



King's Psychology
Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan
June 2023

Faculty / Affiliated University College	King's University College	
Degrees Offered	B.A.	
Date of Last Review	2014-2015	
Modules Reviewed	Honours Specialization Specialization Major Minor	
External Reviewers	Dr. Dawn Good, Department of Psychology Brock University	Dr. Maureen Drysdale, Department of Psychology St. Jerome's University
Internal Reviewer	Dr. Geoff Read, Provost and Dean, Huron University College	
Date of Site Visit	March 20 & 21, 2023	
Date Review Report Received	April 14, 2023	
Date Program/Faculty Response Received	Program: May 16, 2023 Faculty: May 16, 2023	
Evaluation	Good Quality	
Approval Dates	SUPR-U: June 28, 2023 ACA: September 6, 2023 Senate (for information): September 15, 2023	
Year of Next Review	2030-2031	
Progress Report	June 2026	

Overview of Western’s Cyclical Review Assessment Reporting Process

In accordance with Western’s Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), the Final Assessment Report (FAR) provides a summary of the cyclical review, internal responses, and assessment and evaluation of the Psychology Program delivered by the Department of Psychology, King’s University College.

This FAR considers the following documents:

- the program’s self-study brief;
- the external reviewers’ report;
- the response from the Program; and
- the response from the Academic Dean of King’s University College

This FAR identifies the strengths of the program and opportunities for program enhancement and improvement, and details the recommendations of the external reviewers – noting those recommendations to be prioritized for implementation.

The Implementation Plan details the recommendations from the FAR that have been selected for implementation, identifies who is responsible for approving and acting on the recommendations, specifies any action or follow-up that is required, and defines the timeline for completion.

The FAR (including Implementation Plan) is sent for approval through the Senate Undergraduate Program Review Committee (SUPR-U) and ACA, then for information to Senate and to the Ontario Universities’ Council on Quality Assurance. Subsequently, it is publicly accessible on Western’s IQAP website. The FAR is the only document from the undergraduate cyclical review process that is made public; all other documents are confidential to King’s University College, and SUPR-U.

Executive Summary

The Department of Psychology at King's offers honours and general undergraduate degrees in Psychology. Founded in 1968 in the humanistic tradition, the program now offers a broad coverage of the field with a growing applied orientation. King's Psychology strives to educate students in the theories, methods, evidence base, and practical applications of Psychological Science.

Enrolment in program modules was at 412 in 2021, with the total number of course registrants in 2021-2022 at just under 1500.

The self-study was informed by surveys administered to current and former students, the refinement of the program learning outcomes and the completion of a curriculum mapping exercise.

The external reviewers shared a positive assessment of the King's Psychology Program and offered two core recommendations, each with specific sub-themes, for further enhancement.

Strengths and Innovative Features Identified by the Program

- Faculty are recognized internationally for their scholarship and provide strong individualized mentorship of students.
- High-impact pedagogical techniques and explicit experiential/community-engaged learning components enable students to apply their knowledge to solve real-world problems.
- EDID initiatives incorporated into the program include: 1) a cross-listed course which exposes students to feminist, critical, and queer theory as well as research methods consistent with these theories and with oral traditions; and 2) hiring of an Indigenous Initiatives Coordinator who will help streamline EDID development.
- Intensive research mentorship in the Honours Specialization program prepares fourth-year students to excel in graduate schools specializing in areas such as Clinical, Counselling, Social and Developmental Psychology.
- Students are connected with local social service agencies, including hospitals, clinical practice, and the City of London, which leads to a strong relationship between the program and community.
- Student-led Psychology Association hosts several events each year including a speaker series, information panels, social events and exam reviews.
- Recurring strengths emerging from the student survey data included:
 - o program professors were the best feature of the program; and
 - o the variety of assignments across courses.

- The forthcoming addition of a new Honours Specialization in Applied Psychology is unique to King's and is a reflection of the program's ongoing program development.
- Forthcoming joint degree with O.P. Jindal Global, Sonipat, Haryana, India and King's slated to be operationalized in September 2023.

Concerns and Areas of Improvement Identified and Discussed by the Program

- There is a need for laboratory space and equipment to support faculty research and enhance student experience.
- Need for greater consistency with laboratory instruction – consideration of stabilizing the ongoing contract hires.
- 42% of courses are taught by sessional faculty or those on limited-term appointments.
- Additional sections are required for the 3000-level courses since it is not feasible to run the larger classes as a seminar; if this is not feasible, another option would be to replace service courses offered at the 2000-level with 3000-level courses.
- Compare second-year methods course with those taught by affiliates and assess the feasibility of a closer alignment of requirements to allow students to gain access to upper year courses at Western.
- Recurring areas of improvement emerging from the student survey data included:
 - need for more applied work in the community in the form of a co-op program or placements;
 - stronger focus/information on preparing for careers and grad school; and
 - additional spaces in existing courses.

Review Process

As part of the external review, the review committee, comprising two external reviewers and an internal reviewer, were provided with Volume I and II of the self-study brief in advance of the scheduled review and then met virtually over two days with the:

- Vice-Provost (Academic Programs)
- Director of Academic Quality and Enhancement
- President, King's University College
- Academic Dean, King's University College
- Associate Academic Dean, King's University College
- Director of Enrolment Services & Registrar
- Director of Libraries, Cardinal Carter Library
- Manager, Academic Planning and Analysis
- Chair, Department of Psychology
- Administrative Staff

- Program Faculty
- Program Students

Following the virtual site visit, the external reviewers submitted a comprehensive report of their findings which was sent to the Program and Dean for review and response. Formative documents, including Volumes I and II of the Self-Study, the External Report, and the Program and Decanal responses form the basis of this Final Assessment Report (FAR) of the Psychology Program at King's University College. The FAR is collated and submitted to SUPR-U by the Internal Reviewer with the support of the Office of Academic Quality and Enhancement.

Summative Assessment – External Reviewers' Report

External reviewers shared that *“The impressive level of faculty engagement, comprehensive curriculum, and intended experiential learning opportunities will ensure that graduates can be well prepared for graduate work, professional studies, or psychology-related careers.”*

Strengths of the Program

- Faculty are nationally, and internationally, recognized researchers, actively contributing to the discipline.
- Students have many opportunities to work one-on-one with faculty, permitting a more enriched experience and exposure to excellence and effective preparation for a career and/or further graduate training in Psychology.
- The research and the teaching program reflect the Department's keen emphasis on EDID, social concerns (e.g., accessibility, gender pay equity, inequality, implicit bias, prejudice, trauma), learning (e.g., children's memory, math difficulties) and health-related factors (e.g., mental health, addiction, aging, brain injury).
- Curriculum revitalizing, which includes the addition of a new specialization degree in Applied Psychology, aspects of behavioural neuroscience, and EDID materials, offer students broader opportunities for experiential learning both within the university environment and beyond.
- An emphasis on student self-evaluation in upper year courses, and an immersion of social justice in teaching, research, and community work, make this program stand out in comparison to other programs in Canada.
- Programming collaborations within King's (e.g., Department of Thanatology) and beyond King's (e.g., Brescia and Huron University Colleges).

Areas of Concern or Prospective Improvement

- Consider requiring courses above the 2000-level in the major module in order to better ensure career preparedness and competitiveness.
- Reconsider the weighting of thesis course from 1.0 to 1.5 as these are demanding courses to acknowledge the additional demands of the thesis.
- Renewing or converting the LTA position that supports the expansion of behavioural neuroscience to full-time should be considered to ensure the department's competitiveness.
- Early departmental engagement of the Library could result in more effective support.
- There is a severe restriction on faculty to provide students with the opportunities to prepare/design experiments due to significant limitations on lab space and equipment.
- Faculty/program advisors and assistants are having difficulty reaching out to the students early enough to advise and guide their choices, indicating a need for greater support.
- Students noted a preference for more varied assessments in first and second year courses instead of focusing on multiple choice tests.
- While overall enrolments have been rather stable, despite the pandemic, 2021 produced the lowest retention of first to second year students in six years.

Summary of the Reviewers’ Recommendations and Program/Faculty Responses

The following are the reviewers’ recommendations in the order listed by the external reviewers. Recommendations requiring implementation have been marked with an asterisk (*).

Reviewers’ Recommendation	Program/Faculty Response
<p>Recommendation #1 Address issues in the curriculum - to enhance student learning outcomes and thereby student success:</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1a* Require a third-year content course in order to be awarded a non-honours major degree.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1b* Review program requirements for honours thesis credit to be increased to 1.5 credits and be more aligned with other Psychology departments and Science programs.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1c* Expand experiential opportunities to enhance program goals in line with the Universities’ goals but also to permit core subject-matter skills acquisition for the students.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1d Continue to expand EDID-related content to the curriculum and program delivery.</p>	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Chair will submit a proposal to King’s Educational Policy Committee to add a required 1.0 credit at the 3000-level for non-honours majors. b) The Department, in consultation with the Dean, will explore whether this is feasible. It would require (i) a successful analysis of the impact on the program, (ii) the agreement of Western, Huron, and Brescia, as all offer a similar thesis course worth 1.0 credits, and (iii) a successful determination of the impact on teaching assignments and workload credit. c) The program is currently strong relative to other undergraduate psychology programs in this respect. Nevertheless, the departmental curriculum committee will examine areas for further development; including the offering of additional laboratory-based experiential learning opportunities, and proposes to replace multiple part-time, contract-based laboratory instructors with a cost neutral stable full-time equivalent (two permanent part-time positions). d) Led by the Chair, program members will continue to engage in relevant professional development, department conversations, curricular changes, collaboration with EDID experts on campus, and priority setting in faculty hiring decisions. The Chair has also begun to collate psychology-specific resources for curricular development, normalize discussion of EDID in departmental meetings, and encourage reporting on EDID in annual reports. <p>Faculty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Academic Dean’s Office (ADO) supports the program’s plans. b) The ADO will provide logistical support to the program as needed to conduct an analysis to determine the feasibility of this recommendation. It is important to note that there may be workload implications associated with the recommended changes, which fall under the purview of contractual terms of the conditions of employment for faculty. c) The ADO will continue to support the expansion of experiential learning opportunities, including the provision of budgetary support for teaching assistance and collaboration with support units at King’s dedicated to experiential learning infrastructure. d) Faculty Hiring: At both a strategic and operational level, the ADO prioritizes EDID in the recruitment, retention and promotion of faculty across all academic units. Specifically, the ADO has secured approval of a multi-year hiring plan that has EDID principles as one of its main priorities. The ADO is

	<p>working with the Director of EDID at King’s and with Chairs, Directors and Coordinators, including Psychology, to implement EDID best practices in hiring processes.</p> <p>Curricular Development: Psychology is encouraged to continue to conduct regular curricular reviews and to pursue curricular design strategies that reflect the program’s commitment to expand EDID-related curriculum and pedagogy. The ADO acknowledges and supports the Department’s plans for faculty professional development, including in EDID.</p>
<p>Recommendation #2 Address resource issues for enhanced teaching and learning:</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2a* Laboratory space and equipment for instructional purposes and core subject-matter skills development which are expected for Psychology students are a critical need.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2b Teaching Assistant supports for grading and seminar discussion are necessary.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2c* Greater integration and coordination with the administrative supports - librarians, academic advising and admin assistants.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2d Review proportion of program being delivered by contract and part-time faculty as 42% of the</p>	<p>Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Department needs accessible and dedicated laboratory space sufficient to meet the needs of all full-time faculty. A proposal for laboratory space was submitted by the Department to the Administration in 2019, 2020, and 2022. Additionally, the Department has collaborated on a 1-million-dollar Canadian Federation for Innovation Grant that may, if successful, contribute some funding to research space. b) That levels of funding are half of those of other units is a misunderstanding; however, the development of more experiential learning will likely require additional funds. The Chair will communicate departmental needs to the Dean annually, as per standard procedure. c) The Department welcomes better collaboration with the library, and will invite the Librarian to a Departmental meeting to initiate. The Department has begun to invite the Academic Program Assistant to departmental meetings. As the program grows, dedicated administrative support will likely become essential and the Chair will communicate these needs to the ADO. d) This has been completed at the department level (it was done in the self-study submitted for this IQAP review). The department supports a strategy of hiring permanent, full-time faculty positions and recognizes this as an institutional responsibility. Additional full-time faculty expertise (e.g., in cultural psychology) would also support recommendation 1d, expanding EDID-related content. <p>Faculty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The ADO acknowledges the need for laboratory space for Psychology and has identified this as both a core pedagogical and research strategic priority. The ADO will work collaboratively with the program to identify suitable space ready for use by September 2023, in anticipation of a more satisfactory long-term solution to be realized through ongoing campus development plans. A dedicated laboratory space for Psychology is central to the first ever institutional CFI grant (outcome pending summer 2023). Moreover, a dedicated laboratory space for Psychology is an identified priority in campus development projects envisioned to be completed in the next five years. b) The ADO appreciates the need for institution-wide reassessments of teaching assistant supports; however, respectfully notes that the claim made in this recommendation of a differential support rate for the program is factually incorrect. At present, a funding formula that is generally tied to the identified funding needs of respective programs as well as to overall enrolments is deployed. The Dean will continue to consult with the program as pedagogical and curricular needs evolve.

<p>program is taught by non-full-time faculty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">c) The ADO acknowledges and appreciates the spirit of this recommendation. To that end, the ADO already is engaged in discussions with the program and with all academic departments to discuss strategies for increasing administrative support to all academic units and to reorganizing existing resources to support and enhance departmental-level autonomy over program management and development.d) The ADO acknowledges that, like all post-secondary institutions, there is a growing structural reliance on part-time faculty for course delivery; but, will continue to devise and advocate for a strategy that privileges the hiring of full-time, tenure-track positions. As always, of course, there is an institutional responsibility to balance full-time faculty hiring with the need to maintain a complement of academic support professionals and staff to promote student learning and wellbeing.
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Implementation Plan

The Implementation Plan provides a summary of the recommendations that require action and/or follow-up. In each case, the Program Chair, and the Dean of the Faculty is responsible for enacting and monitoring the actions noted in Implementation Plan.

The number of recommendations prioritized for implementation has been reduced as some are already, or are in the process of being, actioned (#1d & #2d) and some have resulted from a misunderstanding (#2b), as described in the program and faculty responses above. As a result, the recommendations appearing in the implementation table are recommendations #1abc, & #2ac.

Recommendation	Proposed Action and Follow-up	Responsibility	Timeline
<p>Recommendation #1 Address issues in the curriculum - to enhance student learning outcomes and thereby student success</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1a Require a third-year content course in order to be awarded a non-honours major degree.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1b Review program requirements for honours thesis credit to be increased to 1.5 credits.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 1c Expand experiential opportunities to enhance program goals in line with the Universities' goals and to permit core subject-matter skills acquisition for the students.</p>	<p>a) Submit a proposal to King's Educational Policy Committee to add a required 1.0 credit at the 3000-level for non-honours majors.</p> <p>b) Determine the feasibility by assessing the impact on the (i) program, (ii) agreements with Western, Huron, and Brescia, and (iii) teaching assignments and workload credit.</p> <p>c) Examine areas for further development of i) additional laboratory-based experiential learning opportunities, ii) collaboration with support units at King's dedicated to experiential learning infrastructure.</p> <p>Discuss restructuring of lab instruction roles with the ADO.</p> <p>Work to diversify assessment practices, in particular in the 1000 and 2000-level courses.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Curriculum Committee</p> <p>Associate Dean</p>	<p>a) Aim for Sept. 2024 implementation</p> <p>b) By Sept. 2024</p> <p>c) By Sept. 2024</p>

<p>Recommendation #2 Address resource issues for enhanced teaching and learning</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2a Laboratory space and equipment for instructional purposes and core subject-matter skills development which are expected for Psychology students are a critical need.</p> <p>Sub-Recommendation 2c Greater integration and coordination with the administrative supports - librarians, academic advising and admin assistants – can enhance support for faculty and students.</p>	<p>a) Identify suitable short-term space ready for the next academic year.</p> <p>Development of a long-term solution realized through campus development plans.</p> <p>c) Invite a Librarian to departmental meetings to explore more ways to enhance support for faculty and students.</p> <p>Implement recommendations to enhance dedicated admin support across King's as part of the Academic Plan.</p>	<p>Associate Dean Chair</p>	<p>a) Short term plan by Sept 2023</p> <p>Long-term by Sept 2028</p> <p>c) By December 2023</p>
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