

Accreditation Report



The
British
Psychological
Society

Membership and Professional Training Board

Division of Educational and Child Psychology Training Committee

SECTION A: Cover Sheet

Name of Institution:	University College London
Title of Programme:	Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology (DECPsy)
Length and Mode of Attendance:	3 years full-time
Relationship to Chartered Status:	Trainees who successfully complete the doctorate are eligible to achieve the status of Chartered Educational Psychologist.
Date of Visit:	19 and 20 February 2009
Historical Information:	The Doctorate was first accredited from the 2005/06 cohort.
Period of Accreditation:	2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14
Date of next full visit:	2013/14
Date of Follow-up Visit/Action:	Not applicable
Chair of Training Committee:	Tony Tarrant
Membership of Accreditation Team	Trevor Holme (Convenor), Margaret Tunbridge, Dr Jane Yeomans and Pat Bennett
Programme Directors:	Professor Norah Frederickson and Dr Sandra Dunsmuir
Date report approved by the DECPTC:	6 April 2009
Date report approved by the MPTB:	18 May 2009

SECTION B: Summary of Outcome

Recommendation to the Membership and Professional Training Board

The Division of Educational and Child Psychology Training Committee is pleased to recommend to the Membership and Professional Training Board that the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology that is taught at University College London continues to be accredited. This accreditation covers five trainee cohorts, commencing with the 2009/10 cohort.

Commendations

The accreditation team noted the following aspects of good practice and wished to commend the programme for:

1. the quality, clarity, organisation and consistency of the programme documentation for all stakeholders (*passim*);
2. the way in which the learning outcomes explicitly underpin, inform and direct the teaching and learning (para. 3.1 & 4.1);
3. the research methods element of the programme which is an excellent example of the integration of practice and research; this is further supported by the innovative use of local authority research advisors (para. 8.1);
4. use of problem based learning (PBL) as a mechanism for integrating theory with practice. This approach to teaching and learning is clearly valued by trainees and local authority staff and is an innovative way of developing critical reflective practice and research (para. 4.1);
5. the way in which the programme addresses and embraces diversity through selection, placement requirements and curriculum (para. 4.2 & 13.1); and
6. the innovative and responsive IT provision and support (para. 5.4 & 6.2).

Conditions

None

Recommendations

None

SECTION C: Report Text

1. Context and Background

- 1.1 Acting on behalf of the Division of Educational and Child Psychology Training Committee, an accreditation team visited the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, which is taught at University College London, on 19 and 20 February 2009. The purpose of the visit was to establish the programme's fulfilment of the 2007, revised 2008 accreditation criteria.

2. The Programme

- 2.1 The programme is based within the Department of Psychology. The programme is structured to enable educational psychologists in training effectively to integrate theory, research and practice. The accreditation team was impressed with the quality and presentation of the documentation submitted in advance of the visit. The points of clarification and the issues raised during the visit are detailed in this report according to the sections in the accreditation criteria.
- 2.2 The accreditation team was pleased to hear that the principal educational psychologists had been impressed with the quality of UCL trainees; the quality of their research and their professionalism. They have high levels of confidence in taking trainees on placement, because expectations of them and the trainees are clear.

3. The Required Learning Outcomes

- 3.1 The accreditation team noted the explicit statement of the educational aims of the programme, which articulate the formal teaching, practical experience and research that trainees will need to undertake, and the assessments they will need to complete if they are to demonstrate achievement of the programme's intended learning outcomes. The learning outcomes for the programme are based on those specified in the accreditation criteria, and in turn map very clearly on to each unit in the programme. It was agreed that the way in which these learning outcomes underpin, inform and direct the teaching and learning is a strength of the programme and ensures that it is coherent for trainees and tutors.

4. The Structure of Training

- 4.1 It was clear to the accreditation team that the programme provides a broad, balanced, and integrated experience in training that enables trainee educational psychologists to achieve the required learning outcomes. The innovative use of Problem Based Learning (PBL) as the principal approach for the programme was discussed in further detail. Practice problems are used as the starting point for learning. The tutors support trainees to draw out actively the relevant information required to deal with the problem scenario from library research and other sources. The trainees and local authority staff value this approach to learning. It is an effective way of integrating theory and practice. In addition, PBL allows trainees to develop a range of skills such as critical analysis, self-directed learning strategies and team working. The programme team hold seminars, sometimes with leading experts, which provide trainees with overviews in key areas related to the problem scenario and opportunities for discussion.
- 4.2 The programme team gave an overview of the way in which the teaching and learning and professional experience activities provide broad and balanced coverage of the working contexts of educational psychologists, including the full range of clients, and experience of working with culturally diverse populations. The programme team explained that there were fewer opportunities for trainees in working with the post-16 age group but that the competency framework ensures that each trainee covers different working contexts of educational psychologists. The structure of training also focuses on allowing trainees to build upon the competencies developed from one year to the next. During the third year of training trainees are required to work with a wider range of client groups in multi-agency contexts and voluntary and independent providers. The competencies for the third year also encourage self-reflection. The practice tutors/supervisors highlighted that the frameworks that trainees learn in year one and the way in which they are carried forward to the second and third year is one of the strengths of the programme.

5. Underpinning Human Resources

5.1 The accreditation team was satisfied that the requirements laid out in the accreditation criteria were met. All professional development tutors are practising educational psychologists working within Local Authority settings. The programme team comprises 5.7 FTE academic staff in total, as follows:

Dr Shama Ali (0.4 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor; Practice Tutor
Dr Susan Birch (0.2 FTE)	Thesis Tutor
Dr Roger Booker (0.2 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor
Sarah Challis (0.2 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor
Prof. Tony Cline (0.2 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor
Owen Davis (0.4 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor; Practice Tutor
Dr Sandra Dunsmuir (0.9 FTE)	Programme Co-Director
Prof. Norah Frederickson (0.9 FTE)	Programme Co-Director
Beverley Graham (0.5 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor; Practice Tutor
Shani Khan (0.1 FTE)	Practice Tutor
Dr Robin Murphy (0.2 FTE)	Research Tutor
Dr Dino Petrides	Assistant Director (Research)
Dr Michelle Sancho (0.4 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor
Dr Juliet Starbuck (0.4 FTE)	Academic & Professional Tutor
Christina Cargill (0.1 FTE)	Practice Tutor

5.2 The roles and responsibilities of the Programme Co-Directors are clearly laid out. Furthermore, the accreditation team felt that the quality of leadership and management of the programme was excellent. It was also noted that the contingency planning in terms of staff sickness or absence was carefully considered.

5.3 The accreditation team was interested to hear about the most recent team development day, which was jointly organised with tutors from the University of Manchester and Tavistock and Portman. The day was jointly planned and led by Professor Norah Frederickson, Dr Kevin Woods and Dr Mark Fox. The purpose of this team development day was to discuss the evaluation of research doctoral theses and conducting viva voce examinations.

5.4 The programme is supported by 2 FTE administrators. Technical support staff are also involved in the programme, particularly for ICT. The trainees appreciated this support and reported that any problems encountered with their laptops were resolved promptly.

6. Underpinning Physical Resources

6.1 The accreditation team had the opportunity to tour the physical resources underpinning the programme, which were deemed adequate. The management team advised that there are potential opportunities to acquire additional suitable accommodation.

6.2 All trainees are provided with a personal laptop and webcam for the duration of the programme. The laptops are particularly useful for trainees in accessing the virtual learning environment (Moodle), electronic library resources, databases for the Problem Based Learning exercises and research work. In addition, high levels of contact with tutors and other trainees are maintained, particularly in years two and three of the programme.

6.3 The accreditation team viewed the extensive web-based resources, which effectively support trainees, tutors and supervisors. A knowledgeable member of staff is assigned to manage, update and deal with any problems related to the virtual learning environment. The frequency of usage of Moodle is also monitored for trainees, as well as for tutors and supervisors.

7. Development and Support of Trainee Educational Psychologists

- 7.1 In relation to the development and support for trainees it was learned that each trainee is allocated a professional development tutor, who works as an academic and professional tutor on the programme. Regular tutorials are held in order to monitor and support the development and progress of the trainees throughout their training. Each trainee is also assigned a practice tutor and a research thesis supervisor, with whom regular tutorials are scheduled. Trainees are encouraged to use self-reflection, which aids development and progression. Moreover, the programme team provides opportunities for trainees to receive formative feedback throughout the programme. The trainees praised the tutors for the level of support provided to them. In particular, the tutors tend to have an open-door policy, and the trainees felt that the tutorial time available to them was good. It was learned that additional face-to-face or telephone tutorials can be scheduled if necessary.

8. Research

- 8.1 The accreditation team felt that the research methods training on the programme was excellent and there were explicit learning objectives for the research activity. The use of research advisors, who are senior and principal educational psychologists from services in the region qualified to doctoral level, serves to enhance the integration of theory and practice for trainees. Some trainees had found the Moodle Research Methods module difficult; however, they were able to seek further support from the tutors. The programme team clarified that the length of the thesis according to the regulations should be 25,000 to 40,000 words.
- 8.2 The programme team described the protocol for gaining ethical approval for research, which is explained to trainees at an early stage and is documented on Moodle. All trainees are required to complete a research ethics form, which is reviewed by the thesis supervisor and then submitted to the College or Department Ethics Committee. It was clear that trainees were encouraged to plan ahead and be proactive in designing and negotiating their research and in obtaining ethical approval well in advance of any data collection or fieldwork.
- 8.3 Two trainees highlighted that there had been some tension between the choice of their research topic and the demands and wishes of the local authority. The principal educational psychologists and the programme team advised that there had been an instance where a trainee had discussed a research topic with their tutor but the proposal was thought to be unrealistic. The research topic had been sound but the scope of the work was unmanageable in the timeframe. The programme team also advised that there had been an instance where a trainee had developed a realistic research proposal but the principal educational psychologist had set ideas for the area of research that they would be interested in and this had not been communicated to the supervisor. The Programme Directors explained that they are aware of this issue and are dealing with it by writing directly to the principal educational psychologists once a trainee is employed in their local authority to ensure that the research is planned early. Furthermore, the programme team ensure that the research topic is both suitable for the local authority and meets the academic requirements for a doctoral level thesis; the negotiations therefore take place well in advance. The trainees and local authority staff felt that overall the Development and Research priorities that are used as the basis for the theses have been useful in providing a clear focus for the trainees and the framework is broad enough to include local priorities.

9. Collaborative Provision

- 9.1 The programme has strong links with local psychology services, which facilitates access for trainees to a wide range of settings. The strong links are established through clear communication mechanisms and regular contact with educational psychology services. The Research Advisory Committee and the Stakeholder/Advisory Committee are examples of the active support from the local educational psychology services.

10. Evaluation and Progression of Trainee Educational Psychologists

- 10.1 The programme team provided information detailing the way in which the assessment of professional competence of trainees and the academic knowledge is comprehensive and objective. The regular meetings with professional development tutors and the termly progress review meetings aim to ensure that any problems that trainees may be experiencing are identified at an early stage.
- 10.2 In discussions with the trainees, it was apparent to the accreditation team that there was an awareness of the ethical challenges arising from professional practice and there was progression throughout the training in being equipped to handle them.
- 10.3 The accreditation team was interested to hear about the framework used to help trainees identify ongoing professional development needs.

11. Programme Approvals, Monitoring and Review

- 11.1 There were many examples of the programme team's responsiveness to feedback from trainees and supervisors, and their commitment to continual improvement for the programme. The trainees rate each seminar and workshop using the web-based software. A report is then produced for each session and fed back to the tutor and programme directors.
- 11.2 In terms of managing the communication within the large programme team, it was learned that electronic communications are used effectively. Team meetings take place once a term and additional meetings are planned as and when required.

12. Professional Experience and the Supervision of Trainee Educational Psychologists

- 12.1 All practice tutors/supervisors are given a supervisors' handbook, which can also be accessed on Moodle, along with further details of the supervisor training events. The supervisors commented that this handbook had been extremely helpful. In addition, the supervisor-training day, which takes place in advance of the trainee commencing their placement or employment was a useful preparation and raised awareness of the responsibilities of the supervisor. Some supervisors had attended the workshops and teaching events organised by UCL, which had been beneficial for them in their supervisor and practitioner roles.
- 12.2 The team sought the supervisors' views about the way in which the taught component of the programme prepares the trainees for the practical experience. The supervisors were impressed with the up-to-date knowledge that trainees have and the extent to which trainees are able to integrate theory with practice, which enables them to share knowledge with other team members. The principal educational psychologists also felt that the link with UCL has brought mutual benefits to the trainees and the Educational Psychology Services.
- 12.3 The supervisory arrangements and the monitoring of professional progress were discussed in further detail. The principal educational psychologists advised that the supervisors' workloads had been adjusted this year to allow a greater time dedicated to supervising trainees. It was added that the expectations that are outlined in the handbooks are very clear for UCL trainees. Their ability to use self-evaluation means that the trainees have a realistic understanding of the point at which they are at in their professional development.
- 12.4 The programme team outlined support mechanisms for trainees who undertake their practical experience in a local authority, which is some distance away from the programme's base. The professional development tutors arrange to visit each trainee in year two. The structure of the programme timetable means that trainees attend the University in blocks and contact between the trainee and tutor is maintained in between these blocks.

13. Recruitment and Admissions

- 13.1 The programme receives a high number of applications. The accreditation team consistently heard positive reports about the thorough, transparent and fair recruitment and selection process. There are clear criteria for each stage of the process, which is also available on the UCL website so that applicants are aware of the expectations for the application process and also the expectations of the programme. Interview panel members receive training for the selection process and the outcomes are monitored. It is also ensured that the process includes specific measures to avoid disadvantaging applicants from minority and under-represented groups. The monitoring process has so far highlighted that minority ethnic groups have been successful in gaining places, when taking account of the number of applicants.

14. Policy Statements of the Membership and Professional Training Board

- 14.1 The accreditation team considered that the programme adheres to all those policies that are of relevance.

SECTION D: Accreditation Criteria Checklist

This must be read in conjunction with *Criteria for the Accreditation of Three-Year Training Programmes in Educational Psychology in England, Northern Ireland and Wales* (British Psychological Society 2007, revised October 2008)

DECPTC Programme Log of Evidence (1)

PARA.	ITEM	MET		COMMENTS
1.	The required learning outcomes			
1.1	Trainees develop required skills, knowledge and values	Y		
1.2	Programme incorporates required learning outcomes	Y		
1.3a	Learning outcomes underpinned by specified competencies:	Y		
1.3b	Core professional skills	Y		
1.3c	Practice of applied educational psychologists	Y		
1.3d	Personal and professional standards and values	Y		
1.3e	Application of evaluation, research and enquiry	Y		

2.	The structure of training			
2.1	Balanced and experience of training	Y		
2.2	Balanced set of experiences	Y		
2.3	Programme provides foundation skills and knowledge	Y		
2.4a	Coverage of working contexts of educational psychologists	Y		
2.4b	Coverage of different styles of working	Y		

3.	Underpinning human resources			
3.1	PD in post	Y		
3.2	PD appointed in line with MPTB policy	Y		
3.3a	PD of appropriate standing	Y		
3.3b	Local public sector EPs involved in appointment	Y		
3.4	Tutors meet accreditation criteria	Y		
3.5	Staff team involved in range of EP practice	Y		
3.6	Staff:trainee ratio meets criteria (1:10 in year 1, 1:15 in years 2 and 3)	Y		
3.7	Appropriate admin and technical support	Y		
3.8	All members undertake CPD	Y		

4.	Underpinning physical resources			
4.1	Adequate teaching and study space	Y		
4.2	Access to adequate facilities	Y		
4.3	Adequate funding for speakers and tutor activities	Y		

5.	Development and support of trainee educational psychologists			
5.1	Regular tutorials with designated programme tutor	Y		
5.2	Programme responsive to personal issues	Y		
5.3	Programme supports trainees experiencing severe stress/emotional upset	Y		

6.	Research			
6.1	Clear learning objectives for postgraduate research	Y		
6.2	Each trainee undertakes substantial empirical research project.	Y		
6.3	Teaching of research design and methodologies	Y		
6.4	Access to data analysis facilities and guidance on use	Y		
6.5	Regular and scheduled research supervision	Y		

7.	Collaborative provision			
7.1	Strong links with local psychology services	Y		

8.	Evaluation and progression of trainee educational psychologists			
8.1a	Assessment covers academic, research and professional competence	Y		
8.1b	All three required to pass programme	Y		
8.2a	Comprehensive and objective assessment strategy	Y		
8.2b	Range of assessment methods	Y		
8.3	Help to identify CPD needs	Y		
8.4a	Mechanism for formally warning trainees at risk of failure	Y		
8.4b	Guidance and support provided in above circumstance	Y		
8.5a	Trainees aware of <i>Code of Ethics and Conduct</i>	Y		
8.5b	Mechanism in place to deal with continued unsatisfactory behaviour	Y		

9.	Programme approvals, monitoring and review			
9.1	Title of programme reflects content	Y		
9.2	Clear programme specification	Y		
9.3	Clear learning objectives for each component	Y		
9.4	Teaching postgrad-specific	Y		
9.5	10% of time protected for private study	Y		
9.6	Stakeholders Committee in place which meets accreditation criteria	Y		

10.	Professional experience and the supervision of trainee educational psychologists			
10.1a	Professional experience in all 3 years	Y		
10.1b	300 days of total programme time spent on placement	Y		

10.1c	Appropriate work undertaken on placement	Y		
10.2	HEI resources made available to supervisors	Y		
10.3	Professional experience supports achievement of learning outcomes	Y		
10.4a	Agreement in place between HE provider and training Local Authorities	Y		
10.4b	Provisions in agreement assure quality of supervision	Y		
10.5	Appropriate processes in place to support professional experience	Y		
10.6	Consistency of assessment of professional competence	Y		
10.7	Responsibility for trainees' health and safety at work made clear	Y		
10.8a	Clear guidelines for supervision	Y		
10.8b	Workshops and teaching events available to supervisors	Y		
10.9	Lead nominated supervisor for each trainee	Y		
10.10	Lead supervisor meets accreditation criteria	Y		
10.11	Formally protected supervision time meets minimum standards	Y		
10.12a	Designated programme tutor monitors trainees' professional progress	Y		
10.12b	Regular, flexible contact between programme and training LA	Y		

11.	Recruitment and admissions			
11.1a	Appropriate information made available to applicants	Y		
11.1b	Strategies to widen access in place	Y		
11.2	Explicit selection criteria in place	Y		
11.3	Trainees encouraged to apply for appropriate grade of Society membership	Y		
11.4	Interview panel meets accreditation criteria	Y		
11.5a	Selection process includes specific measures to avoid disadvantaging applicants	Y		
11.5b	Effectiveness of measures evaluated and action taken	Y		

Programme Log of Evidence (2)

Policy Statements of the Membership and Professional Training Board (October 2008)

ITEM		Yes	No	Comment
Accredited programmes				
1-7	Compliance with MPTB policies relating to accredited programmes	Y		
Distance learning programmes				
8	DL programmes provide underpinning knowledge and research	N/A		
Admission to an accredited programme				
9a	All entrants eligible for GBR	Y		
9b	Non-GBR students given alternative award	N/A		
9c	Teaching of psychology at appropriate postgraduate level	Y		
10	APL/AEC only granted for work undertaken since student gained eligibility for the GBR	N/A		
Nomenclature				
11	Programme title distinguishable from any similar non-accredited award	Y		
12	Programmes delivered overseas in franchise arrangements do not result in same named award	N/A		
Attendance requirements				
13	Students must attend at least 80% of the scheduled sessions	Y		
Modification of an accredited programme				
14	Change to award title notified to QA department	Y		
Teaching				
15	Programme includes teaching on <i>Code of Ethics and Conduct</i> .	Y		
16	Teaching and learning associated with practice embedded into programme	Y		
Assessment				
17	Students not obtaining acceptable level in professional practice do not receive accredited award	Y		
External Examiners				
18	External Examiner appointed in line with MPTB policy	Y		
Staffing				
19	Programme Director appointed in line with MPTB policy	Y		
Collaborative provision				
20	Where elements of practice included QAA Code of Practice complied with	Y		
21	Society kept informed of all collaborative provision	Y		

SECTION E: Other Information

1. The Visiting Team

Trevor Holme	Convenor; DECPTC member, Practitioner representative
Margaret Tunbridge	Tutor (University of Exeter); Educational Psychologist (Cornwall).
Dr Jane Yeomans	DECPTC member; Tutor (University of Birmingham Doctorate in Educational Psychology); Educational Psychologist (Sandwell)
Pat Bennett	DECPTC member; Educational Psychologist (Lancashire); Tutor (University of Sheffield).
Rupal Nathwani	Quality Assurance Officer, The British Psychological Society

2. Written Material Assessed

Material received in advance of the visit:

Full accreditation submission, including:

Self-Evaluation Document

DECPTC Programme Log of Evidence

Appendices to the Log of Evidence

DECPsy Programme Handbook 2008-09 and Year 2 and 3 Supplements

Supervisors' handbook 2008-9

Tutor Handbook 2008

DECPsy Programme Timetable 2008-9

External Examiners' Reports (2006-7 and 2007-8)

Resource Collection Catalogue

Academic Staff CVs

3. People Met During the Visit

Programme Team

Dr Shama Ali

Dr Susan Birch

Dr Roger Booker

Sarah Challis

Owen Davis

Steph Douglas

Dr Sandra Dunsmuir

Professor Norah Frederickson

Beverley Graham

Helen Hosier

Dr Michelle Sancho

Dr Juliet Starbuck

Cassie Wood

Professor Tony Cline

Dr Dino Petrides

Senior Management (via teleconference on 9 February 2009)

Professor Peter Fonagy Head of Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology

Professor David Shanks Head of Division of Psychology and Language Sciences

Professor Norah Frederickson Programme Co-Director

Practice Tutors

Dr Shama Ali

Owen Davis

Beverley Graham

Shahnawaz Khan

Placement Supervisors

Annabel Clarke, Essex EPS
Rachael Green, Kingston Upon Thames EPS
Tim Lister, Windsor and Maidenhead EPS
Elizabeth Taylor, Cambridge EPS
Grania Usher, Harrow EPS

Principal Educational Psychologists

Julia Hardy, Kingston Upon Thames EPS
Mike Hymans, Brent EPS
Elaine Killerby, Merton EPS
Harriet Martin, Luton EPS
Anne Moore, Croydon EPS
Jane Turner, Bucks EPS

Trainees

Year 1

Sarah Coulter
Louise Field
Susanna Flett
Sara Freitag
Pandora Giles
Katey Hambleton
Derrick Imadojemun
Timothy Jones
Keira Keenan
Ciara ODonnell
Roxanne Parker
Julia Parsonson
Joe Wilson
Vi Vien Yang

Year 2

Esther Adelman
Claire Costello
Claire Douglas
Shane Gallagher
Adrian Harrison
Lisa Henson
Louise Marshall
Mary McAuley
Caroline Robertson
Rosie Thomasson
Jennifer Wills

Year 3

Sajda Ahmed Hussain
Kathryn Arsenault
Roberto Blasco-Alcala
Gemma Castleman
Rachel Cole
Miriam Craddock
Clare Knowler
Sonia Shah
Jennifer Singleton
Emma Viner
Rebecca Williamson