. Because a crucial decision like the one you are about to make, should be made with the utmost care.

o2o is constantly looking for new members to strengthen its fight to day after day better the lives of our fellow students. Therefore, if you are interested in becoming a candidate, or if you want to join one of our other teams, make sure to send us a message.

If you have any feedback or comments on this particular booklet, please reach out to us on our [Instagram!](#) To get to know us better, check out our [website](#).

Right now we need unity, progressive ideals that aren't afraid to look at history, and pragmatic policies rooted in science that get the job done, while leaving no one behind.

Sincerely,

Your o2o Team.

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