



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

Introduction to Social Psychology

Module description

Gordon Allport (1968) described social psychology as the study of how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others. To some extent we are all social psychologists because to get by we need to have a well-developed understanding of why people behave in the ways that they do. This common sense, intuitive understanding is not the same as being an empirical scientist and this module will be an introduction to the scientific investigation into the ways in which people, as individuals or in groups, influence on another.

This module aims to:

- Develop students':
 - knowledge of the theories and methods in the field of social psychology
 - attentiveness to the ethical principles for research and conduct, as set by the British psychological society
 - social learning skills through a combination of independent and collaborative knowledge creation exercises

Learning outcomes

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

- define social psychology and demonstrate an understanding of what social psychologists do
- demonstrate understanding of ethical conduct in psychology
- critically evaluate how we process, store and use information about ourselves and other people
- critically evaluate how attitudes are formed and changed

Syllabus

- An introduction to the science of social psychology
- Social cognition and social knowledge (forming impressions, schemas and categories, stereotypes)
- Self and identity
- Causal attribution
- Heuristics and judgements
- Attitudes and behaviours
- Ethics in social 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.

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%
Essay	2,000 words	End of module	70%