



SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

PSYCHOLOGY
GENERAL YEAR 12

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2015

This document – apart from any third party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority's moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. Copying or communication of any third party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Disclaimer

Any resources such as texts, websites and so on that may be referred to in this document are provided as examples of resources that teachers can use to support their learning programs. Their inclusion does not imply that they are mandatory or that they are the only resources relevant to the course.

Sample course outline

Psychology – General Year 12

Unit 3 and Unit 4

Semester 1

Week	Key teaching points
1	<p>Introduction to psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course structure • school assessment policy <p>Research methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethics in psychology research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ participants' rights – confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights ▪ informed consent procedures ▪ deception in research
2–5	<p>Cognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • definition of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ cognition ▪ sensation ▪ perception ▪ attention span • memory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ state- and context-dependent cues ○ mnemonics ○ chunking ○ repetition • states of consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ selective attention ▪ divided attention ▪ daydreaming ▪ meditation ▪ hypnosis ▪ sleep • physiological indicators of consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brainwaves ▪ heart rate ▪ galvanic skin response <p>Task 1: Topic test – Cognition</p>

Week	Key teaching points
6–7	<p>Research methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terminology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ experimental, non-experimental ▪ scientific, non-scientific ▪ sample ▪ population • experimental research method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ independent and dependent variables ▪ operational hypotheses ▪ controlled and uncontrolled variables ▪ experimental and control groups • displaying quantitative data – tables, graphs, diagrams • data interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mode ▪ mean ▪ median ▪ range <p>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]</p>
8–9	<p>Personality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personality theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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	<p>Relational influences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • friendship formation/determinants of liking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ proximity ▪ similarity ▪ reciprocity • types of relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ pro-social ▪ anti-social • types of solutions to resolve conflict <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ imposed ▪ distributive ▪ integrative • techniques for resolving conflict <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mediation ▪ negotiation ▪ counselling <p>Task 4: Topic test – Personality/Relational influences</p>

Week	Key teaching points
12–15	<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ social background – Bernstein ▪ gender differences – Tannen ▪ Robinson’s social skills • persuasive communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ source of the message ▪ nature of the communication ▪ characteristics of the audience <p>Research methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-experimental (descriptive) research methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ case studies, surveys, correlational studies • qualitative methods for data collection • objective quantitative measures in research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ physiological measures • subjective quantitative measures in research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ checklists ▪ rating scales – Likert scale <p>Task 4: Externally set task – Week 14</p> <p>Task 5: Effectiveness of a healthy lifestyle advertisement – Communication</p>

Semester 2

Week	Key teaching points
1–3	<p>Biological influences/bases of behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functions of the four lobes of the cerebral cortex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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 <p>Task 6: Topic test – Biological influences/Bases of behaviour</p>
4–6	<p>Social psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group influences on behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ compliance ▪ group polarisation ▪ social status and power ▪ conformity and obedience – Asch, Milgram, Zimbardo ▪ bystander effect <p>Task 7: Essay – Social psychology</p>
7–8	<p>Research methods – recapitulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ethics in psychology research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ participants' rights – confidentiality, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights ▪ informed consent procedures ▪ deception in research • experimental research method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ independent and dependent variables ▪ operational hypotheses ▪ controlled and uncontrolled variables ▪ experimental and control groups • displaying quantitative data – tables, graphs, diagrams • data interpretation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mode ▪ mean ▪ median ▪ range <p>Task 8: Investigation report – Examining group influences on behaviour or Data interpretation</p>
9–11	<p>Developmental psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explanations of development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Piaget's theory of cognitive development ▪ Kohlberg's theory of moral development • cultural bias in developmental theories • ways of studying influences on development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ twin studies ▪ adoption studies <p>Task 9: Topic test – Developmental psychology</p>

Week	Key teaching points
12	<p>Research methods – recapitulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • terminology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ experimental, non-experimental ▪ scientific, non-scientific ▪ sample ▪ population • non-experimental (descriptive) research methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ case studies, surveys, correlational studies • qualitative methods for data collection • objective quantitative measures in research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ physiological measures • subjective quantitative measures in research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ checklists ▪ rating scales – Likert scale • use of correlation to establish association between variables • statistical significance
13–15	<p>Culture and values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conventions and expectations ▪ cultures as social groups – collectivist, individualistic • racism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ causes of prejudice ▪ reducing prejudice <p>Task 10: Reduce prejudice campaign – Culture and values</p>