



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL, CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOLOGY (DECAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

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Doctorate in Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology (DECAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Submitting an Application

Please carefully read the **DECAP Guide for Applicants for September 2021 entry**. This can be found on the DECAP website, along with the **online application form**.

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/psy/Study/PostgraduateTaughtCourses/DECAP/>

There are several other documents available on the website to assist you: an example application form, guidance on work experience and an overview from the 2020 shortlisting process.

How do I apply? The Online Application form

The online application form needs to be completed during one sitting. You cannot save the application as you go along. Therefore it would be useful to look at the example application form, to get an idea of the questions you will be asked. You may find it useful to prepare any longer responses in Word in advance (e.g. the personal statement). You could then paste this into the application form.

In addition to the online application, you will be required to send supplementary documents by email to DECAP@qub.ac.uk. These documents include:

- academic transcripts and certificates for qualifications (from degree onwards)
- birth certificate
- confirmation of GBC (if your Psychology degree was completed outside the UK or is unusual in any way)
- confirmation of proficiency of English Language (where applicable,)

What is the Closing Date for Applications for September 2021 entry?

The closing date is **Friday 8th January 2021 at 4.00 pm**.

Do I need to have completed my Psychology degree before applying?

Yes, applicants must have at least a 2.1 Psychology degree or the equivalent *at the time of application*.

If I got a 2.2 in my Psychology degree but have completed further study since, would my application be considered?

Candidates who have not obtained a 2.1 may apply if they can show evidence of a postgraduate degree relevant to Educational Psychology (e.g. Masters or PhD). In the case of a Masters degree, the percentage mark should be given and/or academic qualifications (conversion) transcript.

References - Do I need to send them at the time of application?

No, you don't need to send references. The application form asks you to *name three referees and provide contact details for each*. Please make sure to include their email address. These should normally include someone familiar with your first degree in psychology or higher degree where this is recent, and someone who has known you in a work setting. ***In accordance with Safeguarding procedures, one of the three referees must be from the last place of employment (or voluntary***

work) in which you worked with children or young people. Where possible, you should name psychologists or others familiar with the demands of educational psychology training. Your referees will only be contacted if you are shortlisted for interview. Please see *Guide for Applicants* for further information.

References – are they scored and will this affect my overall score at interview stage?
No, references are not scored. They inform selectors regarding a candidate's suitability.

Personal Statement - What should I ideally include here?

Selectors will make a judgement on how well the applicant has been able to reflect on his or her personal qualities, as expressed in the personal statement, and how they have been developed by means of training, employment and voluntary or other experiences. In this section of the application form you should demonstrate evidence of your capacity to reflect on your motivation to undertake educational training as an educational psychologist, the experiences and values which have shaped that decision, as well as the personal qualities you would bring to this career. You may wish to include information about your personal and/or professional interests. You should indicate how you relate your experiences, skills and competencies to the training programme for educational psychology.

Work Experience - What is considered to be the best type of previous experience?

Please see the DECAP website for an outline of relevant work experience. Applicants are expected to have appropriate experience working with children, young people and young adults for **at least two years full-time equivalent (FTE) by the application closing date**. This can be cumulative or continuous and may be remunerated employment or work undertaken in a voluntary capacity. Experience acquired during university placement of less than 10 months will not be counted. Whatever kind of work has been undertaken, applicants **should reflect** on what they have learnt from their experiences and its relevance to the work of an educational psychologist, and, how they have been able to apply the knowledge of psychology from their studies. The 'quality' of experience in work experience is as important as the quantity of experience gained. Breadth and variety of experience will be favourably considered.

Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) - do I need to have this at the time of application?

Yes, graduate membership of the British Psychological Society (BPS) is required at the time of application.

Proof of English Language Proficiency for overseas students – is this required at the time of application?

Overseas candidates should provide evidence of proficiency in written and spoken English, **unless you obtained your degree through English**. Candidates must be able to communicate in English to the standard equivalent to level 7 of the International English Language Testing System (with no element below 6.5) or in an equivalent English Language test acceptable to the university see <http://go.qub.ac.uk/EnglishLanguageReqs>.

Usually this must be forwarded as part of your application. However, if you have been delayed accessing the test due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there may be some flexibility this year, as long as this would be available shortly after the application closing date.

Brexit - Will NI/UK applicants be favoured?

We are currently not aware of the full implications of Brexit in relation to international students. Further clarification will be available early in the new year 2021.

In terms of prospective DECAP applicants from the Republic of Ireland however, we hope that there will be a Memorandum of Understanding between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland which will afford British and Irish citizens the right to access all levels of education and training, and associated student support, in each other's state, on terms no less favourable than those for the citizens of that state. *If that remains the case*, students from the Republic of Ireland would be regarded as home students.

We will update this information sheet as soon as arrangements are confirmed.

Driving Licence – Do I need to have a full driving licence at the time of application?

Preferably yes, however if you have been delayed completing a driving test due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there may be some flexibility this year. However, any offers of a place on the programme are normally subject to having full licences before beginning the course (unless prevented for health or disability reasons).

Shortlisting

Shortlisting – what is the process?

A shortlisting panel, made up of tutors and practitioner psychologists scrutinise all valid applications. The applications are first judged on whether a candidate meets the minimum entry requirements. Those who do not will not be shortlisted. The candidates are then rated by individual panel members on Readiness for Training and Personal Qualities. On the basis of the combined panel scores, a shortlist of candidates for interview is drawn up.

Shortlisting decisions - when will I know if I have been shortlisted?

You should hear within four weeks of the application closing date.

Interviews

Interviews– when will they take place?

Interviews are planned for either week commencing 1 March 2020, or week commencing 22 March 2020 – to be confirmed.

Interviews – Will they be online or face to face?

The arrangements for interviews will be confirmed at a later date. However, it is highly likely that they will be conducted online in March 2021. There will be two separate interviews, one with an Academic-Research panel and the other with a Professional-Personal panel. Interview marks from both panels are equally weighted.

Interview Panels – what is the composition of each panel?

Each interview panel comprises of two members of staff from the DECAP tutor team and one senior practitioner Educational Psychologist.

Interview marks – will my shortlisting score be used to calculate a final mark?

No, shortlisting scores are not used at the interview stage. Following the interviews, marks are awarded to each candidate for three components (Academic Ability, Personal Qualities and Readiness for Training). Those candidates with the highest overall ratings in the three components, and who have reached a satisfactory standard in each, are offered places on the course.

What is the best way to prepare for the interviews?

You can prepare by reading lots of journal articles and reflecting on research you have been involved with. You should also consider your experience to date and reflect on the theories that have informed your practice and the approaches you have taken. It may also be helpful to get some practical experience of delivering a presentation.

DECAP Offers – Terms and Conditions

If I am offered a place on the programme, will I be asked to sign a contract?

Any offer of a place on the DECAP programme is made in conjunction with a bursary offer / contract. Funding for the programme is provided by the Department of Education. The bursary contract must be signed and returned within a 2-3 week period. This contract is legally binding and ties you in for three years of study/training, followed by a minimum of three years' work as an Educational Psychologist in the Education Authority in Northern Ireland post qualification, subject to the availability of jobs.

DECAP Timetable

Timetabling - Can you provide an outline of the Year 1 timetable?

Semester 1: 1 September – December

The majority of the first semester is spent at university for a teaching block. Typically, classes are scheduled over four days and one day is set aside for study (where possible).

There are two short 5-day placements in Semester 1.

Semester 2: January-March

You will complete a 20-day placement in January (Placement 3). Placements 1-3 are spent in the same EA office. You will be back at QUB for a short teaching block at the beginning of February, before Placement 4 commences. This is a block placement initially. Typically, you are on placement Monday-Thursday and Friday is often a study day.

Easter to end of term

After Easter, you will continue Placement 4 two days a week only, and the rest of the week will be teaching days at QUB or study. The final placement in Year 1 (Placement 5) is an elective placement and this takes place during the month of June.

Classes – Can you provide an outline of the topics covered?

The DECAP curriculum is a graduated, spiral curriculum that allows for the incremental development of skills and knowledge throughout the progression of the course. All elements of the curriculum are introduced (or at least prefaced) in Year 1 through five modules:

Year 1	Content of teaching, tutorials, seminars and placement activity includes but is not limited to:	
PSY 9042 Learning and Development 20 CATS	Inclusion and SEN Observation Skills and Placement 1, 2 Reading Skills Language Development Maths Development	Bilingualism Intelligence & Intelligence testing ICT in Schools Introduction to Neuropsychology
PSY 9043 Barriers to Learning / Vulnerable Groups 40 CATS	Counselling Skills 1, 2, 3 ADHD Anxiety based School Refusal Introduction to EMDR Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties Developmental Coordination Disorder Exceptionally mobile populations: MoD Cultural differences	SEWB 1-4 Loss & Change Attachment Reading difficulties Severe Learning Difficulty ASD Maths Difficulties Sensory impairment
PSY 9044 Assessment & Intervention 40 CATS	<u>Assessment</u> Interactive Factors Framework Understanding Formulation Cognitive assessment : WISC IV/V, WIAT, BAS, WPPSI TEACCH <u>Intervention</u> Video Enhanced Reflective Practice Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Introduction to Motivational Interviewing	Consultation Skills Pre-School Assessment Dynamic Assessment Assessment and Intervention Bullying Prevention & Intervention Dynamic Assessment Acceptance and Commitment Therapy
PSY 9045 Research 40 CATS	Qualitative Research Methods and Data Analysis Quantitative Research Methods and Data Analysis Research Design & Professional Skills	Research Panel 1 Research Seminars <i>Tutorials</i>
PSY 9046 Professional Issues 40 CATS	Personal Safety and well-being at work AEP & BPS Membership Children's Rights The Role of the EP School based Management of SEN Safeguarding Inclusion	Legislative framework, inc Children Order, Chn & Families Act, SEND, MCA, CoP etc Supervision Skills Report Writing Codes of Conduct and Ethics (HCPC, BPS)

DECAP Placements

Placements – can I be placed somewhere close to home?

Placement offices are currently located across Northern Ireland. While some consideration would be given to your home address and the distance to travel to placement offices, particularly for longer placements, you will be expected to travel on occasions. It would not be possible to place you in the most convenient office for all of the placement days. If your placement venue is a long distance from your home (e.g. one hour's drive or longer), you will be offered the opportunity of staying at accommodation close to your placement office. Placement accommodation is organised by DECAP, in conjunction with the university travel company, and is funded by the DECAP programme.

Placements – how much time will be devoted to placement?

300 days are spent on placement over the three years of training. The current **Year 1 placement schedule** is outlined below. Please note that this is subject to change but will give you an idea of what to expect. Placements 1-3 are typically spent in the same EA office with the same supervisor(s). Placement 4 is in a different EA office, and Placement 5 (Elective) is organised by the student, in conjunction with personal tutor/year tutor. All our fieldwork supervisors complete mandatory supervision training prior to supervising a student.

Placement Overview – DECAP Year one

Placement	Location	Nature of Placement	Number of days	Dates
1	EAs	Observation Week	5	During Semester 1
& 2		Observational assessment	5	During Semester 1
3	EAs	EPS casework	20	Semester 2 - January N.B. Fridays QUB/Study Days
4	EAs	EPS casework and therapeutic intervention	42	<i>(6 week block 30 days), plus 12 days (two days per week)</i> Semester 2 – End of February to Easter holidays (block 30 days) – N.B. Fridays are QUB/Study Days Semester 3 - After Easter – end of May (12 days – two per week)
5	Elective	Trainee choice	18	Semester 2: June
TOTAL DAYS			90	