



Additional information to the short leaflet

Research Master in Behavioural and Social Sciences

Characterisation of the programme

The programme offers a firm methodological, research-oriented basis that facilitates a strong connection between content-related theories and statistics. The programme uniquely provides training in multidisciplinary theorizing and research, while there are ample opportunities to specialize according to individual interests.

Three themes

The first step into specialization is taken by choosing one of the three themes, which revolve around core research strengths at our faculty. The themes are:

- Mental Health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology (MH)
Specializations: Clinical Neuropsychology | Clinical Psychology | Psychometrics and Statistics
- Lifespan Development and Socialization (LDS)
Specializations: Developmental Psychology | Orthopedagogy | Pedagogical and Educational Sciences | Sociology | Psychometrics and Statistics
- Understanding Societal Change (USC)
Specializations: Environmental Psychology | Organizational Psychology | Sociology | Social psychology | Psychometrics and Statistics

According to the individual interest, a student further specializes via the elective modules, the individual traineeship and the thesis project.

Psychometrics & statistics specialization possible

The student may specialize in psychometrics & statistics, starting from any of the three themes.

Science practitioner

Within the themes MH and LDS students have the option to do a Clinical Science Traineeship. A Clinical Science Traineeship allows students to apply a scientific perspective into work in clinical or clinical-educational practice. A student conducting a Clinical Traineeship follows a fixed programme.

Advanced research training in small groups

The programme offers a unique combination of theoretical and practical training. Teaching takes place in small-scale, group-based education allowing for close interaction with the teaching staff and fellow students. The research projects are supervised on an individual basis, while being embedded in an active research group. Students can gradually learn to identify their own areas of interest and to function as independent researchers in multidisciplinary research projects, offering excellent job opportunities after completion.



Choose a theme, based on your background, interest and ambitions

If you want to apply for our Research Master, you will need to choose one of the three themes, based on your background, interests and ambitions. Please read the following to get an idea what would be of your core interest, and which disciplines are actively involved in each theme.

Choose one of the following themes

Mental health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology

Would you like to gain a better understanding of psychopathological disorders and brain disorders and deficits?

Within the theme Mental Health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology, we combine insights from clinical psychology, clinical neuropsychology, and psychometrics, rendering a unique multidisciplinary approach. We address associations between brain and behaviour, but the programme also has a focus on understanding the causal mechanisms underlying the onset and maintenance of disorders. Moreover, insight in transdiagnostic (dysfunctional) cognitive, emotional, and behavioural processes is combined with insight in specific disorders, their symptoms, and effects on everyday functioning. You will gain the knowledge and tools to conduct fundamental research as well as more applied research on assessment, diagnosis, and improving interventions in healthcare.

Students also have the opportunity to train in advanced diagnostic and other clinical skills to qualify for a postdoctoral training programme. In terms of ECTS spent on clinically relevant components (including courses, traineeship and skills subjects) this is equivalent to the RUG Master's degree in Clinical Psychology or Clinical Neuropsychology- where our programme includes a thorough and more extensive research-oriented training. With a statement of the programme, you can enroll in several postgraduate programs. Please contact us for such a statement or if you want to know more about this option.

Lifespan Development and Socialization

Would you like to gain insights in how individuals develop from relatively dependent infants to active contributors to society?

The Lifespan Development and Socialization (LDS) theme uses a multidisciplinary perspective on human development. Our goal is to better understand the processes that underlie the development of the marked differences in emotions, happiness, creativity, identity, learning ability, motivations, and the comorbidity of somatic and mental problems as they unfold over the lifespan. What is abnormal or healthy? What is the role of culture and society? How are individual differences and lifespan changes reflected in our interactions with parents, siblings, peers, friends, teachers, colleagues, romantic relationships, the jobs we choose, or society more broadly? Our courses cover the domains of Developmental Psychology and Psychopathology, Sociology, Positive psychology, Educational Sciences, and Methodology and Statistics. Happiness, health, and somatic and mental problems can only be understood from a lifespan perspective that also covers the worlds in which we live and grow.

By the end of the programme, students will be proficient in both theoretical and conceptual modeling and empirically studying how interpersonal contexts shape individual development across the life span. In addition, students will master research



method techniques to analyse three-dimensional data (persons, variables and time points), such as dynamic network analyses, time-series analyses, and complex dynamic system models. The programme is designed to prepare students for PhD studies, but also for a professional career in social science research institutes and educational and clinical settings.

Understanding Societal Change

Perhaps more rapidly than ever, modern society is facing major challenges, changes, and demands for resilience. Good examples are the rise of societal tensions (e.g., the influx of migrants, political polarization and protest, terrorism, abusive leadership), the aging and diverse labour market, and climate change. How do individuals and groups cope with and adapt to these and many other changes? And how can they live, work, and interact with others in their changing world?






In the theme Understanding Societal Change you will learn theory and research methods about how individuals, organizations and societies change and adapt from the state-of-the-art from environmental, organizational, and social psychology and sociology. As such you will develop specialized expertise within one discipline and broad knowledge across these disciplines, which enables you to define, explain, and design empirical research about understanding societal change.

Overview of the programme

The programme consists of four types of modules:

- Joint modules: a series of advanced courses on theory building, reflecting on science, research methods and statistics.
- Theme specific modules: a series of modules for a thorough introduction into the theme, from the various perspectives offered by the disciplines involved.
- Elective modules: modules to further specialize in a topic or discipline
- Individual modules: research projects to gain experience in performing research and specialize in your area of interest



	Year 1		Year 2	
	First semester	Second semester	First semester	Second semester
 Theory and training in multidisciplinary perspectives	Theme courses (15ECTS)		Multidisciplinary research in action (5ECTS)	
 Specialization	Specialization courses (10-20ECTS total)			
 Science courses	How to theorize (2.5ECTS)		Reflecting on Science and Integrity (7.5ECTS)	
 Statistics & methodology courses	Advanced statistics (7.5ECTS)	Applied statistics (10ECTS)		
	Elective Statistics & methodology course (5ECTS total)			
 Research experience and professional development		Traineeship (10ECTS)	How to write an effective research proposal (5ECTS)	Master's thesis, possibly including course 'Writing in English' (30ECTS)
			Clinical traineeship (20ECTS)	
	Seminars (including Systematic review and meta-analysis workshop)			



Overview of the programme (total 120 ECTS):

Joint modules		EC
How to theorize		2.5
Reflecting on science and integrity		7.5
How to write an effective research proposal		5
Multidisciplinary research in action		5
Advanced statistics		7.5
Applied statistics		10
Elective methods course, to choose from: Multilevel analysis, Statistical analysis of social networks, Qualitative Research Methods, Statistical modelling of single cases, Structural equation modelling		5
Seminars		2.5
Theme specific modules		
Mental Health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology	Lifespan Development and Socialization	Understanding Societal Change
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> MH: A multidimensional perspective MH: Advanced research methods Choice between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical interventions and e-health for adults and youth Neuropsychological assessment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling interactions between persons and variables over time Lifespan development Socialization 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Theorizing change From problem analysis to intervention design
		15
Elective modules		
Choose from elective modules, such as: Structural equation modelling Statistical analysis of social networks Multilevel analysis Statistical modelling of single cases Literature study Qualitative Research Methods <i>Mental Health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology</i> Evidence-based interventions Experimental psychopathology Research in Clinical neuropsychology <i>Lifespan Development and Socialization</i> Economics and society: Critical transitions in Advanced Industrialised Societies Solidarity and social contexts Development, learning and instruction Complexity, dynamics and development Research in Clinical Neuropsychology Contextualized Assessments & Interventions <i>Understanding Societal Change</i> Understanding working life: Major Theories and Research Trends in Org. Psy. Researching power and leadership Cultural psychology Diversity in society: current issues and challenges Environmental psychology Economics and society: Critical transitions in Advanced Industrialised Societies Solidarity and social contexts		Specialization¹ P&S P&S P&S P&S CN EP P&ES CP CP CN So So DP P&ES Or DP DP Or OP OP SP SP EP So So
		20
Individual modules		
Traineeship		10
Master's thesis		30

¹ P&S: Psychometrics and Statistics P&ES: Pedagogical and Educational Sciences CP: Clinical Psychology
 SP: Social Psychology CN: Clinical Neuropsychology So: Sociology Or: Orthopedagogy
 OP: Organizational Psychology DP: Developmental Psychology EP: Environmental Psychology



Staff involved

All staff members involved in the Research Master programme are affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences at the University of Groningen. Staff members from various disciplines work together to offer our high-quality research programme. A list of our staff members involved in teaching and directing can be found on: <https://www.rug.nl/research/gradschool-behavioural-and-social-sciences/research-master/academic-staff>

Director, coordinators and organization

Director of the programme:	Prof. dr. Marieke Timmerman
Chair Mental health: Perspectives from Neuro- and Clinical Psychology:	Prof. dr. Rafaele Huntjens
Chair Lifespan Development and Socialization:	Dr. Bertus Jeronimus
Chair Understanding Societal Change:	Prof. dr. Martijn van Zomeren
Coordinator Psychometrics & Statistics:	Prof. dr. Marijtje van Duijn

The Research Master's programme is offered by The Graduate School of Behavioural and Social Sciences (rema.bss@rug.nl).

Academic advisor: Iris de Boer, MSc (studyadvice.rema.bss@rug.nl)



Career prospective

Students from previous cohorts have published articles in top academic journals, participated in international research networks, presented their research on international conferences and received high-level research subsidies. After having successfully finished the Research Master BSS, the vast majority of students (about 66%) got positions as PhD-students. The others took a variety of positions, including in clinical practice, and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

A career involving research activities

After graduating as a PhD, the majority proceeds with a career involving research activities, in academic or applied research. Academic research takes place at universities. Examples of applied research involve clinical research as a science practitioner, policy research, research at independent organisations as TNO (<https://www.tno.nl/en>) and CITO (<http://www.cito.nl/>), or at commercial organisations (e.g., test publishers).

Careers of graduates of the Research Master BSS

To give an impression of possible careers, we present here bio sketches of former students. As you will see they specialized in different directions.

- Gijs Huitsing (graduated 2008) is doing research on bullying among children and adolescents. He received an NWO research talent for his PhD project on a social networks perspective on bullying and an NWO Veni for network interventions in the peer context. Currently, he is assistant professor at the Sociology department at the University of Groningen.
- Philippa Hüpen (graduated 2016) completed her Master's thesis on social motivation in patients with autism spectrum disorder. In addition, she completed two systematic reviews during her Master, which resulted in two publications in international peer-reviewed journals. Furthermore, Philippa completed a clinical science traineeship at the university hospital in Essen, Germany. Currently, she works as a PhD student at the University of Aachen in Germany.
- Willem de Kock (graduated 2009) worked on digital learning environments and their effect on transfer of learning. He wrote his PhD thesis at the Groningen Institute of Educational Research on the effectiveness of hints during computer-supported problem solving. He is currently a lecturer in mathematics at the NHL Hogeschool in Leeuwarden.
- Miriam König (graduated 2016) completed her Master's thesis on freezing of gait in patients with Parkinson's disease. In addition, she completed a systematic review during her Master, which resulted in a publication in an international peer-reviewed journal. Furthermore, Miriam completed a clinical science traineeship at the university hospital in Karlsbad-Langensteinbach, Germany. Currently, she is in training to become a clinical neuropsychologist and psychotherapist at the university hospital in Karlsbad-Langensteinbach in Germany.
- Namkje Koudenburg (The Netherlands, graduated 2009) did her PhD research on the emergence and regulation of solidarity through social interaction, at the University of Groningen, department of Social Psychology. In 2014 she received her PhD with the distinction "cum laude". Since September 2013 she works at the University of Groningen, currently as an associate professor, and got awarded a prestigious Veni grant by NWO and received an Early Career Award by KNAW.
- Tanja Krone (graduated 2011) performed her internship at the University of Oslo, on the psychometric properties of a psychological test. She wrote her PhD thesis on



Bayesian Time Series Analysis in psychology at the University of Groningen, department of Psychometrics & Statistics. Currently, she is working as a statistician at TNO near Utrecht.

- Mechteld van Kuijk (2008) investigated the role of adaptive education in furthering motivation and achievement of minority students in primary education. She completed her doctoral thesis in 2014 and was working as a postdoctoral researcher at GION (Groningen Institute of Educational Research) in The Netherlands, where she is the project leader for “Success for All – Nederland”. Currently, she is working as an educational advisor at Hanzehogeschool Groningen.
- Saskia Nijman (graduated 2015) completed a clinical internship at the departments of Psychiatry (UMCG) and Psychotic Disorders (GGZ Drenthe). Thanks to this, she obtained BAPD and LOGO certifications, which are necessary to qualify for therapeutic training (‘GZ-opleiding’ in Dutch). She started a PhD project at GGZ Drenthe and UMCG, aiming to develop and test a Virtual Reality treatment to improve social cognition in people with a psychotic disorder.
- Christien Slofstra (graduated 2012) investigated imagery rescripting as a psychological intervention technique to change the affective impact of aversive autobiographical memories. During the Research Master, she combined research with a clinical internship. She continued her academic career with a PhD on affective change and depressive relapse. Currently, she is working at Lentis as both a researcher in the field of severe mental illnesses and as a clinical psychologist.
- Frederik Wermser (graduated 2015) has started a PhD position at the University of Groningen, Faculty of Economics and Business in September 2015, on identity processes in merging army units. Frederik visited the InterDisciplinary Center, Herzliya (Israel), during his traineeship about Israeli peace activists and wrote his Master’s thesis about core motivations of Israeli and US activists.
- Laura Steenhuis (graduated 2012) worked on projects concerning the role of social cognition and social functioning in the development of psychosis in adolescence. The latter project formed the topic of her doctoral thesis at the University of Groningen. She recently joined a research project about the effectiveness of CBT treatment for anxiety disorders in children, working together with both Accare Groningen and Trimbos Utrecht. She finished her PhD thesis with the title: ‘social predictors of psychotic experiences in adolescence’. She is now working as a postdoctoral researcher at Accare.
- Marijn van Aalst (graduated 2019) worked during his Research Master with several data and analysis technics. He develop a serious interest in data during his traineeship and master’s thesis. He is now working as data analyst/specialist at ABN AMRO.
- Marie Stadel (graduated 2020) has started a PhD position at the faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences on a multidisciplinary research called ‘Capturing a Patient’s Context: Developing experience sampling tools for personalised patient feedback in psychotherapy’.

Further information

For any further information, please contact: studyadvice.rema.bss@rug.nl

Visit: <http://www.rug.nl/masters/behavioural-and-social-sciences-research/>