

PSYCHOLOGY BACHELOR'S DEGREE

THE PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR "PREPARATION AND EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH" APPENDIX

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

General information

1. In psychology, the thesis is a portfolio of four individual research papers in the four basic disciplines of psychology.
2. Each research paper aims to raise a scientific or practical question or problem of a psychological nature and to study it in depth.
3. Three of the four individual research papers are of medium length (11-20 pages). According to the decision of the Institutional Council of 12 February 2014, the minimum length requirement for a medium individual research is 11 pages, excluding bibliography and appendices. The fourth, longer individual research paper (30-40 pages) should include empirical work (research study). A registered supervisor should supervise the latter.
4. Individual research work must be in each of the four basic scientific areas, but it is up to the student to decide which area to choose for the longer piece of work, which includes empirical research.
5. The time for the individual research is the last, third year of the BA course. Exceptions to this may be granted by the institute's director only in exceptional and justifiable cases.
6. Failed (graded as one) individual research papers cannot be corrected in the given semester. In the semester of the final examination, if one of the medium individual research papers of a given student is unsatisfactory, the student may rewrite it within the given deadline. If the grade on the rewritten paper is also a failing grade, the student will not be able to complete that individual research (course) again until the following semester. If the assessment of the empirical research paper is unsatisfactory, it cannot be corrected in that semester.
7. For individual research involving empirical research, the choice of a topic supervisor is compulsory. Consultation with the supervisor is encouraged but not mandatory, and the student assumes the professional consequences. If not consulted, the supervisor may indicate this in the textual part of the assessment.
8. The topic supervisor of the empirical research can be any lecturer from the department representing the area who teaches in the psychology department. Of course, the principle of equal supervision load applies. It is up to department heads to enforce this principle.
9. The supervised individual research papers are graded according to specific criteria (see below) by the lecturers with whom the students have written their individual research papers. Grading is conducted on an evaluation sheet using established criteria. The completion of the Evaluation Sheet is compulsory for the supervisor. If he or she feels it is necessary to add textual comments after the evaluation, he or she may do so.
10. The grade for the individual empirical research is weighted twice in determining the overall grade for the thesis portfolio.
11. For all individual research, the student must sign a declaration that the work has been produced in compliance with international copyright standards.
12. The student is obliged to keep the individual research work, to submit it in a summary (portfolio) in the semester of the final examination and to upload it to the Electronic Archive of the University of Debrecen (DEA).
13. The presentation and defence of the supervised individual research is part of the final examination.
14. In accordance with the regulations of psychological training at other universities and the prevailing clear recommendation in the science of psychology, the University of Debrecen's Institute of Psychology requires ethical permission for conducting empirical research in BA and MA courses, as well as in the work of scientific student groups (see: Applying for ethical permission for empirical research conducted by students).

**The three medium-sized individual research papers (11-20 pages)
evaluation criteria**

- the formulation and explanation of the problem (circumscription, professionalism, reliance on an appropriate literature background)
- the correctness of the planned study (sampling, study methods, methods of processing the data obtained)
- the adequacy of references (quantity, quality, compliance with formal requirements in the text and in the references)
- the clarity, editing and style of the individual research paper

A maximum of 5-5 points can be awarded for each of the 4 criteria, for a total of 20 points, divided by the number of criteria. If the result of the division is not a whole number, the mark will be determined according to the rules of rounding.

If one of the assessment criteria for the workshop paper is 0, the paper will be evaluated with a failing grade, but in this case, a written commentary is required.

An additional point may be awarded to a student who

- points out the social and/or professional and/or practical relevance of the psychological issue raised (+1 point);
- the reference section is more in-depth than expected (detailed, relevant and up-to-date) (+1 point).

If extra points are awarded, the sum is still divided by 4.

**The longer individual research paper (30-40 pages), including a research report
evaluation criteria**

- the formulation and explanation of the problem (circumscription, professionalism, reliance on an appropriate literature background)
- the adequacy of references (quantity, quality, compliance with formal requirements in the text and in the references)
- the clarity, editing and style of the individual research
- the quality of the operationalisation of the variables, the findings and presentation of the method
- qualitative and quantitative compliance of the sample selection
- the relevance of statistical analysis to the problem, the quality of presentation and interpretation of results.

A maximum of 5 points can be awarded for each of the six criteria, for a total of 30 points, divided by the number of criteria. If the result of the division is not a whole number, the mark will be determined according to the rules of rounding.

If one of the assessment criteria for the workshop paper is 0, the paper will be evaluated with a failing grade, but in this case, a written commentary is required.

An additional point may be awarded to a student who

- formulates a novel, original problem (+1 point);
- points out the social and/or professional and/or practical relevance of the psychological issue raised (+1 point);
- the bibliography is more in-depth than expected (detailed, relevant and up-to-date) (+1 point);
- the sample size is significantly larger than expected (+1 point).

In the case of a plus point, the sum is still divided by 6.

The formal requirements of the individual research papers are subject to the requirements of the BTK.

BTK-addendum (modified according to the BA in Psychology FAQ)

16. §

(to § 24 (1), (2), (3), (6) and (8) of the DE TVSZ)

(1) The thesis, dissertation, final thesis (hereinafter referred to as the thesis) is a scientific and/or practical study of four specific topics in the four basic areas of psychology, based on independent professional work selected in accordance with the provisions of these regulations, which also testify to the student's thorough knowledge of the subject and his/her proficiency in its application. For each of the individual research papers, the student must declare that the research paper has been prepared in accordance with international copyright rules and is their own independent work. They must attach a signed declaration to all four printed and electronic forms.

(2) Each academic year, the institutes/departments shall announce the offered topics of individual research by the end of the first month of the autumn semester. In the Bachelor's programme (BA), students must choose from the topics announced by the end of the fourth semester at the institute concerned.

(3) The content requirements of the individual research, the general criteria of evaluation and the number of credits allocated to the research are specified in the course credit lists, the course information leaflets and regulations.

(4) A paper that has been awarded the main prize, a prize (1st, 2nd or 3rd place) or a special prize at the OTDK, if it meets the professional requirements of the institute/department, may be accepted as an individual research paper by the head of the institute/department without any special evaluation and with an excellent mark. Outstanding performance in other national or international competitions may be similarly graded based on an institute/departmental opinion.

(5) The scope of the individual research for psychology undergraduate students, in accordance with the requirements of the BTK, is regulated separately by the Institute of Psychology.

(6) The student shall submit a computer-edited, spiral-bound copy of the portfolio of the workshop work to the institute's educational manager by 30 November in the case of the autumn semester and by 31 March in the case of the spring semester, and at the same time upload it in electronic form to the Electronic Archive of the University of Debrecen (DEA). The institute may extend the submission deadline by one week upon request. Only those portfolios that have been submitted in both electronic and paper format may be defended. The head of the department will ask a reviewer (the topic supervisor or another lecturer) to evaluate the individual research paper. The evaluation form, completed and signed by the lecturer, must be attached to the portfolio and submitted to the author of the particular research work at least one week before the final examination.

II. CONTENT AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PAPER

First pages of the individual research paper

Front page:

- Name of university, faculty, institute
- Title of the individual research
- Name of author, year, subject
- Name, title of supervisor
- Place and year of submission of the individual research (Debrecen)

Declaration of individual work in line with research ethics.

The table of contents should be published on the page following the declaration.

Structure of the individual research paper

For a medium-sized individual research paper:

- Title page
- Declaration
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Study plan

- References
- Annexes

For an empirical individual research paper:

- Title page
- Declaration
- Table of contents
- Introduction
- Literature review
- Study
- Conclusions / Discussion
- References
- Annexes

Scope of the individual research paper

The page count of the work from the introduction to the references (excluding the references): For a medium-sized individual research paper, the expected length is a minimum of 11 pages, generally between 11 and 20 pages.

For a large individual research paper, the minimum expected length is 30 pages, typically ranging from 30 to 40 pages.

Recommended structure of the large individual research paper

The title

Be brief, professional and informative.

Declaration

The student must declare that the individual research paper is his/her own independent work, prepared in accordance with international copyright rules, and the signed declaration must be included in the electronic document.

Table of contents

The table of contents should be numbered in Arabic numbers.

Introduction

It defines the topic and outlines its theoretical and practical relevance, as well as its timeliness. The introduction provides an essay-style outline of the literature units and, in light of this outline, defines the more specific topic of the study.

Literature review

The literature review must be closely related to the topic. It summarises and analyses the results presented in the relevant literature, and must be targeted rather than exhaustive. The literature review sets the scene for the study, presents the background to the hypotheses, and links the constructs under investigation to the initial topic. Only your own ideas should be included without references. Still, if possible, references should be included for one's own ideas, even if they are not revolutionary insights, but rather point to a common knowledge base in the literature.

Research study

The description of the study can be divided into the following points: aim of the study, sample, method, and results. In the chapter on the study's objective, after a concise explanation of the aim, the hypotheses are listed in detail. If the research is qualitative, there are no necessarily hypotheses, but the focus of the topic is presented here.

The sample subsection includes the recruitment method, the information provided during recruitment, the sample selection criteria, the main descriptive statistics on the demographics and other basic characteristics of

the sample that are relevant to the research, the respondents excluded from the study, the amount of data, and the reasons for exclusion.

The method chapter covers the study procedure. The research ethics approval number may be indicated here. The study should be described in a manner that allows it to be replicated. The study's method, instruments, and scales used should be described in detail. In the case of an experiment, for example, the full design of the experiment is presented here; in the case of an interview, the circumstances of the interview and the interview outline; in the case of a questionnaire, the question blocks, in the case of a non-standard questionnaire, the questions, in the case of a standard questionnaire, the focus, subscales (with reference to the source), example items.

The results chapter includes reliability tests and descriptive statistics for standard scales in quantitative research. These are followed by a presentation of the hypotheses and possible additional test statistics. In the case of qualitative research, a structured presentation of the data, with or without statistical calculations, is provided. It is important to avoid redundancy in the presentation. The data may be illustrated with figures and tables, numbered consecutively or sequentially, and accompanied by titles. They are referred to in the text together with their serial number, e.g. (see *Figure 1*), in which case they are referred to without a hyphen and in italics. For statistical tests, the procedure and variables should be clearly described; except for exact tests (e.g., Fisher test), the parameter values should be indicated next to the p-values.

In a qualitative study, the data could be, for example, a citation or a frequency table for content analysis. Conclusions can be drawn from these. In the results section, the results are not yet compared with the findings in the literature, but are summarised factually.

The same information should not be presented in more than one form (e.g. a table and a graph of the same data). Results and graphs obtained with statistical software in a foreign language should be included in the paper with Hungarian subtitles only. Data, tables and graphs should always be presented with a reason; it is not necessary to include all the data and tables produced by the statistical program in the appendix. Figures should be captioned so that the reader understands what is shown in the figure, for example, the groups being compared should be named. The captions of tables and figures should follow APA style (for guidance, see apa.org, under the "APA Styles" menu, specifically "Tables" and "Figures").

Conclusions / Discussion

In this chapter, it is useful to summarise the main findings and compare them with the literature. If discrepancies arise, it is essential to discuss the reasons behind them. In this chapter, the findings are presented at the level of constructs, rather than in statistical terms, and no further data or statistics are provided. The summary should provide a brief description of the issues addressed by the study, as well as its main findings and conclusions. The objectives, if any, and the reasons why they were not achieved should be stated boldly and clearly. The limitations of the study should also be discussed, along with suggestions for further development. The generalisability of the results should also be addressed in this section. It is worth considering generalizability in terms of whether a different measurement approach would have led to similar results in a distinct population, the specificities of the approach, and its implications. It is also worth explaining the practical relevance of the results and the extent to which the research represents a step forward in the field under investigation.

References

The references should be compiled with accuracy and care, and a reference should appear in the reference section if, and only if, it has been cited in the text by the thesis author. References cited should be listed in alphabetical order of the first author's name, without serial numbering. The scientific titles of the authors (e.g., Prof., Dr., habil.) should not be included. If the order is not otherwise clear, the shorter name precedes the longer, the single-authored article precedes the multiple-author, and the earlier publication precedes the later. In compiling the literature, the bibliographic entries must contain accurate and verifiable information to ensure retrievability. The format of the bibliography, as well as the in-text citations, must comply with the current American Psychological Association (APA) format requirements, following the APA style, which can be found at apa.org (APA Style).

Annexes

This is where the larger tables and graphs are placed, which would have been difficult to fit in the text. Documents used as a basis for the method (e.g., interview outline, questionnaire) can be placed here.

Differences in the structuring of intermediate individual research

In the case of a medium-sized individual research study, results are not included; however, the planned statistical methods to test the hypotheses should be specified. Discussions are also not included in the medium workshop, but an ending section is needed to close the essay.

Additional formal requirements

- Text structure on each page: 3 cm top, 3 cm bottom, 2.5 cm margin on left, 2.5 cm margin on right, single-spacing, TNR 12 font size, 1.5 line spacing. Larger spacing between larger units may be used, but no blank half-pages should be left.
- Page numbers at the bottom of the page, centred.
- The page numbering of the individual research paper starts on the table of contents and ends with the bibliography.
- The individual research paper may also include annexes with additional documentation and illustrative material. Annexes are not included in the scope of the paper, but are numbered and referred to in the body of the paper.
- Literal quotations should not exceed 10% of the length of the essay.
- The proportion of illustrations and diagrams in the essay must not exceed 20% of the length of the essay.
- It is recommended to use a maximum of three levels of structuring within an essay. The format for APA style headings can be found under "Headings" in the "APA styles" menu on the APA website.
- It is easier to read if the parts of the essay are divided into proportionate paragraphs. A paragraph should generally be longer than a sentence or two, but no longer than a third of a page. Paragraphs should be separated, either by starting the first line of the paragraph 1 cm inside or by a larger line spacing between paragraphs. Avoid footnotes.
- Use *italics* for emphasis only. Highlighting this way of a full sentence or more should be used sparingly.
- Writing numbers
 - Numbers in text below 10 are usually written as letters, while those from 10 upwards are written as numbers. Exceptions are statistics and measures, where numbers are written in figures, and numbers in a series, where a single spelling may be used (e.g., "measurements were taken in the seventh, ninth and eleventh grades").
 - The results of statistical calculations are usually reported to two or three decimal places.
- The clear tables and figures enhance the content and aesthetic value of the individual research papers. All tables, figures, and other elements should be numbered, have a title, and be formatted in APA style.

III. APPLYING FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR EMPIRICAL STUDIES CONDUCTED BY STUDENTS

In accordance with the order of psychological training at other universities and the prevailing clear recommendation in the science of psychology, the Council of the Institute of Psychology decided that empirical research should be subject to ethical permission in the BA and MA courses at the Institute of Psychology of the University of Debrecen, and in the work of scientific student groups; i.e. empirical research by students should only be started with ethical permission.

The rule requires students to seek ethical approval for data collection from the Institutional Research Ethics Committee BEFORE starting data collection. This rule became mandatory from the 1st semester of the 2016/2017 academic year.

To apply, students need to fill in the form, which is provided on the Institute of Psychology website, sign it after their supervisor has given his/her opinion, and have it signed by their supervisor. Applications with attachments (e.g., informed consent, non-standard measures to be attached) are expected to be submitted electronically in a single file. Please insert the page(s) concerned by the signatures in this single file as an image or scanned file in the appropriate place in the application and send the file in .doc, .docx or .pdf format to the Institutional Research Ethics Committee at the address ikeb@arts.unideb.hu.

The application should include a description of the purpose of the research and the instruments to be used in the study, as indicated in the points to be completed (if they are known instruments, it is sufficient to refer to them, although some examples of each instrument may be useful; if they are not known, it is necessary to provide enough information to assess the application). The application should also include the approach to be taken with the subjects (if this is to be done through an institution, a letter of approach to the institution's responsible persons should be included) and the informed consent form for the subjects.

In addition, applicants must answer a few yes-or-no questions (e.g., does the test cause pain?), and if they answer yes to any of these questions, they must provide reasons. A 'yes' answer does not, in itself, preclude approval of the ethical authorisation. Still, it is necessary, for example, to alleviate any concerns, and the way this is done is explained in the justification.

If psychological assessment or patient testing is to be carried out at any level of health and social care, ask about the specific ethical requirements and testing conditions of the institution and obtain the necessary written authorisation.

The deadline for submitting ethics approval for individual research is no later than 90 days before the thesis submission deadline, or 15 December for spring submissions. Suppose the ethics clearance is not submitted by the deadline. In that case, it is the supervisor's responsibility to assess whether the assessment remains feasible, and consent is required for the student to submit the thesis. This written statement must be in the student's possession at the time of submission, but does not need to be uploaded with the thesis. The committee will consider the permissions within 10 working days, and the applicant will be notified accordingly. If, for some reason, this does not happen within 10 working days, it is advisable to contact the operational chair (currently balazs.katalin@arts.unideb.hu) as soon as possible.

The committee assesses whether the research aligns with the general ethical requirements for psychological research. Before filling in the application form, please consult the file "Guidelines for making a declaration", also available on the website. Ethical control and approval of research protect the interests of the subjects and the researchers themselves, as well as the interests of psychological research, and also facilitate the possible publication of research results, as most journals currently require ethical approval for the publication of research findings.