



Module code	ICP	NQF level	4
Credit value	15	Study duration	9 weeks

Introduction to Cognitive Psychology

Module description

This module is a first introduction to the study of human memory and cognition. This is the study of the mental events and knowledge we use when we recognise an object or a person, have a new idea, memorise facts, understand or solve a problem.

Whilst other fields of study seek to understand these issues through philosophical or non-empirical methods, the central feature of cognitive psychology is its scientific approach to the study of brain and behaviour; particularly, the argument that if mental processes exist that they can be studied scientifically.

Cognitive psychology has broad applications to other disciplines and fields outside of experimental psychology and this module will introduce you to the application of theories and research in this area to fields such as education and medicine.

This module aims to:

- Develop students':
 - knowledge of the role of memory as the mediator of cognitive processes
 - experimental experience through data collection and analysis
 - capacity to apply the knowledge of cognitive psychology to other disciplines
 - ability to apply the principles of cognitive psychology to the development of their own critical thinking

Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

- critically evaluate the evidence that thinking can be improved
- demonstrate application of the relationship between acquisition, retention and retrieval of knowledge to real world situations
- demonstrate understanding of the basic principles of experimental design
- carry out a literature search using an academic data base

Syllabus

- An introduction to the history and science of cognitive psychology
- Critical thinking
- The acquisition, retention and retrieval of knowledge
- The relationship between thought and language
- An introduction to decision making, problem solving and creative thinking
- Applications of cognitive psychology
- Ethics in cognitive psychology

Learning and teaching methods

The pedagogical approach for this module is informed through the principles of collaborative enquiry, constructionism and scientific apprenticeship.

Collaborative enquiry is supported through our internet-mediated learning platform that aims to develop a learning community and support dialogue and collaboration between students. This is encouraged through online peer discussion and debate to construct a unique learning experience that enhances students' subject understanding through social interactions and empowers them to explain their understandings, and receive feedback from tutors and peers.

Learning through scientific apprenticeship will take place through the integration of scientific knowledge, principles and experience into the practical application of scientific communication (scientific report).

Teaching will be delivered through the provision of specified reading materials that will be provided on the University of Essex Online learning platform, and will be supported by specified discussion forums, pre-recorded lecturecasts and biweekly online question and answer sessions (using synchronous communication software and application sharing facility).

Students will be provided with indicative guidance on, and encouraged to look at relevant websites which are appropriate to the learning outcomes, and to identify and share appropriate web-based resources (as learning support references) with their fellow students.

The pre-recorded lecturecasts and the online question and answer sessions will include referenced use of selected case studies which will be drawn from the reading materials and the practice-based and professional/educational contexts and experience of the tutors.

Self-managed learning will supplement lectures and students will be given direction on required and indicative reading.

Description of unit of assessment	Length/Duration	Submission date	Weighting
Collaborative Learning Question: Post a 500-word response to a tutor posed question. Respond to two of your peer's posts (300 words per response). Your answers must be evidence based and supported with psychological literature.	1,100 words	Continuous	30%
Scientific report	2,000 words	End of module	70%