

MSc COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

MSc (by RESEARCH) COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

These MSc courses are the first in the UK in Community Psychology, and provide a unique opportunity for you to develop your psychological understanding, and skills of facilitating social change through working with people in the community.

Course Aims

In particular the courses aim to enable you to:

develop skills in the application and critical evaluation of psychological theory within community contexts;

develop the skills of reflexive, participant, empowerment practice with people from marginalised groups, so as to affect positive social change;

support you in your personal development through an explicit scheme of assessment, learning contracts and development opportunities arising from work with community projects, and which connect critical theoretical analyses with reflexive experiential work.

On these courses there will be opportunities for you to learn by doing (action learning) and working on projects in the community. Throughout there will be an emphasis liberatory action research, at the core of which are attempts to understand the experience of social marginalisation within group, organisational, community and societal contexts, in collaboration with local people. In common with community psychology programmes elsewhere in the world, you will be encouraged to develop systems perspectives on understanding social behaviour and experience, and to develop a reflective stance throughout your studies.

The taught programme is best suited to those of you who may be relatively new to working with local people for change towards a more just society, or new to psychological frameworks. It will give you the opportunity to understand key principles of working community psychologically and to develop skills of participative enquiry and evaluation. Each of the core modules will help you acquire a range of skills as well as theoretical understanding.

The research programmes are best suited to those of you who have already done a substantial amount of work with community organisations in relation to, for example, housing, regeneration, community development, community based health initiatives and so on. The course will be ideal for professional development purposes and you will be able to carry out your assignments and research in your own workplace if you wish. (We are currently investigating the possibility of offering the research routes 'off site' – please let us know if you would be interested in this type of provision.)

Core Courses

Community Psychology enables you to explore fundamental principles and practices of community psychology whilst working on a real change issue in the community. The course is organised around the real issues that you, the students, are facing in your work, and is assessed via portfolio and oral presentations about your work.

Explorations of Community Psychology provides space for you to explore in greater depth issues arising from your action project. This is the course that enables you to pursue one or two topics in depth. You are also invited to organise some experiential learning sessions around a topic of your choice, using skills and techniques that may be used in the field. These are assessed by tutors and your peers and become part of your portfolio for assessment.

Social Psychological Foundations of Change enables you to explore in depth the role of 'self' as a participant in change as well as to analyse interpersonal, group, organisational and societal dynamics of change. You will be able to use video and expressive methods of learning in this course and will be assessed on your ability to analyse theoretical and process issues underlying change.

If you are studying a research route, you will take ONE, TWO or THREE of these modules alongside your Dissertation, according to the following models:

Model a

Dissertation (120 Credits)

Personal Development (15 Credits)

Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Explorations of Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Social Psychological Foundations of Change (15 credits)

Model b

Dissertation (135 Credits)

Personal Development (15 Credits)

Two Modules from:

Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Explorations of Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Social Psychological Foundations of Change (15 credits)

Model c

Dissertation (150 Credits)

Personal Development (15 Credits)

One Module from:

Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Explorations of Community Psychology (15 Credits)

Social Psychological Foundations of Change (15 credits)

If you are studying the taught route, you will take the three core modules, plus FOUR from the following list:

Qualitative Methods (15 credits)

Quantitative Methods (10 Credits)

Research and Empowerment (15 credits)

Counselling Skills Workshop (15 Credits)

Psychological Perspectives on Counselling Psychology (15 credits)

Feminist Approaches to Counselling Psychology (15 credits)

Psychology, Culture and Identity (15 credits)

Educational Psychology (15 credits)

Juvenile Justice (15 credits)

Victims of Crime (15 Credits)

Special Study (5 - 30 Credits)

Critical Psychology (15 credits)

Psychology and Disability (30 credits)

Managing Change (15 credits)

Managing Diversity (15 credits)

Stress and Stress management (15 credits)

Negotiated Elective

Any 15 Credit Module at M level

The flexibility of the programme means that you will be able to combine previous or current experience of working in community settings. You may be able to gain credit exemptions for prior relevant study or experience. It is possible for you to study full or part-time. Alternatively you may wish to take one or more modules as stand alone courses and not as part of a degree programme. Overall, you will complete 180 credits, which translates in terms of time as 1800 hours of study. This is total study, not just contact in classes! If you wish, you may cease your studies after 60 credits (for a Certificate) or 120 credits for a Diploma.

We encourage you to think about what you might want to get out of the course – and whether this is as simple as finding out what community psychology is all about or as complex as developing new systems of working – we are sure you will find the experience an interesting and stimulating one.

Although this MSc programme is new, students have studied community psychology units, and undertaken community psychological research at MMU for a number of years. Examples of projects they have undertaken include:

- Housing and well being of refugees
- Organisational change and the involvement of people with mental health difficulties in training
- Organisational change and organisational chaos in a Diocesan organisation
- Victim support and 'hard to reach groups': a needs assessment
- Participatory evaluation of a hostel by the young women residents
- The development and formation of a disabled people's organisation in a Northern town

- Empowerment and disaffected youth: the development of a creative arts project
- Social inclusion and men in the inner city: the role of health and fitness
- Mental distress in rural areas: the role of official regulations in farming and farmers' suicides
- Fourth generation evaluation in a brain injury unit
- Community psychological versus psychotherapeutic responses to sexual health: a 'cottaging' case study
- Community responses to school inclusion: the development of a pressure group
- Needs analyses of services for elders from ethnic minority communities
- Evaluation of a drug users' project: barriers to participation

Several students who have studied community psychology with us have gone to gain or move into relevant employment. Examples of the kind of jobs they have obtained include:

- Development worker with local Age Concern
- Social Enterprise and Community Development Worker
- Participation development worker in a University
- Manager of a project supporting learning disabled adults to lead inclusive lives
- Research worker with regeneration project
- Research worker on a social capital and health project

In the Department we have a lively Community and Organisational Psychology (COP) Research group, with several students studying for PhDs, and you will be invited to take part in any of the COP Group activities.

For further information about Community Psychology at MMU see our webpage:

www.compsy.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you and answering any questions you may have about the courses.