THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

MAppPsy(Org) HANDBOOK 2027

School of Psychological and Social Sciences

Programme Staff



Associate Professor Anna Sutton

Anna Sutton | Mō | About | University of Waikato
anna.sutton@waikato.ac.nz

Dr Anna Sutton is a registered psychologist and has worked in the field of Organisational Psychology for 20 years. She gained her BSc (Hons) in Psychology and Neuroscience from Manchester University (UK), her MSc in Occupational Psychology and Business from Aston University (UK) and her PhD in Occupational Psychology from the University of Leeds (UK). Having held lecturing roles in Psychology Schools and Business Schools, Dr Sutton is focused on using psychology to improve our work lives.

Professional organisations

New Zealand Psychological Society for general information about psychology in New Zealand.

Institute of Organisational Psychology for specialist networking and resources related to Organisational Psychology. Membership is free for students studying postgrad organisational psychology.

New Zealand Psychologists Board is responsible for accrediting and monitoring Registered Psychologists.

International
Society for Industrial and Organisational Psychology Australia
Division for Occupational Psychology, UK
The Association for Business Psychology, UK
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, USA
Canadian Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Canada

Organisational Psychology

Interested in people, work, and making organisations better?

Organisational Psychology examines the relationship between people and the workplace. It combines the science of psychology with practical strategies to improve employee wellbeing, organisational effectiveness, and workplace culture.

From leadership and team performance to recruitment, training, motivation, and workplace wellbeing, organisational psychologists use research and data to solve real-world workplace challenges. Their work helps organisations create environments where people feel supported, engaged, and able to perform at their best.

Graduates can pursue careers in human resources, organisational development, people and culture, leadership consulting, workforce planning, learning and development, employee wellbeing, and organisational research. They can also go on to do a further qualification to become a Registered Psychologist in New Zealand (not currently offered at the University of Waikato).



The Master of Applied Psychology (Organisational) prepares you to apply psychological science to some of the most important challenges facing today's workplaces. You'll develop the knowledge and practical skills needed to help organisations attract, develop, and support their people while creating healthy, productive, and inclusive work environments.

Throughout the programme, you'll explore topics such as employee wellbeing, motivation and engagement, leadership, organisational culture, workforce development, organisational change, and people analytics. You'll learn how to collect, analyse, and interpret organisational data, design evidence-based solutions, and apply psychological principles to improve both employee experiences and organisational performance.

Whether your goal is to work in organisational development, people and culture, leadership consulting, human resources, workforce analytics, or employee wellbeing, this programme will equip you to make a meaningful impact in the world of work.

Learn by doing, not just by studying

The MAppPsy(Org) is built around a scientist-practitioner approach, combining cutting-edge psychological research with practical workplace application. Throughout the programme, you will learn how to apply evidence-based solutions to real organisational challenges, developing the skills employers value in organisational psychologists, consultants, and people and culture professionals.



Through seminars, case studies, discussions, and applied projects, you'll learn how to turn research into meaningful workplace outcomes.
Students have previously worked on projects involving:

- Designing recruitment and selection processes to help organisations identify top talent
- Identifying training and development needs to support workforce capability
- Investigating mindfulness techniques to help employees manage stress and stay resilient under pressure
- Exploring what makes people feel genuine at work, to help organisations boost job satisfaction and performance
- Evaluating workplace wellbeing programmes and coaching initiatives to demonstrate real, lasting improvements for staff
- Assessing the impact of environmentally sustainable practices on employee happiness and productivity
- Examining emotional strain in high-pressure roles, such as policing, to inform better support and retention strategies
- Developing practical tools to measure self-awareness and wellbeing, so organisations can track what's actually improving outcomes



Classes are intentionally small, providing opportunities for close interaction with academic staff and your peers. The programme attracts students from New Zealand and around the world, creating a diverse learning environment where different perspectives and experiences enrich classroom discussions.

You will learn from internationally recognised academics and practitioners who bring extensive experience in teaching, research, and organisational consulting. Our staff are active contributors to the field, publishing in leading international journals and helping organisations address contemporary workplace challenges. Their expertise ensures that what you learn is both academically rigorous and directly relevant to the changing world of work.

Graduate with the confidence to apply psychology in real workplaces and make a measurable difference to organisations, teams, and employee wellbeing.



Careers in Organisational Psychology

What's involved in a career in Organisational psychology?

- Apply research methods to investigate human behaviour and workplace issues
- Coach individuals and teams to high performance
- Analyse and interpret data to inform evidence-based decision-making
- Collect and evaluate information from a range of sources
- Design and deliver education, training, and development initiatives
- Work effectively with clients and stakeholders to understand needs and develop solutions
- Communicate complex psychological concepts to diverse audiences
- Assess human cognition, behaviour, and performance in applied settings
- Produce professional reports and deliver engaging presentations
- Contribute to social, organisational, and community-focused research projects

Most MAppPsy(Org) graduates find roles in human resource management, organisational development, or training within private and public sector organisations — from banks and large retailers to Fonterra, the New Zealand Army, and hotel chains. Others move into consulting firms specialising in organisational psychology or HR services, such as Career Services, Deloitte, and PricewaterhouseCoopers.



MAppPsy(Org) Degree Structure

The MAppPsy(Org) programme is a two-year (full-time) degree (240 credit points) for students who have completed a three-year undergraduate degree.

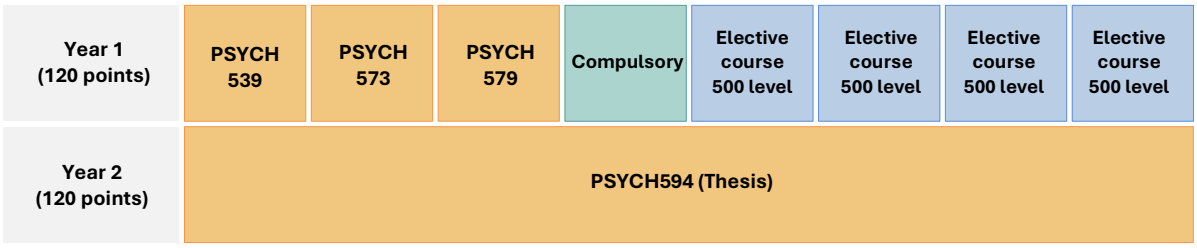
The programme consists of a set of core papers, elective papers or Honours dissertation, and completion of a research thesis.

Full-time students typically complete most of their course work taught in their first year of the programme, and complete the thesis in their second year.

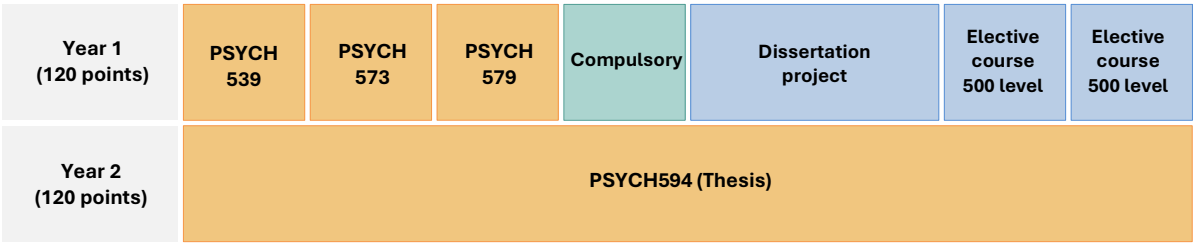
MAppPsy(Org) Degree overview

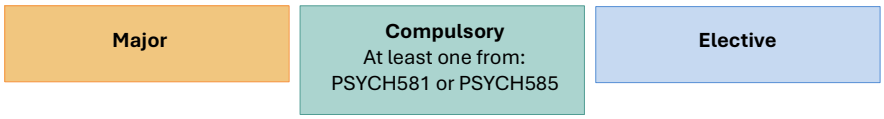
https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/qualifications/master-of-applied-psychology/?subject=BEHAN&plannerSubject=BEHAN#degree

MAppPsy(Org) - with taught papers only in first year



MAppPsy(Org) - with dissertation in first year





Core Papers

PSYCH573
Training and Development - 15 points
Students develop knowledge and skills in conducting training needs analyses; identifying appropriate training content; applying learning theory and research to develop effective training designs to maximize both learning and transfer of skills to the work environment; and training evaluation.

PSYCH579
Applying Psychology to Work – 15 points
This paper is designed to help students develop a critical awareness of psychological contributions to how our work and workplaces are designed. It will develop student knowledge of how psychology can be used to understand work behaviour and relationships, create more efficient workplaces and protect employee safety, as well as enhance well-being at work.

PSYCH585
Leadership and Change - 15 points
Students learn about the processes and outcomes of organisational development interventions, including organisational diagnosis and change management strategies, as well as the knowledge and skills needed when functioning as internal or external consultants within the field of organisational psychology.

PSYCH581
Psychological Assessment – 15 points
The objective of this course is to provide students with the knowledge base required to conduct psychological assessments and evaluate psychometric measures. The course builds on the knowledge of the principles of psychometrics covered in the third-year course on psychological measurement (PSYCH337). The content will include coverage of administration, evaluation, scoring and interpretation of psychometric instruments and behavioural assessment. The overall aim is to help you understand how you might go about selecting instruments, conducting assessments and understanding the test results.

PSYCH539
Graduate Research Methods - 15 points
Through this course, students broaden their familiarity with methods of data analysis used regularly in both thesis and published research. Students practice analyzing and interpreting data and reviewing research articles using the techniques covered in class.

PSYCH594
Thesis - 120 points
Students taking the MAppPsy(Org) complete a research thesis in the field of organisational psychology.



Elective papers

Students typically choose electives from Psychology, Management or Sociology, with approval of the Director of Organisational Psychology.

Recommended electives

From Psychology:

- PSYCH585 Leadership and Change – 15 points
- PSYCH555 Environmental Psychology – 15 points
- PSYCH536 Eyewitness Memory, Psychological Science and the Law – 15 points
- PSYCH575 Kaupapa Maori Psychology – 15 points
- PSYCH562 Theories of Psychotherapy – 15 points
- PSYCH591 Dissertation – 30 points*
  ** Note: Application through the normal School route*

From Management:

- LCOMM583 Leadership, Communication and Transformation – 30 points
- HRMGT502 Career management and development – 30 points
- HRMGT503 Human Resource Management Theory – 30 points
- BUSAN543 Applied Business Analytics – 30 points
- STMGT505 Strategy and Organisational Theory – 30 points*
  **Pre-requisite – STMGT301 or STMGT303 or equivalent*

Other Electives:

- SOCIO509 Contemporary Social Theory – 30 points
- SOCPY503 Health, Wellbeing and Policy – 15 points

Other entry pathways

PGDip pathway
Students enrolled in a Postgraduate diploma, with psychology as a major, may include 500-level organisational psychology papers in their degree, then apply for Year 2 of the MAppPsy(Org) – 120-point Masters thesis. If students have not taken up to 30 points of core organisational papers, a 90-point thesis may be considered alongside the outstanding 30 points of papers.

Honours pathway
Students enrolled in an Honours degree, with psychology as a major, may include graduate-level organisational psychology papers in their degree, then apply for Year 2 of the MAppPsy(Org) – 120-point Masters thesis. If students have not taken up to 30 points of core organisational papers, a 90-point thesis may be considered alongside the outstanding 30 points of papers.



Registration as a Psychologist

The University of Waikato does not currently offer a psychologist registration pathway with a specialisation in Organisational Psychology.

It is recommended that you look at registration qualifications offered at other tertiary providers – see the New Zealand Psychologists Board for accredited providers - Accredited papers | NZ Psychologists Board

Further Information

If you wish to discuss possible enrolment or obtain academic advice, please contact either:

psychology@waikato.ac.nz

or arrange a Postgraduate Psychology Advice appointment by scanning the QR code below





THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

KO TE TANGATA
FOR THE PEOPLE

The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand

0800 WAIKATO
0800 924 528
info@waikato.ac.nz
waikato.ac.nz

© The University of Waikato, August
2026 #0001