



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS HANDBOOK 2027

School of Psychological and Social Sciences

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Behaviour-Analysis-Handbook 2027

Programme Staff



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[Staff profile](#)

Dr. Amarie Carnett is the Director and Senior Lecturer for the Behaviour Analysis programme, and a Research Affiliate at Victoria University of Wellington. She is a doctorate level Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA-D). She has over 15 years of experience working in the field of behavioral science and Autism/Developmental Disabilities.



Associate Professor Tim Edwards

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[Staff profile](#)

Tim Edwards is a behavioural specialist who is interested in learning processes, particularly as they relate to socially significant behaviour. He aims to bridge gaps between basic research and applications. Tim teaches in the School of Psychology's Behaviour Analysis Programme and is director of the University's Scent Detection Research Group. Much of his research is cross-disciplinary, involving collaborations with biologists, zoologists, chemists, and medical researchers.



Dr Tania Blackmore

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[Staff profile](#)

Tania is currently Lecturer with the School of Psychological and Social Sciences. Her primary interests are applied behaviour analysis, where her behavioural research has involved adapting operant conditioning techniques to investigate psycho-physics (colour vision), reversal learning and maze learning in large animals. Her other primary interest is psycho-oncology.



Victoria Burney

Senior Tutor

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Victoria is a Senior Tutor with the School of Psychological and Social Sciences, supporting students enrolled in the PGDipPracPsych (ABA). Victoria is a Registered Psychologist (NZPB) and a Board-Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA), who works part time in clinical practice (currently in the area of paediatric brain injury rehabilitation). Victoria's research and clinical interests centre around applied behavioural support for a variety of stakeholders, primarily parents and caregivers.



Tina Bourke

Senior Tutor

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[Staff profile](#)

Tina is currently a Senior Tutor based at the Tauranga campus. Tina teaches across a range of undergraduate and post-graduate level psychology papers. Tina's primary interest is applied behaviour analysis (ABA).



Donna Walsh

Programme administrator

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Donna is a Programme administrator with the School of Psychological and Social Sciences. She works directly with the Behaviour analysis and Community Psychology programmes.

Professional organisations

New Zealand Psychologists Board (NZPB) - <https://psychologistsboard.org.nz/>

Society of Behaviour Analysis Aotearoa New Zealand (SBAANZ) - <https://societyofbehaviouranalysis.co.nz/>

Association of Professional Behaviour Analysis (APBA) - <https://www.apbahome.net/>

Association for Behaviour Analysis International (ABAI) - <https://www.abainternational.org/welcome.aspx>

Behaviour Analysis

Behaviour analysis is a scientific approach to understanding why people and animals do what they do. Studying behaviour analysis will teach you how behaviour is affected by events in the social and physical environment and what you can do to produce behaviour change to help improve lives. Knowledge of this science of behaviour and its behaviour-change technology will assist you in a variety of careers.

As a field, behaviour analysis consists of concepts, principles, and techniques. As a student of behaviour analysis, you will learn how behaviour can be understood and changed. This includes an introduction to behaviourism, which is the philosophy underpinning the science of behaviour, and the experimental analysis of behaviour (EAB), which is the domain of basic behavioural research. Applied behaviour analysis (ABA) is concerned with the application of these foundations and in the development of a technology to improve socially important behaviours. You will learn many skills, including how to define and measure behaviour, create behaviour change programmes, and evaluate their effectiveness in courses that combine theoretical and practical learning to produce marketable skills.



Applications of Behaviour Analysis

Applied behaviour analysis (ABA) is the application of behaviour-analytic principles to improve socially important behaviours. ABA is used in many settings and with a wide range of problems. Many effective and evidence-based procedures and interventions to addressing problem behaviour, and therapy supporting individuals with developmental disabilities are based on ABA.

ABA can be used to help people gain new skills, reduce unwanted behaviours, or prevent problem behaviour starting in the first place. ABA is useful in many domains including, for example, organisational behaviour management (OBM) and ecological interventions (e.g., reducing littering, increasing recycling behaviour, addressing climate change).

Careers in Behaviour Analysis

Some students study behaviour analysis to apply their knowledge and skills to human problems, and to do work based on behaviour principles in an applied setting or to undertake research in these areas. Others study it to work with animal behaviour; they may be interested in research or in animal problem behaviours or animal training. Some combine both research and practice and/or the study of animal and human behaviour.

For whatever reason you are considering taking courses in this area, the behavioural courses and programmes will provide you with knowledge which you can use to understand, study and work practically with behaviour. An understanding of how and why behaviour occurs and how it can be changed for the better is of fundamental value to almost all professions. Depending on your specialty, you may work in a range of settings (including research institutions, private practice, schools, special education settings, universities, health services, business and industry, and governmental agencies), and with a range of populations (including families, people with psychological problems, children with challenging behaviours, individuals with special needs, teachers, people and their pets, and others seeking positive behaviour change).



Students who have specialised in the application of behaviour analysis to human issues and clinical problems are working in the community, in the disability sector, mental health, and in early intervention, or in educational settings with individuals with a wide range of diagnoses and disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder, conduct disorder, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

However, it doesn't matter what type of psychology you choose to practice, or whether you end up in a field orientated to people or animals. What is important is that you gain an understanding of how and why organisms behave (i.e., what maintains and influences behaviour).

Practical Experience in ABA

Many students pursuing careers involving the application of behaviour analysis gain practical experience alongside their undergraduate and graduate studies. This can be voluntary or paid, such as support work. In addition, experience can sometimes be gained working for parents or trusts who employ students specialising in ABA to work with their children, helping to implement programmes for them.

The graduate programme includes training in the skills required to work practically, applying behaviour analytic principles to behaviour change with humans. The postgraduate programme provides supervision and training for students who are completing internships to become registered psychologists in NZ and Australia (please see the Ahpra website for further information regarding registration in Australia). It also delivers the curriculum required for full membership with the Society of Behaviour Analysis Aotearoa New Zealand - [Society for Behaviour Analysis Aotearoa New Zealand](#)

Behaviour Analysis at the University of Waikato

The undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate courses in behaviour analysis provide training in the experimental analysis of behaviour, applied behaviour analysis, and the philosophical underpinnings of behaviour analysis.

The undergraduate courses can be taken on campus in Hamilton or Tauranga. Postgraduate courses can be taken on campus in Hamilton or online as part of an Honours degree, a Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology, the Master of Professional Practice in Behaviour Analysis, or the Master of Applied Psychology in Behaviour Analysis.

The Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology in applied behaviour analysis is a post-masters or post-doctorate qualification that is designed to provide the requirements for registration as a psychologist in NZ, specialising in the application of behaviour analysis. It provides the supervised practical experience required for registration as a Psychologist in NZ.

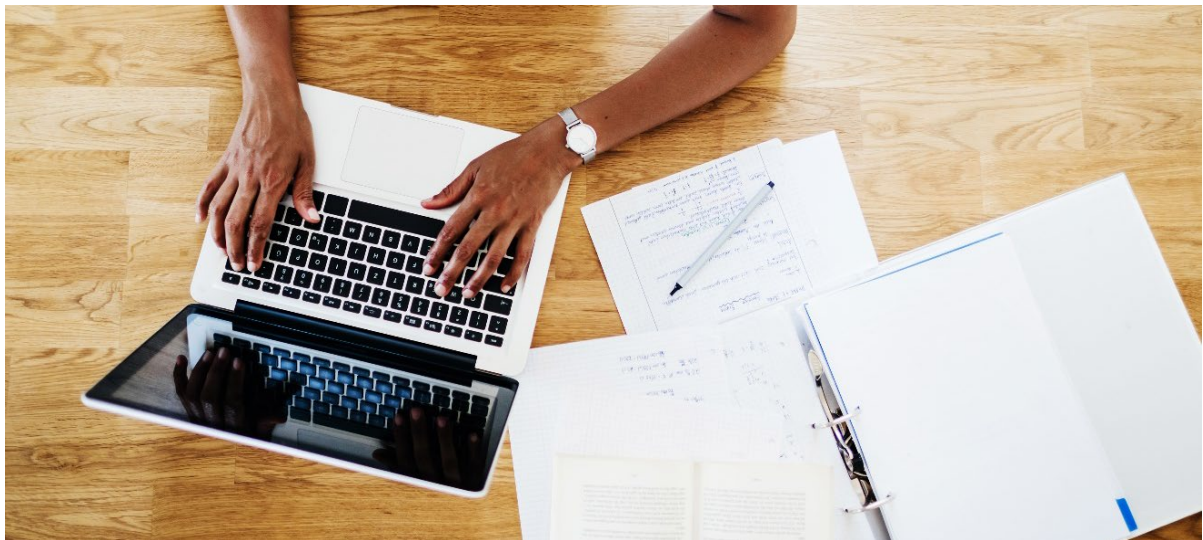
Research in Behaviour Analysis at the University of Waikato

The University of Waikato is involved with both experimental and applied research in behaviour analysis. This research is aimed at advancing the understanding of behaviour. It includes the application of psychological principles to behaviour problems. Many of the advances in behavioural therapies have their basis in laboratory research. Some of the research has a direct crossover between the experimental analysis of behaviour and the applied analysis of behaviour, such as in the areas of reinforcement procedures, reinforcer preference, extinction, self-control, and stimulus generalisation.

Research in behaviour analysis includes the study of learning and of the application of behaviour principles to understanding and changing human and animal problem

behaviour, health-related behaviour, developing communication skills, providing behaviour support for people with disabilities, improving educational practices, and animal training. Current research includes applied research projects examining scent detection with dogs, and research on complex human behaviour, including perspective taking and problem solving. There are also ongoing projects examining the application of behavioural interventions to improve educational and developmental outcomes.

Theses have included topics related to supporting challenging behaviours, teaching adaptive and functional communication skills to vulnerable populations, and exploring the use of technology to facilitate behaviour change and increase independence in learners.



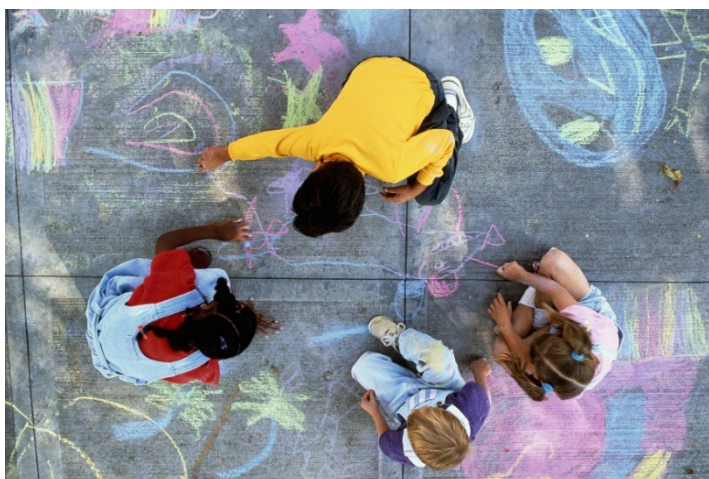
Undergraduate Courses in Behaviour Analysis

Students who wish to study behaviour analysis at The University of Waikato at undergraduate level should complete a BA, BSc, or BSocSc with a major in psychology and should include:

PSYCH100 HAM and TGA	15pts	Brain, Behaviour and Cognition
PSYCH204 HAM and TGA	15pts	Learning and Perception
PSYCH211 HAM and TGA	15pts	Understanding Psychological Research
PSYCH307 HAM and TGA	15pts	Psychological Research Methods
PSYCH314 HAM, TGA and NET	15pts	Behaviour analysis

Depending on the area of their interests, students should consider including:

PSYCH319 HAM and TGA	15pts	Infant and Child Development
PSYCH337 HAM and TGA	15pts	Individual Differences and Measurement
PSYCH338 HAM and TGA	15pts	Mental Health and Wellbeing



If interested in working in educational settings, then students should consider including courses related to education in their degree. A double major in psychology and education could be considered by students wishing to work in special education or in other educational settings.

If interested in animal behaviour, students should consider relevant papers in biological sciences in their degree. A double major in psychology and biological sciences or a minor in animal behaviour could be considered by students wishing to work in animal behaviour.



Suggested academic pathway for registration as a psychologist in Behaviour Analysis

Please note: This document is designed to show you a Bachelor of Arts/MAppPsy/PGDipPracPsych pathway in Behaviour Analysis only – please consult ALPSS Student services to plan your specific undergraduate degree (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Social Sciences, Bachelor of Science).

BA	Y1 120 points	PSYCH 100	PSYCH 101	One from List A	ARTSC110 Old Worlds-New Worlds	Field of the Degree 100 level	Field of the Degree 100 level	Elective	Elective
BA	Y2 120 points	PSYCH 211	PSYCH 204	PSYCH COURSE 200 level	One From List B	Field of the Degree 200 level	Elective	Elective	Elective
BA	Y3 120 points	PSYCH 307	PSYCH 314				Elective	Elective	
MAppPsy Year 1	Y4 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level	Elective course 500 level	
MAppPsy Year 2	Y5 120 points	PSYCH 594							
PGDipPracPsych (ABA)	Y6 120 points	PSYCH 551			PSYCH 552	PSYCH 553			

Major OR Stream

A major or stream is the main subject of your degree.

Elective course

You may have room in your degree to take courses that aren't part of your major or compulsory for your degree. These are called elective courses. Electives can be from any subject offered by the University.

Compulsory course

All of these courses must be taken as part of your degree.

Other courses which are part of the degree – Please consult the ALPSS Student Services team to fully plan your degree.

Qualifications including undergraduate courses in Behaviour Analysis for Graduates in subjects other than Psychology

Students who already hold a bachelor's degree in a subject other than psychology may include the behaviour analysis undergraduate course and the suggested courses (outlined above) as part of a:

Graduate Diploma in Psychology - GradDip(Psych)

<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/study/qualifications/graduate-diploma>
to gain entry into the postgraduate qualifications.



Papers to include in your Graduate Diploma are:

PSYCH204 HAM and TGA	15pts	Learning and Perception
PSYCH211 HAM and TGA	15pts	Understanding Psychological Research
PSYCH307 HAM and TGA	15pts	Psychological Research Methods
PSYCH314 HAM, TGA and NET	15pts	Behaviour analysis

Depending on the area of their interests, students should consider including:

PSYCH319 HAM and TGA	15pts	Infant and Child Development
PSYCH337 HAM and TGA	15pts	Individual Differences and Measurement
PSYCH338 HAM and TGA	15pts	Mental Health and Wellbeing

More papers can be found here: [Find a paper | Catalogue of papers :: University of Waikato](#)

Postgraduate Qualifications that can include Behaviour Analysis

Graduate and postgraduate courses in behaviour analysis can be taken separately or as part of a specialist qualification. Students wishing to include some behaviour analysis courses in their postgraduate qualification may take them as part of one of the following one-year postgraduate programmes:

- [Postgraduate Certificate in Psychology - PGCert\(Psych\)](#)
- [Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology - PGDip\(Psych\)](#)
- [Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours - BSocSc\(Hons\)](#)
- [Bachelor of Arts with Honours – BA\(Hons\)](#)
- [Bachelor of Science with Honours – BSc\(Hons\)](#)

Or as part of an 18-month taught papers programme:

- [Master of Arts - MA](#)

Or as part of a two-year programme:

- [Master of Professional Practice in Behaviour Analysis - MPPBA](#)
This can be taken as a two-year post bachelor's or as a one-year post-honours or post-PGDip qualification, depending on the student's background.
<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/calendar/regulations/masters/mppba/>
- [Master of Applied Psychology in Behaviour analysis – MAppPsy\(BA\)](#)
This can be taken as a two-year post-bachelor's or as a one-year post-honours or post-PGDip qualification, depending on the student's background.
<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/calendar/regulations/masters/mappsy/>

And a one year internship:

- [Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology in Applied Behaviour Analysis - PGDipPracPsych\(ABA\)](#)
This is a one-year post-master's qualification
<https://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/regulations/diplomas/pgdippracpsych.html>

Doctorate in Philosophy Programme (PhD) in Behaviour Analysis

<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/about/faculties-schools/graduate-research/>

The University of Waikato offers a research-only doctoral programme leading to a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. Students with the appropriate level of honours in their master's degree may enrol in a PhD and undertake a research topic in behaviour analysis.

There is no coursework in a research-only PhD. Students must develop a research programme which they then conduct over two to three years under supervision. This research programme and its results are then written up as a thesis that is submitted for examination. It is possible to write up components of the research and submit these to relevant journals for consideration for publication as they are completed and prior to the completion of the whole thesis.

The School of Psychological and Social Sciences website contains some information on past and ongoing research topics and the University of Waikato website provides access to information on staff publications.

If you are interested in the PhD programme, please get in contact with any of the behavioural staff to discuss potential topics and supervision.



Postgraduate Programme overview

Undergraduate qualification

BA BSc BSocSc	Y1 120 points	PSYCH 100	PSYCH 101	One from List A	ARTSC110 Old Worlds- New Worlds	Field of the Degree 100 level	Field of the Degree 100 level	Elective	Elective
	Y2 120 points	PSYCH 211	PSYCH 204	PSYCH COURSE 200 level	One From List B	Field of the Degree 200 level	Elective	Elective	Elective
	Y3 120 points	PSYCH 307	PSYCH 314	PSYCH COURSE 300 level	PSYCH COURSE 300 level	WIL Course 300 level	Elective	Elective	Elective

Honours or PGDip pathway (after undergraduate qualification)

Honours or PGDip	Y4 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level*	Elective course 500 level*
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* If completing an Honours year, you will take a 30-point dissertation PSYCH591 instead of two 15-point elective courses

PhD pathway (after undergraduate qualification)

Honours or PGDip MSc(Research) PhD ** PhD PhD	Y4 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level*	Elective course 500 level*
	Y5 120 points	PSYCH 594						
	Y6 120 points	PSYCH 900						
	Y7 120 points	PSYCH 900						
	Y8 120 points	PSYCH 900						

* If completing an Honours year, you will take a 30-point dissertation PSYCH591 instead of two 15-point elective courses

** You may apply for a PhD directly after completing an Honours year and meet entry criteria with Te Mata Kairangi – School of Graduate Research

Professional Pathways

MPPBA (after undergraduate qualification)

Year 1 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level	Elective course 500 level
Year 2 120 points	PSYCH 551			PSYCH 552	PSYCH 554		

MAppPsy(BA) (after undergraduate qualification)

Year 1 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level	Elective course 500 level
Year 2 120 points	PSYCH 594						

*Pathway to registration as a psychologist

PGDipPracPsych(ABA) (after MAppPsy(BA) or equivalent)

120 points	PSYCH 551	PSYCH 552	PSYCH 553
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*Pathway to registration as a psychologist

Behaviour Analysis Q&A session – B trimester

The Behaviour Analysis programme facilitates an annual Q&A session which is usually held in early B trimester of the year prior to admission into our professional programmes. It's important that you read the information in this handbook and bring any questions you may have to this session.

This year's Q&A session will be held online on:

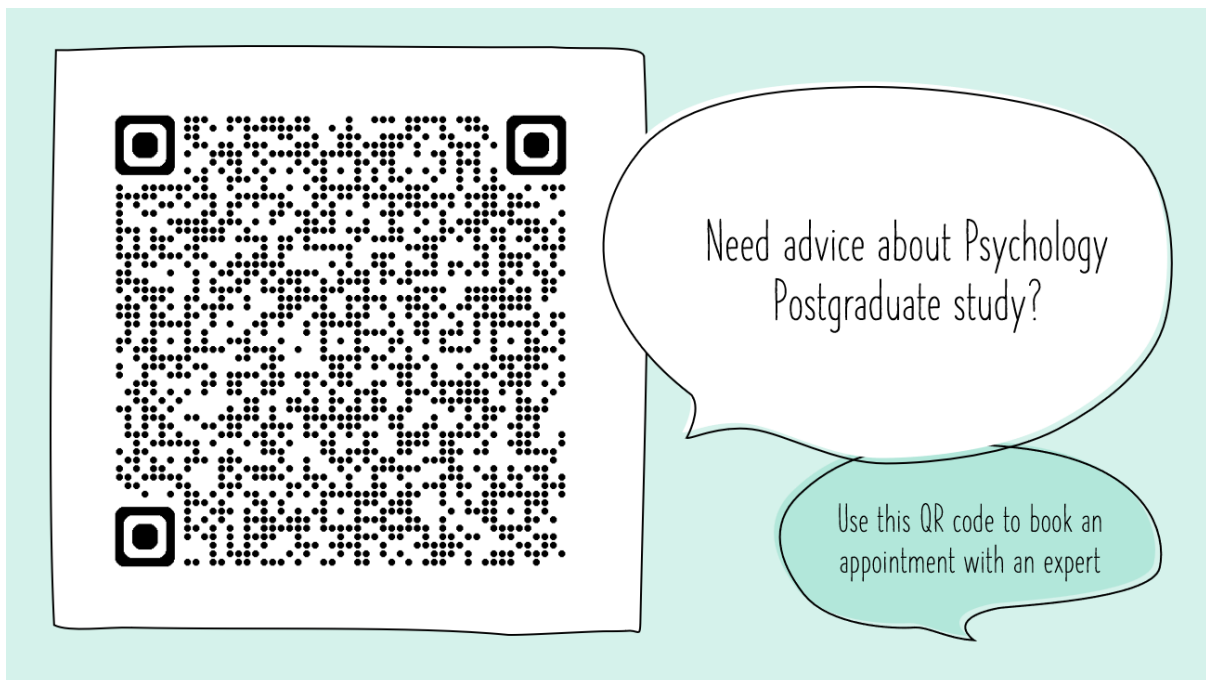
Wednesday 22 July at 1pm-2pm

Microsoft Teams meeting Join:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/42478922387215?p=iDfDNtJf3FPI38779r>

Postgraduate Advice Appointment

If you would like to meet with someone to discuss your postgraduate options in Behaviour Analysis, please use the QR code below to make an appointment – either in-person, online or phone call.



Core papers and Elective papers

PSYCH538B HAM or NET (15pts)

Applied Behaviour Analysis in Practice

This paper focuses on the implementation of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) in practice. The objective is to identify critical components and essential practical skills, and to provide opportunity to practice these skills. Implementation barriers, ethical considerations, and the importance of evidence-based practice will also be discussed.

PSYCH560B HAM or NET (15pts)

Current Applications of Applied Behaviour Analysis

Students in this paper explore the conceptual issues around behaviour analysis, including those underlying the implementation of behavioural programmes across a wide range of applied areas. A focus is on the philosophical underpinnings but we will also learn about topics that are currently under debate. Topics covered include the scientist-practitioner model, evidence-based practice, private events (including fear and anxiety), causation of behaviour, the use of aversive strategies, and the clinical application of behaviour analysis. It will also introduce the theoretical background to some contemporary therapies, including Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

PSYCH561A HAM or NET (15pts)

Behaviour Analysis: Concepts and Principles

This course provides an in-depth introduction to the conceptual foundations and core principles of behaviour analysis, including research and theory related to the concepts of reinforcement, extinction, stimulus control, derived stimulus relations, and motivating operations.

PSYCH577A HAM or NET (15pts)

Single Subject Research Methods

This course covers research methodologies used in the field of behaviour analysis, including collection of data, experimental design, data presentation and analysis, and interpretation and reporting of research findings.

PSYCH586D NET (30pts)

Behaviour Assessment

This 30-point course covers a variety of behavioural assessments and provides the opportunity to gain practical clinical skills by administering a behavioural assessment. Students will carry out an assessment in an external organisation/agency/school with a client and be given professional supervision and instruction to ensure ethical and effective practice. The course is delivered as a NET course for content with live digital workshop sessions. Students are required to attend an approved university practicum setting in person to complete the practical components.

Departmental approval is required to enrol in this paper due to the practical components. This paper is only available to students enrolled in the MAppPsy(BA), MPPBA, Honours, or PGDip(Psych) with core 500-level Behaviour Analysis papers. **You will be required to complete police vetting before the paper starts – please see the paper outline for further details.**

Online (NET) Courses

The courses are available online when they have a NET extension. The NET version papers are fully online and are delivered asynchronously (students complete lessons by specified deadlines according to their own schedule). Tutorials involving discussions of sensitive topics are not recorded. Both NET and on-campus students complete the tutorials for these courses online at times that suit them. NET students also complete the practical work for PSYCH538 online in their own time. Where possible, we encourage students to enrol in the in-person course so that they can interact with their peers and the instructor.

Elective Courses

PSYCH564	15pts	Developmental Psychopathology
PSYCH575	15pts	Kaupapa Māori Psychology
PSYCH580*	15pts	The Psychology of Crime and Criminality: Research and Practice
PSYCH581**	15pts	Psychological Assessment

*PSYCH580 has a pre-requisite of FPSYC201 or FPSYC502

**PSYCH581 is a limited entry paper. Student are encouraged to add this paper early so they can be considered by the convenor for a place in the paper. This paper has a pre-requisite of PSYCH337 or equivalent.

Other psychology courses relevant to the student's specialty may be included with approval from programme staff. Students with biology in their undergraduate degree, in addition to their psychology major, and with an interest in applications of behaviour analysis to animal behaviour may consider taking relevant 500-level psychology courses in animal behaviour or courses in biological sciences. Students with education in their undergraduate degree, in addition to their psychology major, may include an appropriate education 500-level course.

Elective Courses for Online Students

Students who wish to take the full MAppPsy(BA) online should discuss their elective options with staff in the programme.

Master of Professional Practice in Behaviour Analysis - MPPBA

The **Master of Professional Practice in Behaviour Analysis** at The University of Waikato provides students with:

1. a sound understanding of the underlying concepts and principles associated with behaviour analysis, and of the applications of these concepts and principles;
2. an understanding of functional analyses of problem behaviour and how to develop an appropriate programme for behaviour change in their area of specialty;
3. a grounding in evidence-based practice and the scientist practitioner model of practice in psychology in their practice;
4. an understanding of ethical and professional practice, including cultural and legal knowledge relevant to the New Zealand context;
5. supervised experience in the practice of ABA in a community placement.

MPPBA Degree Requirements

When this degree is the student's first postgraduate qualification in psychology it takes two years (full time) to complete. The programme requires 240 points, 120 of which are taken in the first year. Points in the first year come from five courses in behaviour analysis and two elective courses, as outlined below. Elective courses are selected in consultation with the behaviour analysis programme staff. The second year involves 60 points of coursework and a 60-point practicum.

Year 1 MPPBA – Coursework

Year 1 of the MPPBA normally comprises 120 points of courses. The five core behavioural courses (15-30 points each) must be included. 

The remaining 30pts come from other graduate courses, selected from the list of electives below or in discussion with programme staff. Behaviour analysis courses are offered either on campus (HAM) or online (NET).

Year 2 MPPBA – Coursework

Year 2 of the MPPBA comprises two courses (60 points) on the practice of behaviour analysis, including a course on ethics. The other 60 points come from a practicum which involves supervised practice in a community setting.

PSYCH551 Case Study Analysis in Applied Psychology (45 pts)

This course teaches students to critically analyse and apply theoretical knowledge of behaviour analysis to psychological practice within a science-practitioner model, aiming to develop effective and culturally sensitive practitioners. This paper can be taken as a stand-alone paper with permission from the paper convenor. Participating in this paper requires students to have access to a practicum placement, employment, or voluntary work that provides opportunities to practice behaviour analysis.

PSYCH552 Ethical Issues in Psychology (15 pts)

This course provides the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills concerning ethical issues in the professional practice in Psychology, specifically in applied behaviour analysis. This paper can be taken as a stand-alone paper with permission from the paper convenor.

PSYCH554 Advanced Behaviour Analysis Practicum (60 pts)

This course provides students with the opportunity to develop practical skills including conducting behavioural observations and implementing function-based interventions, within a mixture of structured workshops and community-based placements.

Summary of MPPBA Degree Structure*

Year 1 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level	Elective course 500 level
Year 2 120 points	PSYCH 551		PSYCH 552	PSYCH 554			

* As at April 2026

Essential Information

When the MPPBA is the student's first postgraduate qualification in psychology, it normally takes two years (full time) to complete. The programme requires 240 points, 120 of which are taken in the first year.

Points in the first year normally come from six courses in behaviour analysis and two elective courses, as outlined on page 17.

The second year involves 60 points of coursework and a 60-point practicum.

YEAR 1

The following compulsory courses (60 points):

- PSYCH538 Applications of Behaviour Analysis (15pts)
- PSYCH560 Applied Behaviour Analysis: Theories and Issues (15pts)
- PSYCH561 Behaviour Analysis: Concepts and Principles (15pts)
- PSYCH577 Single Subject Research Methods (15pts)
- PSYCH586 Behavioural Assessment (30 pts)
- Plus 30 points of approved courses



Plus optional courses in Psychology or in other subjects such as Human Development, Education, Biological Sciences or other courses. Optional courses should be selected in consultation with the Behaviour Analysis Programme.

YEAR 2

Year 2 of the MPPBA comprises two courses (60 points) on the practice of behaviour analysis, including a course on ethics. The other 60 points come from a practicum which involves supervised practice in a community setting.

Year 2 courses are:

- PSYCH551 Case Study Analysis in Applied Psychology (45 pts)
- PSYCH552 Ethical Issues in Psychology (15 pts)
- PSYCH554 Advanced Behaviour Analysis Practicum (60 pts)

We recommend that you read copies of the current course outlines via the University website and communicate with one of the programme staff to discuss the suitability of the course for you.

If you have any queries regarding the programme or supervision, please contact behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

MPPBA Entry Requirements

MPPBA programme for the two-year degree requires:

- a Bachelor's degree with a major in psychology,
- at least a B average in psychology (over 300 level courses),
- Some of the possible elective courses for the MPPBA may have pre-requisite requirements over and above those required for the behaviour analysis courses and for entry into the programme. When possible, students should check these when selecting their third-year undergraduate papers. PSYCH307 Psychological Research Methods and PSYCH314 Behaviour Analysis, or equivalent, is strongly recommended, though not required for entry.

Entry into Year 2 of the MPPBA programme for the one-year degree requires:

- a completed PGDip(Psych) or a Bachelor's with Honours degree in psychology including the core 500-level courses for the programme,
- an average grade of at least a B averaged over their psychology graduate courses,

Using Year 1 of the MAppPsy(BA), a PGDip(Psych) or a BSocSc(Hons) (with appropriate courses) as a substitute for Year 1 of the MPPBA

Candidates from the University of Waikato who plan to undertake a PGDip(Psych) or an honours degree may take the MPPBA Behaviour analysis courses as part of a PGDip(Psych) or an honours degree.

These candidates can then apply for entry to the MPPBA at Year 2 and can take the MPPBA as a one-year degree once their PGDip(Psych) or honours is complete.

Candidates from the University of Waikato who have completed MAppPsy(BA) Year 1 may apply to transfer to the one-year MPPBA and would only need to complete the Year 2 requirements if they meet entry requirements.

Applying for entry into the MPPBA

Potential applicants should approach the School of Psychological and Social Sciences for help in planning the most appropriate course of study for their needs and background: behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

Students who are not graduates of Waikato should also include their academic record when contacting the school. Details of each student's course of study must be approved by programme staff prior to the student being accepted into the programme.

**Applications are called for from B trimester,
with a deadline of September 15.**

Please apply early via MyWaikato as there is a 2-step application process

Applications will require the following documentation:

- Application for qualification in MyWaikato

Once university entry criteria have been met, the School of Psychological and Social Sciences will invite you to complete the Internal School selection form which includes:

- A Statement of Purpose
- Your Curriculum Vitae
- Academic Transcript
- Referee contact details for 2 referees
- Police vetting consent and International Police check

All applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's previous academic, work and personal experience, bicultural appreciation, commitment to training, and understanding of the profession. There is no upper or lower age limit. The selection process is undertaken in a way which seeks to attract the best applicants rather than favouring one gender over another. However, given that there is a shortage of men in the profession and a shortage of Māori, if two applicants are equal in all the aforementioned criteria, then gender and/or cultural identity may be considered in choosing an applicant. NZ is a bicultural country which is fortunate to have peoples of many and varied cultures. We welcome applications from a wide range of cultural identities.

1. Application in MyWaikato

Applications for Year 1:

If you are a returning student, please apply via MyWaikato for the MPPBA.

If you are new to the University, please create a student account and apply for the MPPBA via MyWaikato.

We encourage applications in MyWaikato for Year 1 as early as possible and if you are successful in gaining entry, to ensure you are fully enrolled, and able to successfully commence study when Trimester A starts.

Applications for Year 2:

If you are a returning student but have not been enrolled in MPPBA previously, please apply via MyWaikato for the MPPBA.

If you are new to the University, please create a student account and apply for the MPPBA via MyWaikato.

2. Internal School Selection form

Please complete the selection form (sent directly to you by the school) and include your most current personal details along with any other required documentation.

3. Statement of Purpose

You need to include a statement of purpose with your online selection form. This is an important part of the selection process, so take the time to write it well.

Use it to show who you are, what you’ve done, and how your experiences have prepared you for this programme. Explain clearly what motivates you to work in this field. Write in a positive and professional way. Be specific and give examples instead of general statements.

Check your spelling and grammar carefully before you submit.

Keep each section to no more than 200 words, and the total under 2000 words and submit as a Word or PDF document.

Section	What to cover
Why behaviour analysis?	Your motivation for this field and what inspired your decision to specialise.
Relevant experience	Paid or voluntary work in education, disability, health, community services. research or leadership.
Personal qualities	Empathy, analytical thinking, patience, ethical awareness, teamwork, and openness to supervision.
Commitment to people	Your understanding of and commitment to working ethically and effectively with diverse individuals, families and communities.
Cultural commitment	Connections with Māori and underrepresented communities and your commitment to equity and culturally responsive practice.
Programme commitment	How you will manage the academic, professional and placement requirements of the programme.
Your support network	Personal, whānau, family, or institutional supports that will help you succeed and sustain your professional development.

4. Academic Transcript/Qualifications

Please provide a current official copy of your academic transcript.

5. Curriculum Vitae

A current curriculum vitae (CV) that outlines your education, work experience, skills, and achievements. Use it to give a clear, structured overview of your background and show how your experience aligns with the programme you’re applying for. Limit your CV to 3 pages.

6. Pre-requisite courses

Indicate which pre-requisite courses you have completed (or are completing). If you have not completed the core courses at Waikato, you will be asked to list the equivalent courses you have taken and provide paper outlines for these. An example of a paper outline: [PSYCH560-25B \(HAM\)](#)

7. Referees

You are expected to arrange TWO suitable referees and provide their contact details. A Reference form will be sent out to your referees. Your referees will have 1-2 weeks to submit their reference, so please ensure your referees are available to complete the form.

We would like to see references from the following people:

- Your line manager / supervisor (work related) and/or
- An academic convenor (study related)

Avoid family, friends, relatives, or people who know you only socially.

Remember that referees always have the best intentions but may need to be reminded complete their form within the appropriate timeframe.

Applications with FEWER THAN TWO references will not be considered by the selection panel, so please try to ensure that your referees have completed their form.

8. Police vetting consent and international police check

Police vetting consent

Applicants who have lived in New Zealand prior to the start date of the Master of Professional Practice in Behaviour Analysis are required to complete NZ Police Vetting. International students who have not yet arrived in New Zealand will also need to complete NZ police vetting.

You will be sent an email containing information regarding completing the police vetting consent form once you have received a conditional offer. The [Vulnerable Children's Act 2014](#) requires us to sight your original identity documents which means you will need to bring these to the [Student Centre](#) on the Hamilton or Tauranga Campus before you start your classes.

International police check

Applicants who have lived overseas are also required to complete an International Criminal History Check for every country they have lived in for twelve months or more over the last 7 years. Note that this must have been issued within one year of the start date for the Master of Professional Practice in

Behaviour Analysis. Please follow [New Zealand Immigration guidance](#) to find out how to obtain a police certificate from a specific country.

The Procedure We Follow

All MyWaikato applications are screened by Admissions in the first instance to ensure university entry has been met. The selection form link will be sent out in the conditional offer. The internal school selection form will then be screened by the programme administrator to ensure all documentation is included before passing the application on to the selection committee. The selection committee will consider the applications. The selection committee includes programme staff and practicing psychologists. If you have not been successful at this stage, you will be informed as soon as possible.

Selection Interviews

Selection interviews will take place in the School of Psychological and Social Sciences over a three to four-day period. The selection process may include several tasks including an interview. Details of the selection procedure will be sent to those who are shortlisted.

The selection committee will interview applicants who have progressed to the next stage. Dates for interviews will be communicated to applicants after the selection closing date.

After the Interview

Following interviews, second conditional or unconditional offers of admission to the programme will be extended. Some offers may be made contingent on you agreeing to complete further coursework in the first years of training.

If we are not able to consider you further for admission, we will notify you of this as soon as possible.

If further coursework is expected, it should be completed within the first year of the programme. After receiving an offer, applicants have until a specified deadline to accept the offer. After this date the offer will be withdrawn, and the place will be offered to another candidate. We ask that you provide us with written acceptance by email and accept your offer in MyWaikato.

All unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing as soon as possible.

The panel's decision is final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Master of Applied Psychology in Behaviour Analysis - MAppPsy(BA)

The **Master of Applied Psychology in Behaviour Analysis** at The University of Waikato provides students with:

1. a sound understanding of the underlying concepts and principles associated with behaviour analysis, and of the applications of these concepts and principles.
2. knowledge of the research skills required for behaviour analysis, including the ability to read, interpret, and appraise published behavioural research critically, and the ability to conduct fundamental and applied research in behaviour analysis.
3. an understanding of functional analyses of problem behaviour and of how to develop an appropriate programme for behaviour change in their area of specialty.
4. analytic and library research skills, and skills in presenting proposals and reports in both written and oral format.

MAppPsy(BA) Degree Requirements

When this degree is the student's first postgraduate qualification in psychology it normally takes two years (full time) to complete. The programme requires 240 points, 120 of which are taken in the first year. These points normally come from five courses in behaviour analysis and two elective courses, as outlined below. Elective courses are selected in consultation with the behaviour analysis programme staff. The second year typically involves a 120-point thesis. To progress to Year 2 of the degree, a B+ average must be maintained. Due to the requirement for thesis supervision, entry into Year 2 of the degree is competitive and dependent on the availability of supervision capacity.

Year 1 MAppPsy(BA) – Course Work

Year 1 of the MAppPsy(BA) normally comprises 120 points of courses. The five core behavioural courses (15-30 points each) must be included. One of the core papers is PSYCH586 Behaviour analysis Practicum (30pts).



The remaining 30pts come from other graduate courses, selected from the list of electives below or in discussion with programme staff. Behaviour analysis courses are offered either on campus (HAM) or online (NET).

Year 2 MAppPsy(BA) - Thesis

Year 2 of the MAppPsy(BA) programme normally comprises a 120-point research thesis on a behavioural topic. The thesis would typically be PSYCH594 (120 pt)

If the student requires further academic background, then they may need to take some courses in Year 2.

Thesis Time Frame

Enrolment in a thesis is normally 12 months full-time (or 24 months for part-time enrolment). The 12 (or 24) month period typically starts at the beginning of the academic year.

The research write-up of the thesis is due in 12 (or 24) months from that date. If the 12 (or 24) months terminates on a weekend day or a NZ public holiday the due date is brought forward to the workday prior to the weekend or holiday.

Summary of MAppPsy(BA) Degree Structure *

Year 1 120 points	PSYCH 538	PSYCH 560	PSYCH 561	PSYCH 577	PSYCH 586	Elective course 500 level	Elective course 500 level
Year 2 120 points	PSYCH 594						

*As at April 2026

Essential Information

This is a two-year degree (or its equivalent part-time). It comprises taught courses and a research component.

Specific requirements are 240 points at 500 level or above, comprising:

YEAR 1

The following compulsory courses (60 points):

- PSYCH538 Applications of Behaviour Analysis (15pts)
- PSYCH560 Applied Behaviour Analysis: Theories and Issues (15pts)
- PSYCH561 Behaviour Analysis: Concepts and Principles (15pts)
- PSYCH577 Research Methods in Behaviour Analysis (15pts)
- PSYCH586 Behaviour Analysis Practicum (30 pts)
- Plus 30 points of approved courses

Plus optional courses in Psychology or in other subjects such as Human Development, Education, Biological Sciences or other course which must be

selected in consultation with the Behaviour Analysis programme.

YEAR 2

Completion of a thesis.

Year 2 of the MAppPsy(BA) programme normally comprises a 120-point research thesis on a behavioural topic. The thesis would typically be PSYCH594 (120 pt).

If the student requires further academic background, then they may need to take some courses in Year 2.

In this case they may enrol in a smaller research thesis – PSYCH593 (90 pt) along with 30 points of courses from Year 1.

We recommend that you read copies of the current course outlines via the University website and communicate with one of the programme staff to discuss the suitability of the course for you.

If you have any queries regarding the programme or supervision, please contact behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

MAppPsy(BA) Entry Requirements

MAppPsy(BA) programme for the two-year degree requires:

- a Bachelor's degree with a major in psychology,
- at least a B+ average (over 300 level courses),
- Some of the possible elective courses for the MAppPsy(BA) may have pre-requisite requirements over and above those required for the behaviour analysis courses and for entry into the programme. When possible, students should check these when selecting their third-year undergraduate papers. PSYCH307 Psychological Research Methods and PSYCH314 Behaviour Analysis or equivalent, is strongly recommended.

Entry into Year 2 of a MAppPsy(BA) programme for the one-year degree requires:

- a completed PGDip(Psych) or a Bachelor's with Honours degree in psychology including the core 500-level courses for the programme,
- an average grade of at least a B+ averaged over their psychology graduate courses,
- availability of supervision for the thesis.

Students accepted into the programme at Year 2 may be required to take specific courses alongside their thesis depending on the content of their PGDip(Psych) or Honours degree courses.

Using a PGDip(Psych) or Honours in psychology (with core courses) as a substitute for Year 1 of the MAppPsy(BA)

Candidates from the University of Waikato whose grades do not meet the requirement or those who have a high enough grade average but who would prefer to do an honours degree, may take the MAppPsy(BA) Behaviour analysis courses as part of a PGDip(Psych) or an honours degree.

These candidates can then apply for entry to the MAppPsy(BA) at Year 2 and can take the MAppPsy(BA) as a one-year degree once their PGDip(Psych) or honours is complete.

If they have some but not all of the Year 1 content, then they may be required to take additional courses as part of Year 2.

Applying for entry to the MAppPsy(BA)

Potential applicants should approach the School of Psychological and Social Sciences for help in planning the most appropriate course of study for their needs and background: behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

Students who are not graduates of Waikato should also include their academic record when contacting the school. Details of each student's course of study must be approved by programme staff prior to the student being accepted into the programme.

**Applications are called for towards the end of the year,
with a deadline of September 15.**

Please apply early via MyWaikato

Applications require the following documentation:

YEAR 1 (240 points) - if new to qualification

- Application for qualification in MyWaikato
- A Statement of Purpose
- Your Curriculum Vitae
- Academic Transcript

- Referee contact details for 2 referees
- Police vetting consent and International Police check

YEAR 2 (120 points) - if new to qualification

- Application for qualification in MyWaikato
- A Statement of Purpose
- Your Curriculum Vitae
- Academic Transcript
- Referee contact details for 2 referees
- Police vetting consent and International Police check

Once university entry criteria have been met, the School of Psychological and Social Sciences will invite you to complete the Internal School selection form which includes:

- Confirmation of completion of core papers
- Written work
- Research Interest Statement

YEAR 2 - if currently completing Year 1

The School of Psychological and Social Sciences will invite you to complete the Internal School selection form which includes:

- A Statement of Purpose
- Your Curriculum Vitae
- Academic Transcript
- Confirmation of completion of core papers
- Referee contact details for 2 referees
- Written work
- Research Interest Statement

All applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's previous academic, work and personal experience, bicultural appreciation, commitment to training, and understanding of the profession. There is no upper or lower age limit. The selection process is undertaken in a way which seeks to attract the best applicants rather than favouring one gender over another. However, given that there is a shortage of men in the profession and a shortage of Māori, if two applicants are equal in all the aforementioned criteria, then gender and/or cultural identity may be considered in choosing an applicant. NZ is a bicultural country which is fortunate to have peoples of many and varied cultures. We welcome applications from a wide range of cultural identities.

1. Application in MyWaikato

Applications for Year 1:

If you are a returning student, please apply via MyWaikato for the MAppPsy(BA). If you are new to the University, please create a student account and apply for the MAppPsy(BA) via MyWaikato.

We encourage applications in MyWaikato for Year 1 as early as possible and if you are successful in gaining entry, to ensure you are fully enrolled, and able to successfully commence study when Trimester A starts.

Applications for Year 2:

If you are a returning student and already enrolled in the MAppPsy(BA) Year 1, you will automatically receive an internal school selection form to complete in B Trimester.

If you are a returning student but have not been enrolled in MAppPsy(BA) previously, please apply via MyWaikato for the MAppPsy(BA).

If you are new to the University, please create a student account and apply for the MAppPsy(BA) via MyWaikato.

Applications for Year 2 are called for in B Trimester – with a deadline for the selection form to be completed by 11.59pm on 15 September.

2. Statement of Purpose

You need to include a statement of purpose with your online selection form. This is an important part of the selection process, so take the time to write it well.

Use it to show who you are, what you've done, and how your experiences have prepared you for this programme. Explain clearly what motivates you to work in this field. Write in a positive and professional way. Be specific and give examples instead of general statements.

Check your spelling and grammar carefully before you submit. Keep each section to no more than 200 words, and the total under 2000 words and submit as a Word or PDF document.

Section	What to cover
Why behaviour analysis?	Your motivation for this field and what inspired your decision to specialise.
Relevant experience	Paid or voluntary work in education, disability, health, community services. research or leadership.

Personal qualities	Empathy, analytical thinking, patience, ethical awareness, teamwork, and openness to super vision.
Commitment to people	Your understanding of and commitment to working ethically and effectively with diverse individuals, families and communities.
Cultural commitment	Connections with Māori and underrepresented communities and your commitment to equity and culturally responsive practice.
Programme commitment	How you will manage the academic, professional and placement requirements of the programme.
Your support network	Personal, whanau, family, or institutional supports that will help you succeed and sustain your professional development.

3. Curriculum Vitae

A current curriculum vitae (CV) that outlines your education, work experience, skills, and achievements. Use it to give a clear, structured overview of your background and show how your experience aligns with the programme you're applying for. Limit your CV to 3 pages.

4. Academic Transcript/Qualifications

Please provide a current official copy of your academic transcript.

5. Referees

You are expected to arrange TWO suitable referees and provide their contact details. A Reference form will be sent out to your referees. Your referees will have 1-2 weeks to submit their reference, so please ensure your referees are available to complete the form.

We would like to see references from the following people:

- Your line manager / supervisor (work related) and/or
- An academic convenor (study related)

Avoid family, friends, relatives, or people who know you only socially.

Remember that referees always have the best intentions but may need to be reminded complete their form within the appropriate timeframe.

Applications with FEWER THAN TWO references will not be considered by the selection panel, so please try to ensure that your referees have completed their form.

6. Police vetting consent and international police check

Police vetting consent

Applicants who have lived in New Zealand prior to the start date of the Master of Applied Psychology are required to complete NZ Police Vetting. International students who have not yet arrived in New Zealand will also need to complete NZ police vetting.

You will be sent an email containing information regarding completing the police vetting consent form once you have received a conditional offer. You must upload the completed form with a scanned copy of your identity documents into your [MyWaikato](#) portal. This will get your Police Vetting underway. The [Vulnerable Children's Act 2014](#) requires us to sight your original identity documents which means you will need to bring these to the [Student Centre](#) on the Hamilton or Tauranga Campus before you start your classes.

International police check

Applicants who have lived overseas are also required to complete an International Criminal History Check for every country they have lived in for twelve months or more over the last 7 years. Note that this must have been issued within one year of the start date for the Master of Applied Psychology. You should complete this process as soon as possible and upload the documents to your [MyWaikato](#) portal. Please follow [New Zealand Immigration guidance](#) to find out how to obtain a police certificate from a specific country.

Written Work – Year 2 entry only

Please upload a document you have written in the past year. This document should be something you wrote yourself.

- If you have completed a dissertation or thesis upload a PDF version.
- If you are, or have recently been, a student in the past year, upload a written assignment.
- If you have recently been in the workforce, upload a piece of professional writing.

Do not upload something with co-authors: you should be the only author of this document.

Research Interest Statement – Year 2 entry only

Your research interest statement helps us to understand your proposed research focus and your readiness for postgraduate research.

If you have not already done so, please get in touch and have a discussion with a potential supervisor whose research interests align with your own – [Academic](#)

Staff List. Please ensure you contact an academic that is either a Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor.

How to approach a potential supervisor:

Email them briefly to introduce yourself, mention your background, and explain what interests you about their research.

Attach your CV and a short research idea that aligns with their research, and keep the tone professional, clear, and respectful of their time. A potential supervisor cannot guarantee they will supervise your thesis.

The Behaviour Analysis programme and the School's Postgraduate Committee decide supervisor allocations. They review all applications before making decisions. Final supervision arrangements are confirmed as part of this process.

Keep your statement to no more than 1000 words and address each of the following points:

Section	What to cover
Your research focus	Identify the specific issue, problem or research question you want to investigate.
Why this topic matters	Explain the significance of your chosen topic. Describe why it warrants further research and how it contributes to existing literature, professional practice or societal needs.
Your proposed approach	Describe how you would address your research question. You might outline your broad methodological ideas or theoretical perspective.
Potential challenges	Acknowledge any methodological, ethical, practical or resource-related challenges your research may face. Reflect on how these might be managed.
Your research experience	Tell us about any prior research experience that is relevant to your proposed topic.
Supervisor alignment	Identify an academic from our programme whose research interests align with your own. Use the find an expert tool Find an Expert . Please contact a potential supervisor before you apply. Suitable supervisors hold the title of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor or Professor.

The Procedure We Follow

All applications are screened by the programme administrator in the first instance to ensure all documentation is included before passing the application on to the selection committee. The selection committee will consider the applications. The selection committee includes programme staff and practicing psychologists.

Offers of admission to the programme will be extended after applications have been considered. Some offers may be made contingent on the student/you agreeing to complete further coursework. If further coursework is expected, it should usually be completed within Year 1, and you will receive a detailed offer letter from the programme regarding which courses are required.

After receiving an offer, applicants have until a specified deadline to accept the offer. After this date the offer is automatically withdrawn, and the place will be offered to another candidate. We ask that you provide us with written acceptance by email within the deadline.

All unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email as soon as possible.

The panel's decision is final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (Applied Behaviour Analysis) - PGDipPracPsych(ABA)

The **PGDipPracPsych(ABA)** provides those with Masters or Doctorate degrees containing a substantial component of behaviour analysis with:

- a quality learning experience for making the transition from academic knowledge to professional practice;
- a pathway for registration as a psychologist under the 'General' scope with the NZ Psychologists Board under the Health Practitioners Competency Assurance Act (HPCA Act);
- a means of achieving bi-cultural competence as an important component of work as a psychologist and exhibiting a commitment to the Te Tiriti o Waitangi throughout their training and professional development.

The mission of the ABA internship training programme at the University of Waikato is to collaborate with the professional community to train culturally and clinically competent, thoughtful, and reflective psychologists specialising in ABA who will contribute to the health and well-being of their communities.

Graduates of the PGDipPracPsych(ABA) will have developed practical skills in applying behavioural principles to a range of behaviour problems in their area of specialty, including experience with functional analyses of problem behaviour, and developing and applying appropriate programmes for behaviour change. They will be able to design techniques for assessment and data collection, implement behaviour change programmes and adjust them in the light of any problems that arise. They will be competent in addressing legal, ethical, cultural (in the context of bi-culturalism consistent with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles) and professional issues while abiding by the relevant guidelines for responsible conduct under the NZ Psychologists Board. At the end of the programme, graduates will have awareness, knowledge, and skills in positive behavioural approaches to dealing with challenging behaviour and in clinical applications of behaviour analysis.



Candidates for this qualification must enrol and follow an approved programme of study in the Division of Arts, Law, Psychology and Social Sciences for at least one year of full-time study, or not more than three years of part-time study.

The PGDipPracPsych(ABA) is accredited by the NZ Psychologists Board as providing the training required for and supervision of 1500 hours of professional experience required for students in NZ wishing to register as Psychologists in NZ under the NZ Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/regulation-health-and-disability-system/health-practitioners-competence-assurance-act>) in NZ.

Students must have appropriate internship employment and have their field supervisor arranged to enter the programme (see entry requirements).

The University of Waikato only offers PSYCH553 to interns in practice in NZ.

Core Courses for PGDipPracPsych(ABA)

PSYCH551D: Case Study Analysis in Applied Psychology (45 pts)

This course teaches students to critically analyse and apply theoretical knowledge of behaviour analysis to psychological practice within a science-practitioner model, aiming to develop effective and culturally sensitive practitioners. This paper can be taken as a stand-alone paper with permission from the paper convenor. Participating in this paper requires students to have access to a practicum placement, employment, or voluntary work that provides opportunities to practice behaviour analysis.

PSYCH552A Ethical Issues in Psychology (15pts)

This course provides the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills concerning ethical issues in the professional practice in Psychology, specifically in applied behaviour analysis. This paper can be taken as a stand-alone paper with permission from the paper convenor.

PSYCH553X: The Practice of Psychology (60pts)

This paper is available to students enrolled in the PGDipPracPsych(ABA) programme or by special permission from the convenor only. It provides supervision for the internship. Undertaking PSYCH553 requires regular attendance at supervision meetings and regular maintenance of a professional practice log. PSYCH553 requires the student to complete 1500 hours of supervised professional practice over a year if taken full-time (part-time enrolment is also possible).

PSYCH552 runs for A trimester, PSYCH551 is taught during the D-teaching period (A and B trimesters), and PSYCH553 runs for the full 12 months of the year with breaks during and between the trimesters, and a short break for the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

For all three papers, students are required to attend classes, workshops and (individual and group) supervision in real time. These are taught in a variety of teaching modalities that include in-person attendance at the university, videoconferencing platforms, and in-person experiences at off-campus locations such as a marae for runanga-based learning. The programme starts at the beginning of the academic year which begins at the end of February. If fulltime, the programme requires the person has every Monday afternoon, 1pm to 5pm (except public holidays) available for the University-provided group supervision, case conferences and for the classes.



PGDipPracPsych(ABA) Structure

The PGDipPracPsych(ABA) is a one-year full-time or two-year part-time postgraduate diploma worth 120 points. The programme includes three courses that are normally taken simultaneously to complete the diploma.

120 points	PSYCH 551	PSYCH 552	PSYCH 553
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*As at April 2026

Essential Information

All applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's previous academic, work and personal experience, bicultural appreciation, commitment to training, and understanding of the profession. There is no upper or lower age limit. The selection process is undertaken in a way which seeks to attract the best applicants rather than favouring one gender over another. However, given that there is a shortage of men in the profession and a shortage of Māori, if two applicants are equal in all the aforementioned

criteria, then gender and/or cultural identity may be considered in choosing an applicant. NZ is a bicultural country which is fortunate to have peoples of many and varied cultures. We welcome applications from a wide range of cultural identities,

Internships and supervision arrangements must be approved by the programme convenor prior to enrolling and registering as an intern psychologist.

An acceptable internship is full- or part-time work that fits the NZ Psychologist Board's definition of psychology and, if applicable, the Behaviour Analyst Certification Board's definition of applied behaviour analysis.

As places are limited, selection is a competitive process. Successful interns will be offered a place into the programme with the intention that their internship will start in A Trimester. Those who are offered a place, will have a time limit to accept or risk their place being offered to someone else.

We recommend that you read copies of the present course outlines by request to the School of Psychological and Social Sciences and communicate with one of the programme staff to discuss the suitability of the course for you. For all the papers listed below interns are expected to enrol in the papers concurrently (at the same time). If additional time is required to complete the paper requirements, subsequent enrolments into the relevant paper will apply.

- PSYCH551 Case Study Analysis in Applied Psychology (45 pts)
- PSYCH552 Ethical Issues in Psychology (15 pts)
- PSYCH553 The Practice of Psychology ABA (60 pts)

If you have any queries regarding the programme, supervision, or internship, please contact the Programme administrator – behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

PGDipPracPsych(ABA) Entry Requirements

In addition to fulfilling the requirements set out in the appropriate University of Waikato regulations, students must meet the School of Psychological and Social Sciences requirements for entry into the programme. The School of Psychological and Social Sciences requirements are:

- Completion of core Behaviour Analysis papers or equivalent
- Completion of a Masters thesis of at least 90 points
- A master's or doctoral degree specialising in behaviour analysis
The master's degree must include a significant research component (90 points or greater) - the MPPBA alone does not qualify.

Where a candidate has not completed a named degree in behaviour analysis, the School of Psychological and Social Sciences will assess whether sufficient graduate-level papers and a thesis/dissertation appropriate to the specialisation have been taken to allow entry. Students may be required to take extra course work prior to or concurrently with the programme.

- Ongoing, full-time or part-time employment (either paid or unpaid) in NZ which provides the opportunity to practice behaviour analysis within an organisation that allows this work to be used as an internship.

Whether the employment requirement is met will be determined by the School of Psychological and Social Sciences from the job description. A signed letter of agreement from the candidate's organisation/manager is also required.

- The availability of field supervision for PSYCH553.
Field supervision must be from a Registered Psychologist.
- The availability of a place in the programme.
The programme currently accepts up to 10 applicants for entry into the programme each year.
- Police vetting and Vulnerable Childre's Act 2014 checks.
- Annual Practising Licence (APC) – registration as an intern psychologist with the New Zealand Psychologists Board.

Entry is subject to the approval of the Chair of the School of Psychological and Social Sciences.

Applying for Entry into the PGDipPracPsych(ABA)

Before applying formally for entry into this programme, candidates should contact the School of Psychological and Social Sciences to discuss their plans, including the suitability of the employment and the availability of appropriate supervision - behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz . They will be put in touch with the appropriate staff to talk about this.

**Applications are called for from B trimester,
with a deadline of September 15.**

Please apply early via MyWaikato as there is a 2-step application process

Once accepted into this programme the student must apply to the NZ Psychologists Registration Board to register as an Intern Psychologist (see NZ Psychologists Board web site for fees and details of how to apply for this):

www.psychologistsboard.org.nz

Applications will require the following documentation:

- Application for qualification in MyWaikato

Once university entry criteria have been met, the School of Psychological and Social Sciences will invite you to complete the Internal School selection form which includes:

- A Statement of Purpose
- Your Curriculum Vitae
- Academic Transcript
- Thesis Abstract
- Referee contact details for 2 referees
- Police vetting consent and international police check
- An agency letter of support from an employer to confirm the employment is appropriate for the programme and details of field supervision
- An onsite supervisor's Curriculum Vitae
- Job description

All applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's previous academic, work and personal experience, bicultural appreciation, commitment to training, and understanding of the profession. There is no upper or lower age limit. The selection process is undertaken in a way which seeks to attract the best applicants rather than favouring one gender over another. However, given that there is a shortage of men in the profession and a shortage of Māori, if two applicants are equal in all the aforementioned criteria, then gender and/or cultural identity may be considered in choosing an applicant. NZ is a bicultural country which is fortunate to have peoples of many and varied cultures. We welcome applications from a wide range of cultural identities.

1. Application in MyWaikato

If you are a returning student, please apply via MyWaikato for the PGDipPracPsych(ABA).

If you are new to the University, please create a student account and submit the University application for the PGDipPracPsych(ABA) via MyWaikato. Once you have applied via MyWaikato, your application will be assessed to see that you meet the university entry requirements for the programme.

2. Internal School Selection form

Please complete the selection form (linked in your conditional offer or sent directly to you by the school) and include your most current personal details along with any other required documentation.

3. Academic Transcript/Qualifications

Please provide a current official copy of your academic transcript.

4. Curriculum Vitae

A current curriculum vitae (CV) that outlines your education, work experience (including voluntary experiences), skills, and achievements. Use it to give a clear, structured overview of your background and show how your experience aligns with the programme you're applying for. Please do not include general letters of recommendation from past employers.

Limit your CV to 3 pages.

5. Masters or PhD Thesis/Abstract

Please upload a copy of your master's and/or doctoral thesis/abstract to the application.

6. Pre-requisite courses

Indicate which pre-requisite courses you have completed (or are completing). If you have not completed the core courses at Waikato, you will be asked to list the equivalent courses you have taken and provide paper outlines for these. An example of a paper outline: [PSYCH560-24B \(HAM\)](#)

7. Referees

You are expected to arrange TWO suitable referees and provide their contact details. A Reference form will be sent out to your referees. Your referees will have 1-2 weeks to submit their reference, so please ensure your referees are available to complete the form.

We would like to see references from the following people:

- Your line manager / supervisor (work related) and/or
- An academic convenor (study related)

Avoid family, friends, relatives, or people who know you only socially.

Remember that referees always have the best intentions but may need to be reminded complete their form within the appropriate timeframe.

Applications with FEWER THAN TWO references will not be considered by the selection panel, so please try to ensure that your referees have completed their form.

8. Statement of Purpose

You need to include a statement of purpose with your online selection form. This is an important part of the selection process, so take the time to write it well.

Use it to show who you are, what you've done, and how your experiences have prepared you for this programme. Explain clearly what motivates you to work in this field. Write in a positive and professional way. Be specific and give examples instead of general statements.

Check your spelling and grammar carefully before you submit. Keep each section to no more than 200 words, and the total under 2000 words and submit as a Word or PDF document.

Section	What to cover
Why behaviour analysis?	Your motivation for this field and what inspired your decision to specialise.
Relevant experience	Paid or voluntary work in education, disability, health, community services. research or leadership.
Personal qualities	Empathy, analytical thinking, patience, ethical awareness, teamwork, and openness to supervision.
Commitment to people	Your understanding of and commitment to working ethically and effectively with diverse individuals, families and communities.
Cultural commitment	Connections with Māori and underrepresented communities and your commitment to equity and culturally responsive practice.
Programme commitment	How you will manage the academic, professional and placement requirements of the programme.
Your support network	Personal, whanau, family, or institutional supports that will help you succeed and sustain your professional development.

9. Police vetting consent and international police check

Police vetting consent

Applicants who have lived in New Zealand prior to the start date of the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology are required to complete NZ Police Vetting. International students who have not yet arrived in New Zealand will also need to complete NZ police vetting.

You will be sent an email containing information regarding completing the police vetting consent form once you have received a conditional offer. The [Vulnerable Children's Act 2014](#) requires us to sight your original identity documents which means you will need to bring these to the [Student Centre](#) on the Hamilton or Tauranga Campus before you start your classes.

International police check

Applicants who have lived overseas are also required to complete an International Criminal History Check for every country they have lived in for twelve months or more over the last 7 years. Note that this must have been issued within one year of the start date for the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology. Please follow [New Zealand Immigration guidance](#) to find out how to obtain a police certificate from a specific country.

10. Position description

Please upload your Position description for the role you will be working in during your internship.

11. An Agency Letter of Support

A Letter of support from the employer to confirm the employment is appropriate for the programme and details of field supervision. Please arrange for your prospective internship organisation to complete a Letter of Support (Page 47/48) for your application. This letter outlines expectations of both the student and organisation, including permission for students to attend regular classes through to supervision requirements. Please upload this letter to the application.

12. An onsite supervisor's Curriculum Vitae

Please upload your external supervisor's CV to the application. If you have a second supervisor, please upload their CV to the application.

Appropriate Clients and Placements

The placement and job description must allow the intern to undertake the required amount of practice of psychology that can be classified as applied behaviour analysis. The most important aspect of employment is the opportunity to practice psychology and to learn to apply behaviour analysis principles in changing behaviour and this will be evaluated by the University prior to acceptance.

The range of clients and problems must include opportunities to undertake behavioural assessments (including functional analyses), designing, overseeing and monitoring behaviour change programmes, changing challenging behaviours (e.g., aggression, self-injurious behaviour), skill development (such as independent living skills,

communication, educational skills, health care skills and social skills), and teaching behaviour management skills (e.g., parent, caregiver, teacher, and staff training in ABA).

The Procedure We Follow

All MyWaikato applications are screened by Admissions in the first instance to ensure university entry has been met. The selection form link will be sent out in the conditional offer. The internal school selection form will then be screened by the programme administrator to ensure all documentation is included before passing the application on to the selection committee. The selection committee will consider the applications. The selection committee includes programme staff and practicing psychologists. If you have not been successful at this stage, you will be informed as soon as possible.

Selection Interviews

Selection interviews will take place in the School of Psychological and Social Sciences over a three to four-day period. The selection process may include several tasks including an interview. Details of the selection procedure will be sent to those who are shortlisted.

The selection committee will interview applicants who have progressed to the next stage. Dates for interviews will be communicated to applicants after the selection closing date.

After the Interview

Following interviews, second conditional or unconditional offers of admission to the programme will be extended. Some offers may be made contingent on you agreeing to complete further coursework in the first years of training.

If we are not able to consider you further for admission, we will notify you of this as soon as possible.

If further coursework is expected, it should be completed within the first year of the programme. After receiving an offer, applicants have until a specified deadline to accept the offer. After this date the offer will be withdrawn, and the place will be offered to another candidate. We ask that you provide us with written acceptance by email and accept your offer in MyWaikato.

All unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing as soon as possible.

The panel's decision is final, and no correspondence can be entered into.

Suggested Template for Letter of Support

Agency Letterhead

Date:

Re: Letter of support for student's name to complete PGDipPracPsych(ABA)

Agency Name agrees that **student's name** may use their position in this **agency/organisation** as an internship for the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (ABA) (PGDipPracPsych(ABA))

Agency Name recognises that for this student to be able to complete the 12-month/24 month PGDipPracPsych (ABA) programme at the University of Waikato, while working at **Agency Name**, requires that **Agency Name** give:

- permission for them to attend regular classes for this course: every Monday afternoon (university holidays included – but not public holidays). *This bullet point is required if the agency employs the candidate full time and the course cuts into normal work hours.*
- permission for them to present ongoing work as part of the supervision process and to present some of the work completed as anonymous case-studies for the purpose of examination (provided consent is obtained from relevant parties)
- permission (provided consent is obtained from relevant parties) for them to use recordings of their interventions and assessments or parts of interventions and assessments to obtain feedback on their performance. These will be seen by the University supervisors in the course.

Agency Name also recognises that the programme requires **full-time employment for 12 months / part-time employment for 24 months** for them to complete the internship or practicum and that there be appropriately qualified on-site supervision (and that this would normally be the day-to-day supervision the agency provides but may also involve arranged professional off-site supervision by psychology consultants). One supervisor should be a registered psychologist.

Agency Name will provide **all / some** of the work hours *required (when the candidate is not full time with the agency the number of hours per week can be specified and when not in permanent employment with the agency the number of weeks of employment offered can also be specified)*

Agency Name agrees to the University of Waikato providing additional supervision as part of the Programme and is willing for the University of Waikato PGDipPracPsych(ABA)

programme staff to liaise with the on-site supervisor and any other supervisors involved with the student.

Please sign if all requirements are agreed to: *(insert appropriate title(s) below)*

Agency Manager Title:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Internship Requirements

PSYCH553 The Practice of Psychology is part of the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (ABA) (PGDipPracPsych (ABA)) in the School of Psychological and Social Sciences at the University of Waikato. This course requires part- or full-time work (an internship) with an organisation providing services meeting the New Zealand Psychologists Board's definition of psychology, the opportunity to work from a behavioural perspective. If the applicant for this course is accepted, the internship organisation and intern agree that:

- The intern will work from the organisation in the proposed role for the agreed time period
- The intern will need to attend (in person or via video conferencing) coursework and supervision sessions at the University of Waikato every working Monday from 1-5pm (excluding public holidays)
- The intern will need to attend individual supervision sessions with a University supervisor as required in person or via video conferencing.
- The intern will need to discuss their work with University supervisors, examiners, and other interns
- The intern will ensure the work they submit for their examination meets ethical requirements (including anonymity and confidentiality)
- The intern will need to use video and audio recordings of their work during supervision and coursework sessions so long as consent is obtained
- An on-site supervisor must be available at appropriate times for day-to-day supervision issues (or other appropriate person when this person is not available)
- There may be more than one person involved in on-site supervision, one of these should be a registered psychologist
- The on-site supervisor(s) and University supervisors will need to exchange information about the intern's work as needed from time to time.

Information about this Programme

Director

Dr Amarie Carnett

amarie.carnett@waikato.ac.nz

University supervisor

Dr Victoria Burney

victoria.burney@waikato.ac.nz

Administration

Programme Administrator

behavioural.psychology@waikato.ac.nz

What is the Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology (ABA)?

The diploma name is abbreviated to PGDipPracPsych(ABA). The “ABA” stands for “applied behaviour analysis” and marks the diploma as having a behavioural focus.

Graduates with a master’s or doctoral degree in psychology with an emphasis on behaviour analysis can enrol as interns in the PGDipPracPsych(ABA) for one year (full time) or two years (part time) to become registered as psychologists with the New Zealand Psychologists Board.

What does the programme involve?

This is a flexible programme that involves attending classes, cultural workshops, course work submitted on-line, 1500 hours of supervised practice, university-based group and individual supervision, on-site (field) supervision, completion of university assessment within context of internship placements, keeping and submitting a practice and case log, and a final oral examination.

The programme consists of two courses and an internship. All may be part-time or fulltime. If fulltime, the programme requires the person has **every** Monday afternoon, 1pm to 5pm (except public holidays), available for the University-provided group supervision and for the classes. These are taught in a variety of teaching modalities that include in-person attendance at the University, video conferencing platforms, and in-person experiences off-campus such as marae for Runanga-based learning. On-line course work is also required, and this is completed in the person’s own time. University-provided individual supervision (which may be in person or through video conference) occurs by arrangement.

Registration as a Psychologist in NZ

The programme is accredited by the NZ Psychologists Board as appropriate for registration as a Psychologist under the 'General' scope of practice in NZ.

Supervision

The University provides group supervision weekly and individual supervision as required. An appropriate on-site or field supervisor must be arranged prior to someone starting in the programme.

Weekly field supervision may be provided by one or more people and is often provided by an already-existing staff member in the internship organisation.

There should be at least one field supervisor who *must be an experienced registered psychologist with knowledge and expertise in Applied Behaviour Analysis* who takes clinical responsibility for the person's case work. This may be someone already employed by the organisation or agency or may be someone employed by the organisation especially for this role. The university approves field supervisors during the process of approving the internship and requires the field supervisor's CV for this purpose.

What time of year does the internship have to start and how long is it?

The programme is 12 months long and begins at the start of the A trimester. A suitably qualified person can begin once: the details of the internship have been finalised (i.e., the position description and the field supervision have been approved by the University and the organisation has indicated its approval), the person has registered as an intern psychologist with the NZ Psychologists Board, and they have been selected through competitive entry into the programme.

Can an internship be started before the master's or PhD thesis is marked?

A person should normally have completed an appropriate master's or doctoral degree prior to starting in the programme and prior to registering as an Intern Psychologist. However, once a person has completed all their work for this degree and once the thesis is submitted for assessment they may start in the programme. If their qualifying degree is not being undertaken at the University of Waikato then they must provide evidence the thesis has been submitted and that all other work is completed.

Enrolment in the PGDipPracPsych(ABA) in these cases is conditional on completing the required degree. The qualification will not be awarded unless the person holds the appropriate master's or doctoral degree.

What kinds of positions are appropriate for internships?

Someone may already be employed in a position that would be appropriate for an internship or they may need to arrange an internship (paid or unpaid).

Existing positions

Someone employed as behaviour specialists, behaviour advisors, or behaviour therapists or in a position known by another name and who works with issues such as problem or challenging behaviour, the development of new behaviours, rehabilitation, changing behaviour or other such problems, may be eligible to join this programme. They could be working with people of any age and with people with a range of abilities. They may be working directly with clients or working with the family, support staff, or those who care for the clients. They would continue to work full-time in the same role while undertaking the programme and would use their ongoing work as the internship. Such interns develop their skills while undertaking their normal work.

The employee requires Monday afternoons for supervision and classes. How this works is negotiated between the person and their organisation. It could be, for example, that they are required to make the time up on other days or they may be allowed that time as part of their professional development.

The benefits to the organization

The employing organisation benefits by up-skilling their employee so they gain the skills and knowledge required to become registered as Psychologists in NZ. It gains University input into the supervision of the employee. The organisation also benefits from the employee's access to university staff, to the University Library and to the electronic databases. The access allows the employee to get up to date with research in their area, to conduct evidence-based practice, and to develop their skills.

Arranged internship positions

Some people find appropriate employment specifically for an internship. This may be as a one-year contract for the internship or it may be the employer wishes to continue to employ the person once the internship has finished and may plan this from the start.

The programme requires the person be available for 4 hours on a Monday afternoon (1pm to 5pm) and that they can complete 1500 hour of appropriate practice either over one year full-time or two-years part time.

Appropriate roles for people in this programme

Internships have ranged widely and can occur in education, schools, corrections, mental health services, disability, social services, geriatric services or elsewhere. The important point is that the internship allows the person to practice the application of psychology from a behavioural perspective and with appropriate supervision.

Appropriate roles can involve working directly with clients or working with clients through families, support staff, carers, parents, teachers, teacher aids or through others who are involved with the client. They can involve direct practice with clients or consultation.

An internship involves assessment, case formulation, data collection, developing behavioural support plans and interventions, through collaboration with families,

teachers, other professionals, etc. In some organisations roles that have been filled by other practitioners, such as teacher aids, may be suitable provided they allow the person to undertake these tasks.

Sometimes a person is employed in a role where the position description fits the requirements of the internship. Sometimes a person is employed in a role that would normally be a support role, such as a teacher-aid or other support worker, and the position description has to be modified so that the role includes practice relevant for training as a psychologist, for example, by including programme planning and implementation and assessment, if it does not already do so.

The University provides supervision that fits with each intern's role as described in their position description. Regardless of the exact role, the following are emphasised during supervision: evidence- based practice, cultural safety and competence, scientist-practitioner approach, behavioural focus, and sustainability.

Roles must fit the *New Zealand Psychologists Board's* 'General' scope of practice described below. In some situations, the person may complete hours of practice over and above their paid time that will count towards practice hours.

According to the *New Zealand Psychologists Board*:

A psychologist within a general scope is defined as rendering or offering to render to individuals, groups, organisations or the public any psychological service involving the application of psychological knowledge, principles, methods and procedures of understanding, predicting ameliorating or influencing behaviour, affect or cognition.

Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards.

Arranging an internship

The potential intern is responsible for negotiating the internship. Internships need to be with organisations that provide, or intend to provide, services that fit under the rubric of "psychology" and have a behavioural focus. If the person is already employed in a suitable position, they need to negotiate with their organisation to obtain its support for using the position for this purpose. As already mentioned, some may also seek a position especially for the purpose of an internship. In both cases the potential intern works with the organisation to complete an application for the course: *PSYCH553X The Practice of Psychology (Internship)* of the PGDipPracPsych(ABA). As part of this process an on-site or field supervisor needs to be arranged.

University staff can provide the organisation with the information it may need and can address any questions that arise. Once the internship has been approved by the organisation and the University, the intern must apply to the NZ Psychologists Board to register as an intern psychologist.

Who can be an on-site or field supervisor?

University supervisors provide supervision for matters that arise during supervision sessions. The intern also requires weekly on-site supervision. They need an on-site supervisor to take responsibility for their practice. The programme is required by the NZ Psychologists Board to approve this supervisor who must be experienced registered psychologists with knowledge and expertise in Applied Behaviour Analysis. Interns also require supervision to manage their case load and/or to help deal with day-to-day issues and crises. These roles may be taken by one or more people. As mentioned previously, the on-site supervisor can be employed in or external to the organisation.

What support and resources are provided by the university?

All interns receive an email account, access to the University library and online journals, access to the School of Psychology's psychological assessment library, technical support and resources through the technicians in the School of Psychology, supervision from staff in group and individual format, and all other support expected from a university.

What are the competencies of a Psychologist?

The *New Zealand Psychologists Board* specifies the following competencies that are developed during the internship:

Discipline, Knowledge, Scholarship and
Research Diversity, Culture and the Treaty
of Waitangi Professional, Legal and Ethical
Practice Framing, Measuring and Planning
Intervention and Service Implementation
Communication
Professional and Community Relations, Consultation, Collaboration
Reflective Practice
Supervision



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