

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

1. Key Information

Programme Title:	Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health
Awarding Institution:	Buckinghamshire New University
Teaching Institution(s):	Buckinghamshire New University
Subject Cluster:	Psychology
Award Title (including separate Pathway Award Titles where offered):	PGCert Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health MA Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health
Pathways (if applicable)	N/A
Other award titles available (exit qualifications):	PGCert Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health PGDip Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health
FHEQ level of final award:	7
Accreditation details:	N/A
Length of programme:	MA 2 Years Part-Time Study PGCert 1 Year Part-Time Study
Mode(s) of Study:	Part-Time Study (0.5 FTE / 0.3 FTE)
Mode of Delivery:	Blended learning
Language of study:	English
QAA Subject Benchmark(s):	Psychology L6 (November 2019)
Other external reference points (e.g. Apprenticeship Standard):	N/A
Course Code(s):	MASPIRBP / PCSPIRBP
UCAS Code(s):	
Approval date:	5 th January 2023
Date of last update:	N/A

2. Programme Summary

Are you curious about life? Are you curious about spirituality? Are you wanting to develop yourself spiritually? Are you wanting to make a difference in the world? Do you ask big questions about who you are and what is your purpose?

The MA Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health (SEMH) is for those who are seeking to explore the big questions in life. This course is for both newcomers to psychology wanting to change their lives, career or world and practitioners wishing to develop their skills and knowledge of the interrelationship between nature, spirituality, mental health and wellness.

SEMH is an innovative course that has the potential to deepen your understanding and connection with yourself, your life and your world, in order to bring about meaningful change. SEMH is a personal and experiential journey to wholeness, taking place in a community of like-minded passionate teachers and practitioners at the Centre for Positive Psychology.

SEMH promotes a cross-disciplinary approach to psychology, drawing from rapidly growing specialist areas of psychology including Transpersonal, Experiential and Counselling Psychology.

You will deepen your knowledge and understanding of the science of spirituality through a teaching ethos of theory-practice-reflection. You will develop both a conceptual and experiential understanding of spirituality, mental health and wellness. You will analyze, evaluate and synthesize current scientific research, wisdom traditions and practices to build your own evidence-based spirituality.

Finally, you will apply theory and practice to relevant personal and professional contexts to promote the mental health and wellness with yourself and others. You will have the opportunity to create or take part in community projects in the UK and Abroad. In doing so, you may be making the difference in overcoming some of the important challenges facing the world today and learning together that spirituality is active not passive.

3. Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

Programme Aims

This programme aims to:

1. Develop your ability to explore, understand and evaluate a range of psychospiritual concepts, models, theories and practices from sources such as research-based evidence, spiritual wisdom traditions and experiential practice.
2. Develop your ability to identify, understand and evaluate the relationship between the natural world, spirituality, mental health and wellness from a cross-disciplinary perspective.
3. Develop a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding the challenges and ethical considerations required to develop nature-based and spiritually orientated practices for promoting mental health and wellness of yourself and others.
4. Develop your ability to identify and evaluate your own spiritual worldview, attitudes, beliefs and values to raise self-awareness and promote mental health and wellness in arrange of personal and professional contexts.
5. Demonstrate your ability to use research processes and skills to effectively communicate and apply spiritual and nature-based spiritual practices to promote mental health and wellness in a range of personal, professional and community contexts.

Programme Learning Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding (K)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
K1	Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding of a range of spiritual practices, traditions, theories, concepts and/or models.

K2	Demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of spiritual development across the lifespan from a variety of practices, traditions and theories.
K3	Demonstrate a depth of knowledge and understanding of a range of research techniques used to define and interpret spiritual phenomenon, practice and theory.
K4	Demonstrate a critical awareness of different worldviews, attitudes, beliefs and values, and their influence on mental health and wellness.
K5	Demonstrate a critical awareness of the relationship between spirituality, nature-based spirituality, mental health and wellness from the perspectives of practice, tradition and theory.

Analysis and Criticality (C)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
C1	Organise and communicate your ideas and experiences with scholarly skill to create logical and evidence-based arguments on topics of spirituality and their connections to mental health and wellness.
C2	Critically evaluate and analyse a range of spiritual practices, traditions and theories for their influence on mental health and wellness.
C3	Critically evaluate and analyse how scientific evidence may support or conflict with a range of spiritual practices and perspectives.
C4	Critically evaluate and analyse a range of research strategies and techniques used to define and interpret spiritual phenomenon, practice and theory.
C5	Critically evaluate and synthesise a range of spiritual practices, traditions and theories to suggest new or innovative hypotheses, applications, practices, models or research suggestions to support mental health and wellness.

Application and Practice (P)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
P1	Demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge of theory in your own practices with care, sensitivity and skill to promote mental health and wellness.
P2	Demonstrate a critical awareness and judgement of the impact of different spiritual practices and perspectives on personal, social and ecological behaviour.
P3	Develop a critical awareness and judgement of the complex issues surrounding the application of spiritual practice and theory with others to promote mental health and wellness.
P4	Critically reflect on the impact of applying spiritual practice and theory in personal and professional contexts.
P5	Critically evaluate barriers to applying spiritual practice and theory promoting mental health and wellness with yourself, others and society, in order to suggest innovative solutions.

Transferable skills and other attributes (T)

On successful completion of the programme you will be able to:

ID	Learning Outcome
T1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of your own learning and development with care, compassion and respect.
T2	Demonstrate a critical awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses as person, professional and scholar.
T3	Demonstrate a critical awareness of your own worldview, attitudes, beliefs and values, and their influence on your mental health and wellness.
T4	Demonstrate a critical awareness of the ethical considerations in working with spiritual issues with yourself and others.
T5	Critically evaluate the social and ethical responsibilities of applying spiritual practices, traditions and theories to life in the contemporary world.

Graduate Attributes

The BNU Graduate Attributes of: Knowledge and its application; Creativity; Social and ethical awareness and responsibility; and Leadership and self-development focus on the development of innovative leaders in professional and creative capacities, who are equipped to operate in the 21st Century labour market and make a positive impact as global citizens.

On this programme, attributes are developed through...

Developing and applying a critical understanding of the science of spirituality and its relationship to mental health and wellness (K1-K5, C1-C2, C5). You are encouraged to show creativity in the application of spiritual theory and practice in variety of personal and professional contexts (C5, P5). Reflective practice is emphasised throughout with a particular focus on your own spirituality, mental health and wellness, and in support and promotion of mental health and wellness in others, thus developing leadership and self-development (P2-P4, T1-T3, C1-C5). Social and ethical awareness and responsibility is further developed from both a researcher and practitioner perspective through applied project work (P2-P3, T4-T5).

4. Entry Requirements

The University's [general entry requirements](#) will apply to admission to this programme with the following additions / exceptions:

If you do not meet the entry requirements you may, if you have relevant professional experience, still be invited for interview, where you will be required to demonstrate the necessary knowledge and understanding for entry onto the course.

Previous study, professional and / or vocational experiences may be recognised as the equivalent learning experience and permit exemption from studying certain modules in accordance with our [accreditation of prior learning](#) (APL) process.

5. Programme Structure

Postgraduate Certificate in Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	Core modules: SOC7001 Spirituality & Wellness SOC7002 Nature & Wellness SOC7003 Mental Health & Wholeness	N/A

Postgraduate Diploma in Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	SOC7001 Spirituality & Wellness (20 Credits) SOC7002 Nature & Wellness (20 Credits) SOC7003 Mental Health & Wholeness (20 Credits) SOC7004 Research Practices (20 Credits) SOC7005 Spiritual Practices (20 Credits) SOC7006 Project: Serving Gaia (20 Credits) SOC7007 Dissertation (60 Credits)	Post Graduate Certificate, awarded on achievement of 60 credits at Level 7

Master of Arts in Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health

Level	Modules (Code, Title and Credits)	Exit Awards
Level 7	SOC7001 Spirituality & Wellness (20 Credits) SOC7002 Nature & Wellness (20 Credits) SOC7003 Mental Health & Wholeness (20 Credits) SOC7004 Research Practices (20 Credits) SOC7005 Spiritual Practices (20 Credits) SOC7006 Project: Serving Gaia (20 Credits) SOC7007 Dissertation (60 Credits)	<p>Post Graduate Certificate, awarded on achievement of 60 credits at Level 7</p> <p>Post Graduate Diploma, awarded on achievement of 120 credits at Level 7</p> <p>Masters of Arts, awarded on achievement of 180 credits at Level 7</p>

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year. Other option modules may also be introduced at a later stage enabling the programme to respond to changes in the subject area.

6. Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Learning and teaching

The MA Spirituality, Ecology & Mental Health programme is delivered via blended learning through Blackboard (the University's Virtual Learning Environment) and MS Teams with support from IT and Library services. The course delivery comprises:

Year 1 (Theory Focus)

To start the course you will:

- Connect with your learning community via a live online/in-person opening ceremony where you will reflect together, experience practices and set your intentions for the journey ahead.

For each core module you will:

- Deepen your knowledge and understanding of theory and practice via recorded online lectures where you be guided to structured learning activities such as essential reading, media, practical activities and reflective questions.
- Analyse and evaluate theory and practice via live online seminars where you will discuss and critically reflect on your learning experiences and ideas.
- Relate and synthesise theory and practice via a live online/in-person workshop where you will present and discuss your learning experiences and ideas.
- Support each other via live online learning circles where you will share and reflect on your experiences in a small group of peers with support from your tutor.

To complete the year, you will:

- Celebrate the year completion via a live online/in-person closing ceremony where you will reflect together, experience practices and share appreciation for the journey so far.

Year 2 (Practice Focus)

To start the course/year you will

- Connect with your learning community via a live online / in-person opening ceremony where you will reflect together, experience practices and set your intentions for the journey ahead.

For each core module you will:

- Deepen your knowledge and understanding of theory and practice via recorded online lectures where you be guided to structured learning activities such as essential reading, media, practical activities and reflective questions.
- Analyse and evaluate theory and practice via live online seminars where you will discuss and critically reflect on your learning experiences and ideas.
- Relate and synthesise theory and practice via a live online/in-person workshop where you will present and discuss your learning experiences and ideas.

- Support each other via live online learning circles where you will share and reflect on your experiences in a small group of peers with support from your tutor.

For the project modules you will:

- Apply theory and practice to either via creating a not-for-profit project or volunteering in a not-for-profit placement that serves your local community or the wider community in either the UK or abroad. You will be supported with one-to-one supervision.

For your dissertation you will:

- Explore, evaluate and synthesise theory or practice from the literature via independent learning with one-to-one supervision, in order to suggest new or innovative hypotheses, models, practices, guidelines/recommendations or proposals for new research.

To complete the course/year you will:

- Celebrate the course/year completion via a live online/in-person closing ceremony where you will reflect together, experience practices and share appreciation for the journey so far.

Assessment

You will be assessed using the following

Year 1

You will be assessed using the following strategies:

- **Written Portfolio (Coursework)** where you will deepen your knowledge and understanding of theory and practice.
- **Oral Presentation (Practical)** where you will increase your critical awareness of theory and practice.
- **Written Essay (Coursework)** where you will critically analyse and evaluate theory and practice.

Year 2

You will be assessed using the following strategies:

- **Oral Presentation (Practical)** where you will increase your critical awareness of theory and practice.
- **Written Report (Coursework)** where you will critically analyse and evaluate theory and practice.
- **Set Exercise (Practical)** where you will document the application of theory and practice through a community project or placement.
- **Dissertation (Coursework)** where you will synthesise literature and suggest new theory or practice.

Contact Hours

You can expect to receive approximately 6 hours of scheduled learning activities per week and 6 hours scheduled learning for the project/placement. A full breakdown of contact hours can be found in individual module descriptors.

7. Programme Regulations

This programme will be subject to the *Regulations for Taught Degree Programmes*.

8. Support for learners

The following systems are in place to support you to be successful with your studies:

- The support of a personal tutor
- The support of a personal learning community
- The support of an authentic, empathetic and understanding teaching team, who themselves are supported by reflective supervision.
- A programme handbook and induction at the beginning of your studies
- Library resources, include access to books, journals and databases - many of which are available in electronic format – and support from trained library staff
- Access to Blackboard, our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which is accessible via PC, laptop, tablet or mobile device
- Access to the MyBNU portal where you can access all University systems, information and news, record your attendance at sessions, and access your personalised timetable
- Academic Registry staff providing general guidance on University regulations, exams, and other aspects of students and course administration
- [TogetherAll](#), a resource for emotional support and wellbeing which has free access to an online library of self-help materials, guided group courses and a supportive, anonymous peer community.
- Central student services, including teams supporting academic skills development, career success, student finance, accommodation, chaplaincy, disability disability.service@bucks.ac.uk and counselling counselling@bucks.ac.uk
- Support from the Bucks Students' Union, including the Students' Union Advice Centre suadvice@bucks.ac.uk which offers free and confidential advice on University processes.

9. Programme monitoring and review

BNU has a number of ways for monitoring and reviewing the quality of learning and teaching on your programme. You will be able to comment on the content of their programme via the following feedback mechanisms:

- Formal feedback questionnaires and anonymous module 'check-ins'
- Participation in the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- Programme Committees, via appointed student representatives
- Informal feedback to your programme leader

Quality and standards on each programme are assured via the following mechanisms:

- An initial event to approve the programme for delivery
- An annual report submitted by the External Examiner following a process of external moderation of work submitted for assessment

- The Annual Monitoring process, which is overseen by the University's Education Committee
- Periodic Subject Review events held every five years

10. Internal and external reference points

Design and development of this programme has been informed by the following internal and external reference points:

- The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) L7
- The QAA Subject Benchmark Statement for Psychology L6
- The QAA Characteristics Statement for Master's Degree 2020
- The BNU Qualifications and Credit Framework
- The BNU Curriculum Framework and Design Model (Blueprint)
- The BNU Grading Descriptors
- The University Strategy, Impact 2022

Mapping of Subject Benchmark Statement and any relevant Apprenticeship Standard to Programme Learning Outcomes

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice	X	X	X	X	X		X	X					X		X					
a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship								X	X	X										
originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret							X	X	X	X					X					

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
knowledge in the discipline	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X
conceptual understanding that enables the student: 1. to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline 2. to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.				X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X					
deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X

Subject Benchmark Statement / Apprenticeship Standard:	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.					X					X		X	X	X	X				X	X
qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: 1. the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility 2. decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations 3. the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.					X	X		X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X		

Mapping of Programme Learning Outcomes to Modules

Programme Learning Outcome	Knowledge and understanding (K)					Analysis and Criticality (C)					Application and Practice (P)					Transferable skills and other attributes (T)				
	K1	K2	K3	K4	K5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
Level 7																				
Year 1																				
Spirituality & Wellness	X					X					X					X				
Nature & Wellness				X				X				X						X		
Mental Health & Wholeness		X					X	X									X			
Year 2																				
Research Practices			X						X	X									X	
Spiritual Practices					X					X			X							
Project: Serving Gaia														X	X				X	X
Dissertation					X					X					X					X