Life after Fourth Year

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agenda for this session

• what do you want to do?
  – questions to consider
  – career options
  – sources of guidance and advice

• how do you get to where you want to go?
  – outline a longer-term plan
  – questions to consider

• what do you need to do for the next step?
  – outline short-term goals & deadlines
  – questions to consider
  – things (not) to do

• parting thoughts

questions to consider

• What have you enjoyed most in your studies?
• What type of questions and/or problems do you want your work to focus on?
• What type of impact do you want your work to have?
• What sorts of activities do you want your work to include?
• What type of setting do you want to work in?
• What type of work are you suited for? (be honest…)

➔ try to make informed and mindful choices
➔ try to ignore external pressures
  (e.g., family expectations, status concerns)

career options

psychologist

• different areas of specialisation:
  – clinical, clinical neuro, counseling, health, organisational,
  sport & exercise…

• national registration is needed to practice as, or call yourself, a psychologist

• registration requirements after 4 year degree:
  – 2 years of supervised practice or
  – accredited postgraduate degree in psychology
    • Masters = 2 years, Professional Doctorate = 4 years

➔ postgraduate training requires research thesis
➔ explore the different areas of specialisation

career options

psychologist – postgrad programs at UQ

• clinical psychology
  – Master of Clinical Psychology
  – Professional Doctorate: clinical / clinical neuro / clinical gero

• counselling psychology
  – Master of Applied Psychology - counselling

• organisational psychology
  – Master of Organisational Psychology

• sport & exercise or health psychology
  – Master of Applied Psychology – s&e or health

➔ additional programs available elsewhere
career options

related helping professions

• different areas of specialisation:
  – counselling, social work, occupational therapy, education…

• different disciplinary perspectives, typically broader than the individual-level analysis in psychology

• requires a 2 year Masters degree to practice
  – can apply with a Bachelors degree in Psychology
  \(\rightarrow\) may not require research thesis
  \(\rightarrow\) these options may be a good match for your interests and career goals

career options

research & evaluation – postgrad programs at UQ

• Master of Counseling
  – offered by School of Social Work & Human Services
  – www.uq.edu.au/swahs

• Master of Social Work
  – offered by School of Social Work & Human Services
  – www.uq.edu.au/swahs

• Master of Occupational Therapy
  – offered by School of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences
  – www.shrs.uq.edu.au

  \(\rightarrow\) additional programs available at UQ & elsewhere

career options

research & evaluation

• academic research at universities & institutes

• government policy & planning
  – policy development & program evaluation

• applied research
  – public opinion polling, market research, etc.

• Bachelors degree may be sufficient for 1st position…
• …but will need a Masters degree or PhD to advance
  – can apply with a Bachelors degree in Psychology
  – PhD: Honours degree required
  – PhD can be combined with Masters to get registration

career options

other directions

• advertising

• human resources

• management & business administration

• Bachelors degree may be sufficient for 1st position…
• …but will likely need a Masters degree to advance
  – can apply with a Bachelors degree in Psychology

career options

other directions – postgrad programs at UQ

• Master of Business
• Master of Business Administration
• Master of Commerce
• Master of Project Management
• Master of Technology & Innovation Management
  – offered by the UQ Business School
  – www.business.uq.edu.au

  \(\rightarrow\) additional programs available at UQ & elsewhere
Australian Psychological Society (APS) I

• information about **what psychologists do**, focusing on the following areas of speciality:
  – Counselling Psychology
  – Clinical Psychology & Clinical Neuropsychology
  – Community Psychology
  – Educational & Developmental Psychology
  – Forensic Psychology
  – Health Psychology
  – Organisational Psychology
  – Sport & Exercise Psychology

Psychology Career Quiz

• helps you learn **which psychology careers are the best matches** for your interests and personality
• 10 multiple-choice questions
• provides info about different types of psychologists:
  – what they do & where they work
  – how much they earn
  – what training is needed
  – Job outlook
• [http://psychology.about.com/library/quiz/bl-psychologycareerquiz.htm](http://psychology.about.com/library/quiz/bl-psychologycareerquiz.htm)

Australian Psychological Society (APS) II

• information about **other careers with an undergraduate psychology degree**, focusing on:
  – Community Services & Counselling
  – Business
  – Education
  – Health Services
  – Protective Services
  – Graduate Programs
    • Generalist management
    • Human resources

Mini Career Explorer

• covers broad range of work interest areas:
  – analytic or scientific
  – creative or artistic
  – helping or advising
  – nature or recreation
  – organising or clerical
  – persuading or service
  – practical or mechanical
• offers basic information about many occupations
• [http://www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au) ➔ Mini Career Explorer link

**individuals and networks**

• **people from our School**
  – academic & professional staff
  – postgraduate students
  – alumni
• speakers in the 4th year Brown Bag lunch series
• APS student & professional networks
• family, friends, acquaintances…

➔ **cast as wide a net as possible**
Outline your longer-term plan

• What are the education requirements for your chosen career?
  – If multiple options are available (e.g., Masters or Professional Doctorate), which one is most relevant to the type of work that you want to do?
• What are the training requirements for your chosen career?
  – e.g., supervised practice, training programs
• When do you need to complete these requirements?
  – Can you start work in your chosen profession without these requirements?

→ Develop a longer-term plan (2 → 5 years) to get to your chosen career

Questions to consider

• How competitive is entry to the education/training programs? Are you likely to gain entry?
  – If not, you may want to consider a similar career path with fewer / less competitive requirements
• Do the education/training requirements for this career fit with your interests and goals?
  – If not, you may find it tough to complete them
• Do the education/training requirements for this career fit with the other responsibilities in your life?
  – If not, how can you make room for them?
• What sort of timeline do you want to follow?
  – It’s okay to take breaks along the way

→ Try to make informed and mindful choices

What do you need to do now?

• Hone in on the first step in your longer-term plan: this is what you will focus on during 4th year
• For nearly everyone, this first step will involve applications of some kind:
  – Postgraduate program
  – Organisation’s training / internship program
  – Job
• Identify application requirements and deadlines
• Set mini-goals and interim deadlines for:
  – Drafting each part of the application
  – Revising each part of the application

Set short-term goals & deadlines

→ Things to do

• Apply for many, many programs / jobs
  – Typically more qualified applicants than positions
  – Different rules compared to Bachelors/Honours entry
  – Do not assume that you are guaranteed entry
• Get lots of advice and feedback on several drafts of your application (worth saying twice)
• Be organised – Keep track of the materials for your various applications
• Meet all deadlines – Extensions will not be granted

Questions to consider

• Do you know how to complete every part of the application? If not, get help!
• How can you highlight your strengths & suitability for the position in the application materials?
• How can you communicate your passion for this career in the application materials?
• How can you best frame your weaknesses in the application materials?

→ Get advice to help develop your application
→ Get feedback on drafts of your application
things to do

- choose your referee-report/letter writers carefully
  - academic staff who have personally read / marked your work (e.g., thesis supervisor, seminar instructor)
  - work supervisors who can comment on the skills/qualifications required for the position
- give letter-writers lots of time to complete the task
  - minimum 3 weeks
- make things easy for letter-writer by providing:
  - a list of all applications, with deadlines and submission instructions
  - addressed & stamped envelopes (if relevant)
  - solid draft of application materials

things not to do

- do not submit incomplete or hastily prepared applications
  - make the time to do this properly
- do not apply for programs/positions unless you meet all the application requirements
  - if you do not meet all requirements, address this before submitting your application
- do not apply for a program/position unless you are seriously considering that career path or job
  - why take a position away from someone else who really wants to be there?
  - why waste your letter-writers’ time?

it’s all happening now

- deadlines will come up in the next few months:
  - March-May: organisations’ training schemes
  - September-December: postgraduate programs
- developing & revising competitive application materials can take 1-2 months…
- …and that’s after you have spent some time carefully choosing a career path
- start ASAP: block out time each fortnight for career planning
- or else you will be stressed later in the year, and may end up with hastily-prepared application materials

parting thoughts

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go forth with confidence

- It is unlikely that you will succeed at everything…
- …but it is also unlikely that you will fail at everything
- as a psychology graduate, you have a lot to offer:
  - skills in quantitative methodology & statistics
  - knowledge about human behaviour
  - critical thinking and planning skills
- and you are all smart and motivated individuals

questions?

- work hard, work smart, make use of helpful advice and feedback, be open to unexpected opportunities

- do your best and enjoy the ride!