Sample course outline
Psychology – General Year 12
Unit 3 and Unit 4

Semester 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Key teaching points</th>
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</table>
| 1    | **Introduction to psychology**  
  • course structure  
  • school assessment policy  
  **Research methods**  
  • ethics in psychology research  
    ▪ participants’ rights – confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights  
    ▪ informed consent procedures  
    ▪ deception in research |
| 2–5  | **Cognition**  
  • definition of  
    ▪ cognition  
    ▪ sensation  
    ▪ perception  
    ▪ attention span  
  • memory  
    ▪ multi-store model of memory – Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968)  
    ▪ sensory register – duration, capacity  
    ▪ working memory (short-term memory) – duration, capacity  
    ▪ long-term memory – duration, capacity, procedural memory, declarative memory – semantic and episodic  
    ▪ strategies for enhancing retrieval of information and improving memory  
      ○ state- and context-dependent cues  
      ○ mnemonics  
      ○ chunking  
      ○ repetition  
  • states of consciousness  
    ▪ selective attention  
    ▪ divided attention  
    ▪ daydreaming  
    ▪ meditation  
    ▪ hypnosis  
    ▪ sleep  
  • physiological indicators of consciousness  
    ▪ brainwaves  
    ▪ heart rate  
    ▪ galvanic skin response  
*Task 1*: Topic test – Cognition
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| 6–7  | **Research methods**  
  • terminology  
  ▪ experimental, non-experimental  
  ▪ scientific, non-scientific  
  ▪ sample  
  ▪ population  
  • experimental research method  
  ▪ independent and dependent variables  
  ▪ operational hypotheses  
  ▪ controlled and uncontrolled variables  
  ▪ experimental and control groups  
  • displaying quantitative data – tables, graphs, diagrams  
  • data interpretation  
  ▪ mode  
  ▪ mean  
  ▪ median  
  ▪ range  
  **Task 2:** Investigation report – Do mnemonic devices improve memory?  
  [Other options – Factors impacting the recall of long-term memories or Comparing selective and divided attention]  |
| 8–9  | **Personality**  
  • personality theories  
  ▪ trait theories – Eysenck, Costa and McCrae  
  ▪ humanistic theories – Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, Rogers  
  ▪ behaviourist theories – Pavlov, Watson, Thorndike, Skinner  
  ▪ social learning theory – Bandura  
  • the relationship between personality, motivation and human performance  
  • advantages, disadvantages and issues related to personality testing by organisations  |
| 10–11| **Relational influences**  
  • friendship formation/determinants of liking  
  ▪ proximity  
  ▪ similarity  
  ▪ reciprocity  
  • types of relationships  
  ▪ pro-social  
  ▪ anti-social  
  • types of solutions to resolve conflict  
  ▪ imposed  
  ▪ distributive  
  ▪ integrative  
  • techniques for resolving conflict  
  ▪ mediation  
  ▪ negotiation  
  ▪ counselling  
  **Task 4:** Topic test – Personality/Relational influences
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12–15</td>
<td><strong>Communication</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• communication styles</td>
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<td>▪ social background – Bernstein</td>
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<td>▪ gender differences – Tannen</td>
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<td>▪ Robinson’s social skills</td>
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<td>• persuasive communication</td>
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<td>▪ source of the message</td>
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<td>▪ nature of the communication</td>
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<td>▪ characteristics of the audience</td>
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<td><strong>Research methods</strong></td>
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<td>• non-experimental (descriptive) research methods</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ case studies, surveys, correlational studies</td>
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<td>• qualitative methods for data collection</td>
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<td>• objective quantitative measures in research</td>
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<td>▪ physiological measures</td>
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<td>• subjective quantitative measures in research</td>
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<td>▪ checklists</td>
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<td>▪ rating scales – Likert scale</td>
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<td><strong>Task 4</strong>:</td>
<td>Externally set task – Week 14</td>
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<td><strong>Task 5</strong>:</td>
<td>Effectiveness of a healthy lifestyle advertisement – Communication</td>
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# Sample course outline | Psychology | General Year 12

## Semester 2

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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| 1–3  | **Biological influences/bases of behaviour**  
• functions of the four lobes of the cerebral cortex  
  ▪ frontal lobe – abstract thinking, problem solving, reasoning, decision making  
  ▪ parietal lobe – primary sensory cortex  
  ▪ occipital lobe – primary visual cortex  
  ▪ temporal lobe – primary auditory cortex  
• methods of studying the brain  
  ▪ electroencephalography (EEG), computed axial tomography (CAT) scan, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI)  
  ▪ case studies – Phineas Gage, Henry Molaison (HM) and London taxi drivers  
  ▪ animal studies – Lashley, Sperry  
**Task 6:** Topic test – Biological influences/Bases of behaviour |
| 4–6  | **Social psychology**  
• group influences on behaviour  
  ▪ compliance  
  ▪ group polarisation  
  ▪ social status and power  
  ▪ conformity and obedience – Asch, Milgram, Zimbardo  
  ▪ bystander effect  
**Task 7:** Essay – Social psychology |
| 7–8  | **Research methods – recapitulation**  
• ethics in psychology research  
  ▪ participants’ rights – confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights  
  ▪ informed consent procedures  
  ▪ deception in research  
• experimental research method  
  ▪ independent and dependent variables  
  ▪ operational hypotheses  
  ▪ controlled and uncontrolled variables  
  ▪ experimental and control groups  
• displaying quantitative data – tables, graphs, diagrams  
• data interpretation  
  ▪ mode  
  ▪ mean  
  ▪ median  
  ▪ range  
**Task 8:** Investigation report – Examining group influences on behaviour or Data interpretation |
| 9–11 | **Developmental psychology**  
• explanations of development  
  ▪ Piaget’s theory of cognitive development  
  ▪ Kohlberg’s theory of moral development  
• cultural bias in developmental theories  
• ways of studying influences on development  
  ▪ twin studies  
  ▪ adoption studies  
**Task 9:** Topic test – Developmental psychology |
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| 12   | **Research methods – recapitulation**  
|      | • terminology  
|      |   ▪ experimental, non-experimental  
|      |   ▪ scientific, non-scientific  
|      |   ▪ sample  
|      |   ▪ population  
|      | • non-experimental (descriptive) research methods  
|      |   ▪ case studies, surveys, correlational studies  
|      | • qualitative methods for data collection  
|      | • objective quantitative measures in research  
|      |   ▪ physiological measures  
|      | • subjective quantitative measures in research  
|      |   ▪ checklists  
|      |   ▪ rating scales – Likert scale  
|      | • use of correlation to establish association between variables  
|      | • statistical significance |
| 13–15| **Culture and values**  
|      | • cultural diversity  
|      |   ▪ conventions and expectations  
|      |   ▪ cultures as social groups – collectivist, individualistic  
|      | • racism  
|      |   ▪ causes of prejudice  
|      |   ▪ reducing prejudice  
|      | **Task 10:** Reduce prejudice campaign – Culture and values |