

**KEY PROGRAMME INFORMATION**

<b>Originating institution(s)</b> Bournemouth University	<b>Faculty responsible for the programme</b> Faculty of Science and Technology
<b>Final award(s), title(s) and credits</b> MSc Research Methods: 180 level 7 credits (90 ECTS credits)	
<b>Intermediate award(s), title(s) and credits</b> PG Diploma Research Methods: 120 level 7 credits (60 ECTS credits) PG Certificate Research Methods: 60 credits (30 ECTS credits)	
<b>UCAS Programme Code(s) (where applicable and if known)</b> n/a	<b>HECoS (Higher Education Classification of Subjects) Code and balanced or major/minor load</b> 100959 - research methods in psychology
<b>External reference points</b> QAA Psychology Subject Benchmark Statement (2023) QAA Masters degree characteristics (2020) National Framework for Higher Education Qualifications The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2023) - Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards (October 2014) - Chapter A1: UK and European reference points for academic standards ESRC International Benchmarking Review of UK Psychology (2011) British Psychological Society Accreditation of new UK programmes (2019) British Psychological Society Standards for the accreditation of undergraduate, conversion and integrated masters programmes in psychology (2019) British Psychological Society Code of Ethics & Conduct (2021) ESRC postgraduate training and development guidelines (2022)	
<b>Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) links</b> Not applicable	
<b>Places of delivery</b> Bournemouth University, Talbot Campus	
<b>Mode(s) of delivery</b> Full-time, Part-time	<b>Language of delivery</b> English
<b>Typical duration</b> 12 months full time (September start) 24 months part time (September start only)	
<b>Date of first intake</b> September 2024	<b>Expected start dates</b> September
<b>Maximum student numbers</b> Not applicable	<b>Placements</b> N/A
<b>Partner(s)</b> None	<b>Partnership model</b> N/A
<b>Date of this Programme Specification</b> March 2025	
<b>Version number</b> 1.1-0925	
<b>Evaluation and modification reference numbers</b> E232435 FST 2324 23, previously version v1.0-0924 EC2425 20, approved 14/03/2025	
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## **Programme Specification – Section 1**

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

Programme Award and Title: MSc Research Methods								
<b>Stage 1/Level 7</b>  <b>Full-Time Delivery Mode</b> Students are required to complete two core and one option research methods (RM) units (see table below), the core Research Project unit, and three option units as follows.  Semester 1: one unit from the following specialist areas: Forensic Psychology (FP), Clinical and Developmental Neuropsychology (CDN) or Clinical Psychology (CP). The units are: Investigative Psychology (FP); Neurodevelopmental Diversity (CDN); Roots and Range of Psychological Disorders (CP) Semester 2: one of the following pairs of units: Professional Practice and Court Skills AND Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP); Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology AND Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (CDN); Clinical Skills AND Psychological Therapy I (CP).								
Unit Name	Core/Option	No of credits	Assessment Element Weightings			Expected contact hours per unit	Unit version no.	HECoS Code (plus balanced or major/minor load)
			Exam 1	Cwk 1	Cwk 2			
Introduction to Research Methods (RM)	Core	20		100		20	1.0	100959
Advanced Qualitative Methods (RM)	Option	20		100		20	1.0	100959
Advanced Quantitative Methods (RM)	Option	20	25	75		20	1.0	100959
Digital Methods and Data Skills (RM)	Core	20		50	50	20	1.0	100959
Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP)	Option	20		100		20	1.0	101294
Investigative Psychology (FP)	Option	20		50	50	20	3.0	100387
Professional Practice and Court Skills (FP)	Option	20		50	50	30	2.1	100387
Neurodevelopmental Diversity (CDN)	Option	20		60	40	20	4.0	100497
Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology (CDN)	Option	20		50	50	20	4.0	100497
Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (CDN)	Option	20		50	50	20	4.0	100497
Roots and Range of Psychological Disorders (CP)	Option	20	100			20	1.0	100497
Clinical Skills (CP)	Option	20		50	50	20	1.0	100497
Psychological Therapy I (CP)	Option	20	100			20	1.0	100497
Research Project	Core	60		100		60	3.0	100959
<b>Progression requirements:</b> Not applicable <b>Exit qualification:</b> PG Cert Research Methods requires 60 credits at Level 7. PG Dip Research Methods requires 120 credits at Level 7. MSc Research Methods requires 180 credits at Level 7. Students are required to complete all 7 core units, or a combination of any units for the award of the PG Cert or Dip.								
<b>Placement</b> N/A								

## Programme Specification – Section 1

Programme Award and Title: MSc Research Methods								
<b>Stage 1/Level 7</b> <b>Part-Time Delivery Mode</b> Students are required to complete two core and one option research methods (RM) units (see table below), the core Research Project unit, and three option units as follows.								
<b>Year 1</b> Semester 1: one unit from the following specialist areas: Forensic Psychology (FP), Clinical and Developmental Neuropsychology (CDN) or Clinical Psychology (CP). The units are: Investigative Psychology (FP); Neurodevelopmental Diversity (CDN); Roots and Range of Psychological Disorders (CP)  Semester 2: one unit from the following pairs of units in one of the following specialist areas: Professional Practice and Court Skills OR Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP); Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology OR Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (CDN); Clinical Skills OR Psychological Therapy I (CP).								
<b>Year 2</b> Semester 1: the other unit of the pair of units chosen in the Spring Semester of Year 1, as follows: Professional Practice and Court Skills OR Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP); Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology OR Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (CDN); Clinical Skills OR Psychological Therapy I (CP).								
Unit Name	Core/ Option	No of credits	Assessment Element Weightings			Expected contact hours per unit	Unit version no.	HECoS Code (plus balanced or major/minor load)
			Exam 1	Cwk 1	Cwk 2			
Introduction to Research Methods (RM)	Core	20		100		20	1.0	100959
Advanced Qualitative Methods (RM)	Option	20		100		20	1.0	100959
Advanced Quantitative Methods (RM)	Option	20	25	75		20	1.0	100959
Digital Methods and Data Skills (RM)	Core	20		50	50	20	1.0	100959
Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP)	Option	20		100		20	1.0	101294
Investigative Psychology (FP)	Option	20		50	50	20	3.0	100387
Professional Practice and Court Skills (FP)	Option	20		50	50	30	2.1	100387
Neurodevelopmental Diversity (CDN)	Option	20		60	40	20	4.0	100497
Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology (CDN)	Option	20		50	50	20	4.0	100497
Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (CDN)	Option	20		50	50	20	4.0	100497
Roots and Range of Psychological Disorders (CP)	Option	20	100			20	1.0	100497
Clinical Skills (CP)	Option	20		50	50	20	1.0	100497
Psychological Therapy I (CP)	Option	20	100			20	1.0	100497
Research Project	Core	60		100		60	3.0	100959
<b>Progression requirements:</b> Not applicable <b>Exit qualification:</b> PG Cert Research Methods requires 60 credits at Level 7. PG Dip Research Methods requires 120 credits at Level 7. MSc Research Methods requires 180 credits at Level 7.  Students are required to complete all 7 core units, or a combination of any units for the award of the PG Cert or Dip.								
<b>Placement - N/A</b>								

### AIMS OF THE DOCUMENT

The aims of this document are to:

- define the structure of the programme(s);
- specify the programme award titles;
- identify programme and level learning outcomes;
- articulate the regulations governing the awards defined within the document.

### AIMS OF THE PROGRAMME(S)

MSc Research Methods programme has been developed as a part of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) and aligns with the ESRC Postgraduate Training and Development Guideline. It can be taken as a part of 1+3 PhD programme or as a standalone course. The programme aims to develop MSc graduates who have:

- 1) Knowledge of psychological research methodologies: various research practices, theories and knowledges
- 2) At least a basic level of statistical literacy
- 3) At least a basic understanding and appreciation of qualitative and mixed methods
- 4) Understanding of the use of digital technologies for research purposes
- 5) General research and training skills (such as project management, data management and analysis, ethical and legal issues, digital and bibliographic skills, language skills, skills for engaging with users and for maximising the impact of research, and exploitation or research and intellectual property rights (IPP))

This programme is designed for psychology graduates as well as students from other backgrounds in social sciences and prepares students to undertake jobs in different sectors. Drawing from the range of expertise of the Psychology Department, the programme provides a route into PhD-level research by adhering to the teaching outcomes set by the ESRC but also enables students to develop good understanding of the contemporary quantitative and qualitative methods used in psychological research and allow for building skills for both academic research and research consultancy. Students take three research methods units to enhance their research skills; they learn qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research skills and ethical practice as researchers; transferrable skills such as around communication, time and project management; are offered opportunities for personal and career development, and research opportunities within the department. MSc projects offer a process of mentorship and are aimed, whenever possible, to comprise publishable studies which students will work on alongside their supervisor, thus strengthening their CVs. Students are also required to select subject-specific units offered in other MSc programmes in the Department, within the areas of clinical psychology, neuropsychology, or forensic psychology. These provide in-depth knowledge of area(s) students choose to specialise in and develop understanding of specific research methodologies relevant to their specialism as well as interdisciplinary research.

### ALIGNMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

The MSc Research Methods programme has been designed in accordance with the Bournemouth University's 2025 (BU2025) vision and strategic plan which revolves around the core ideal of the fusion of excellent teaching, world-class research and professional practice. The students are supported by academics with a wide range of experience in quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method research in different areas of psychology. They are encouraged to participate in a range of learning activities that bridge theory and professional practice to help them develop the full range of skills necessary to succeed in research-related professions within and beyond academia. Consistent with the principles of Fusion, students further engage in a range of innovative coursework activities, a pedagogical approach well aligned with the CEL's current delivery focus, offering students the opportunity to learn by engaging in a series of tasks that have a theoretical or practical focus (e.g., writing practical research reports). Further information, including links to the strategic plan and a summary of the University's vision and 'values of excellence, inclusivity, responsibility and creativity' are available from: <https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/about/bu2025-our-vision-values-strategic-plan>.

### LEARNING HOURS AND ASSESSMENT

Bournemouth University taught programmes are composed of units of study, which are assigned a credit value indicating the amount of learning undertaken. The minimum credit value of a unit is normally 20 credits, above which credit values normally increase at 20-point intervals. 20 credits is the equivalent of 200 study hours required of the student, including lectures, seminars, assessment and independent study. 20 University credits are equivalent to 10 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits.

The MSc programme comprises 180 credits. It is composed of 6 taught units with 20 credits (10 ECTS credits), which is equivalent 200 study hours per unit required of the student, including lectures, seminars, assessment and independent study. In addition, students are required to complete a MSc research project worth 60 credits (30 ECTS credits) and which is equivalent of 600 hours study time of which 60 hours are contact time. The assessment workload for a unit should consider the total time devoted to study, including the assessment workload (i.e. formative and summative assessment) and the taught elements and independent study workload (i.e. lectures, seminars, preparatory work, practical activities, reading, critical reflection).

As a general rule, time devoted to assessment represents approximately 25% of the student learning time for a 20 credit unit (i.e. 50 hours), leaving the rest for specific programme-related activities, including lectures, seminars, preparatory work, practical activities, reading, critical reflection and independent learning. Students are expected to undertake a lot of independent working and some self-directed working across the programme as a whole.

Of the time devoted to assessment, every 10 hours of student effort is equivalent to approximately 1,000 words of coursework or 1 hour of examination. Therefore, assessment per 20 credit unit would normally consist of 3,000 words in total or equivalent (e.g. 1,000 words of written coursework, a 5-minute oral presentation, and 1-hour exam depending on the requirements of the unit). Dissertations/Level 7 Final Projects are distinct from other assessment types. The word count for these assignments is 5,000 words per 20 credits, recognising that undertaking an in-depth piece of original research as the capstone to a degree is pedagogically sound.

Students with additional learning needs will be considered by Additional Learning Support (ALS) on a case-by-case basis. If required, a BU "Reasonable Adjustment for Students" request will be made to the Programme Leader (requesting things such as the provision of course materials in advance of the lecture, extra time in written examinations, to record lecture content etc.). The course has been designed to be flexible in this regard. Wheelchair access to the lecture theatres, seminar rooms and the library is provided.

### STAFF DELIVERING THE PROGRAMME

Students will usually be taught by a combination of senior academic staff with others who have relevant expertise. All the staff members delivering the research methods units have extensive experience in designing and running research projects in psychology or neuroscience. The subject-specific units will be delivered by the academic staff, and – where appropriate according to the content of the unit – qualified professional practitioners, and in exceptional cases demonstrators/technicians and research students.

## INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES – AND HOW THE PROGRAMME ENABLES STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE AND DEMONSTRATE THE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

### PROGRAMME AND LEVEL 7 INTENDED PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

<p><b>A: Subject knowledge and understanding</b></p> <p>The MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7) provides opportunities for students to develop:</p>	<p>The following learning and teaching and assessment strategies and methods enable students to achieve and to demonstrate the learning outcomes for the MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7):</p>
<p><b>A1:</b> A comprehensive understanding of research approaches and methods in psychology</p> <p><b>A2:</b> Advanced knowledge of specialized areas in research methods (qualitative or quantitative)</p> <p><b>A3:</b> Knowledge of digital research design, data capture, curation, storage, and digital data analysis</p> <p><b>A4:</b> Advanced knowledge of specialised areas and their applications: forensic psychology, clinical and developmental neuropsychology, or clinical psychology</p> <p><b>A4_CDN1:</b> Advanced knowledge of theories in cognitive neuropsychology and the inherent variability and diversity of the approaches in clinical and developmental neuropsychology across the lifespan.</p> <p><b>A4_CDN2:</b> Advanced knowledge of specialised areas in clinical and developmental neuropsychology and their applications</p> <p><b>A4_CDN3:</b> A comprehensive understanding of research approaches and methods in clinical and developmental neuropsychology.</p> <p><b>A4-FCP1:</b> Thorough knowledge of the inherent variability and diversity of psychology across psychological disorders.</p> <p><b>A4-FCP2:</b> in-depth knowledge of specialised areas and their applications from a therapeutic perspective.</p> <p><b>A4-FCP3:</b> in-depth knowledge of research approaches and methods relevant to clinical psychology</p> <p><b>A4_IFP1:</b> Forensic and investigative psychology with a particular emphasis on how it can be applied to different types of investigation and at different stages of criminal justice;</p>	<p>Learning and teaching strategies and methods (referring to numbered Intended Learning Outcomes):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures (A1 – A4);</li> <li>• Seminar discussions (A1 – A4);</li> <li>• Preparation of oral presentations (A1 – A4)</li> <li>• Self-study of learning materials using directed reading and the VLE (A1 – A4);</li> <li>• Independent research for the dissertation (A1 –A4).</li> </ul> <p>Assessment strategies and methods (referring to numbered Intended Learning Outcomes):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework essays (A1, A2, A4);</li> <li>• Oral presentations (A1, A2, A4)</li> <li>• Professional practice-based coursework (A1, A2, A4)</li> <li>• Data Management Plan &amp; Research Plan (A1 – A3)</li> <li>• Unseen exams (A4)</li> <li>• MSc Dissertation (A1 - A3)</li> </ul>

## Programme Specification - Section 2

<p><b>A4_IFP2:</b> The roles undertaken (including role boundaries) and forensic environments in which psychologists work;</p> <p><b>A4_IFP3:</b> The multidisciplinary nature of the work – how, when and why psychologists engage with other experts and professionals;</p> <p><b>A4_IFP4:</b> The limitations of current knowledge and practices</p>	
<p><b>B: Intellectual skills</b></p> <p>The MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7) provides opportunities for students to:</p>	<p>The following learning and teaching and assessment strategies and methods enable students to achieve and to demonstrate the learning outcomes for the MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7):</p>
<p><b>B1:</b> Develop the ability to review literature needed for academic study at Masters level, managing complexity, uncertainty and ambiguity in the present knowledge base.</p> <p><b>B2:</b> Develop the ability to critically evaluate current literature and advanced scholarship in the discipline.</p> <p><b>B3:</b> Synthesise information from a number of sources in order to gain a coherent understanding of theory and practice.</p> <p><b>B4:</b> Evaluate methodologies and critique them and, where appropriate, to propose new research questions and hypotheses.</p>	<p>Learning and teaching strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures (B1 – B4);</li> <li>• Seminar discussions (B1 – B4);</li> <li>• Practical Workshops (B1 - B4)</li> <li>• Preparation of oral presentations (B1 – B4)</li> <li>• Self-study of learning materials using directed reading and the VLE (B1 – B4);</li> <li>• Independent research for the dissertation (B1 –B4).</li> </ul> <p>Assessment strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework essays (B1 – B4);</li> <li>• Oral presentation (B1 – B4)</li> <li>• Professional practice-based coursework (Brochure &amp; Case Report based on a referral letter) (B1 – B4)</li> <li>• Data Management Plan &amp; Research Plan (B1-B4)</li> <li>• MSc Dissertation (B1 – B4)</li> </ul>
<p><b>C: Practical skills</b></p> <p>The MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7) provides opportunities for students to develop:</p>	<p>The following learning and teaching and assessment strategies and methods enable students to achieve and to demonstrate the learning outcomes for the MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7):</p>
<p><b>C1:</b> A comprehensive understanding of different methodological approaches in psychology and the ability to apply them in practice</p> <p><b>C2:</b> The ability to plan, initiate, design, conduct and report an original empirical project under appropriate supervision.</p> <p><b>C3:</b> The ability to correctly select and apply a range of advanced qualitative or quantitative research methods used in psychology.</p> <p><b>C4:</b> Skills around digital research design, data capture, curation, storage, and digital data analysis</p> <p><b>C5:</b> A comprehensive and advanced subject specific</p>	<p>Learning and teaching strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures (C1 – C4);</li> <li>• Seminar discussions (C1 – C4);</li> <li>• Preparation of oral presentations (C1, C4)</li> <li>• Self-study of learning materials using directed reading and the VLE (C1-C5);</li> <li>• Practical workshops (C1, C3, C4)</li> <li>• Independent research for the dissertation (C2, C3, C4, C5).</li> </ul> <p>Assessment strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework essays (C1, C3, C5);</li> <li>• Oral presentation (C1, C3)</li> <li>• Professional practice-based coursework</li> </ul>



## Programme Specification - Section 2

<p>skills in forensic, clinical or clinical and developmental neuropsychology.</p> <p><b>C5_CDN1:</b> A comprehensive and advanced understanding of clinical and developmental neuropsychology and the capacity to synthesise this information in new and original ways</p> <p><b>C5_FCP1:</b> A comprehensive and advanced understanding of clinical psychology and demonstrate their understanding of ethical principles within clinical practice.</p>	<p>(C1, C3, C5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class test (C3)</li> <li>• Data Management Plan &amp; Research Plan (C1 – C4)</li> <li>• MSc Dissertation (C1 – C5)</li> </ul>
<p><b>D: Transferable skills</b></p> <p>The MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7) provides opportunities for students to develop skill in the areas of:</p>	<p>The following learning and teaching and assessment strategies and methods enable students to achieve and to demonstrate the learning outcomes for the MSc Research Methods programme (Level 7):</p>
<p><b>D1:</b> Critical and independent evaluation of academic and interpersonal performance.</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Analytical thinking and problem-solving skills suitable for a variety of scenarios.</p> <p><b>D3:</b> Competence in communicating ideas and documented findings via written, oral and visual media.</p> <p><b>D4:</b> Synthesize information from literature and/or through research and present the findings succinctly</p> <p><b>D5:</b> The ability to collect, select, and analyse a range of experimental or fieldwork data.</p> <p><b>D6:</b> The ability to distil, synthesise and critically analyse a variety of approaches to problems.</p> <p><b>D7:</b> Initiative, self-direction and personal responsibility in the management of learning and research.</p> <p><b>D8_CDN1/FCP1:</b> Interpersonal and empathic skills arising from an understanding of both individual differences and inherent capacities and limitations of particular groups of people</p>	<p>Learning and teaching strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures (D2, D3, D6, D8)</li> <li>• Seminar discussions (D1 – D4, D6 – D8);</li> <li>• Practical workshops (D1-D7)</li> <li>• Preparation of oral presentations (D1-D4, D6 – D8)</li> <li>• Self-study of learning materials using directed reading and the VLE (D1, D2, D5-D7);</li> <li>• Independent research for the dissertation (D1 –D7).</li> </ul> <p>Assessment strategies and methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coursework essays (D1 – D4, D6 – D8);</li> <li>• Oral presentation (D1-D4, D6 – D8)</li> <li>• Professional practice-based coursework (D1 – D4, D6 – D8)</li> <li>• In-class test (D2, D3, D7)</li> <li>• Data Management Plan &amp; Research Plan (D1 – D4, D6, D7)</li> <li>• MSc Dissertation (D1 – D7)</li> </ul>

## **ADMISSION REGULATIONS**

This information is available on the course webpage: [Courses | Bournemouth University](#)

## **PROGRESSION ROUTES**

Not applicable

## **ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

The assessment regulations for this MSc programme are the University's Standard Postgraduate Assessment Regulations: [6a-standard-assessment-regulations-postgraduate.pdf \(bournemouth.ac.uk\)](#)

## **WORK BASED LEARNING (WBL) AND PLACEMENT ELEMENTS**

N/A

## Programme Skills Matrix

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes		A1	A2	A3	A4	B1	B2	B3	B4	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7
Units																					
L7	Introduction to Research Methods (RM)	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
L7	Advanced Qualitative Methods (RM)	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
L7	Advanced Quantitative Methods (RM)	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x
L7	Digital Methods and Data Skills (RM)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x
L7	Behavioural Analysis of Serious Crime (FP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Investigative Psychology (FP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Professional Practice and Court Skills (FP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Neurodevelopmental Diversity (DN)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Clinical and Cognitive Neuropsychology (DN)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Ageing and Neurodegenerative Disorders (DN)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Roots and Range of Psychological Disorders (CP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Clinical Skills (CP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Psychological Therapy I (CP)				x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	x	x		x
L7	Research Project	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x