THIRD LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY COURSES –
THEORY COURSES

PLEASE NOTE: This handbook covers the six L3 theory courses only.
Please refer also to the L3 General Handbook, and the L3 Methodology
Handbook (Psychology Honours students only).

MEMBERS OF STAFF IN CHARGE:
Psychology Honours & Behavioural Studies degrees:  Dr Rachel Swainson
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AIMS OF THE COURSES

Students are given the opportunity to pursue many of the themes introduced in the first two years of psychology in greater detail and depth. The course consists of lectures and tutorials. The tutorial system allows you to develop your writing and oral communication skills. The Level 3 timetable allows the opportunity for individual and independent study and you are expected to undertake background reading in addition to specified course work.

First half session  Second half session

Biological Psychology  PS3014  Memory and Language  PS3519
Psychological Assessment  PS3011  Developmental Psychology  PS3518
Perception  PS3012  Social Psychology  PS3517

Each course includes lectures and tutorials.

TUTORIALS

The Function of the Tutorial System

The function of tutorials is to broaden your knowledge of the concepts and content of the subject areas covered at Level 3. Tutorials are not designed simply to cover lecture material in greater detail. You will be expected to prepare work prior to the tutorials and take part in an assessed activity during tutorials. In addition, you will undertake a piece of assessed written work for each lecture course.

Attendance at tutorials is compulsory.

Transferable skills

This element of the level 3 curriculum is aimed to facilitate the acquisition of the following transferable skills:

• **Communication skills**, including the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

• **Analytic skills**, including the ability to gather, analyse, assess and discuss primary data and secondary literature.

• **Information Technology Skills**, such as word processing, email, use of the internet, and web searching.

• **Personal and Organisational Skills**, such as the ability to undertake self-directed study, and to plan and submit work within an appropriate deadline.
The Tutorial System

You will attend a total of three two-hour tutorials during each half session – one for each of the lecture courses (i.e., one for Psychological Assessment, one for Perception, etc.). There will be an assessed activity during each tutorial for which you will be required to prepare beforehand – please look up the course on MyAberdeen to find out what work you should prepare (see the documents “Level 3 Tutorials - First Half-Session / Second Half-Session”, “L3 Tutorial Groups & Times” and “Level 3 Tutorial Allocations” – N.B. documents for the second half-session will be available at the beginning of the second half-session). Giving a satisfactory performance in the tutorial activity is part of the work of the course, and this will form part of the course assessment (5% of your overall mark).

You are also required to complete a written assignment for each course (i.e., one for each of Perception, Psychological Assessment and Biological Psychology in the first half-session, and for Memory and Language, Developmental Psychology and Social Psychology in the second half-session). Your mark for this assignment will form 20% of your final mark for each course.

Two copies of each written assignment must be submitted to the School Office by the appropriate date of submission. Please note that the Office closes at 4pm, and students arriving after 4pm will not be allowed to submit their written assignment. Written assignment must be word processed. Late assignments will be penalised (-1 for the weekend, -1 for each week day). In addition, an electronic copy of each assignment must be submitted to the Turnitin Plagiarism Detection website. You will not receive an essay mark until your work has been submitted for plagiarism detection; you will also be penalised (in the same way as for the hard copy) for late submissions to Turnitin.

Also, as part of the tutorial system, you are encouraged to attend School Research Seminars. These seminars are given by members of staff and postgraduates and invited speakers from other universities. Attendance at research seminars is not compulsory, but may be beneficial as they expose you to a range of different areas of research and provide an important and enjoyable way of keeping abreast of developments in Psychology. Research seminars will be advertised each week within the School and usually take place at 3.30pm every Thursday during term, in room T1 in the School. If you have any queries about research seminars please contact the seminar co-ordinators, Dr David Pearson or Dr Margaret Jackson.

It is advisable to keep back-up copies of all word-processed documents such as your written assignments and any written preparation work for tutorials. Computers sometimes fail, and you may not be granted an extension for work which is late for this reason.
PLANNING AND USE OF TIME

The Level 3 theory courses consist of lectures and a wide range of class activities during tutorials. It is essential that you make the time to familiarise yourself with lecture material and to pursue the recommended reading for each of the courses. Tutorials will involve extra background reading and it is important that you organise your time so that this work is carried out effectively. There are a number of ‘empty slots’ in the timetable of Level 3 courses. These slots are included in the timetable of work so that you can pursue private study and library work.

MARKS FOR CLASS WORK

Written assignments are marked on the University Common Assessment Scale (CAS) described elsewhere this Handbook. For the theory courses, the mark for the written assignment required for each course will count towards 20% of the overall assessment for that course, while 5% of the mark will come from satisfactory performance in the tutorial activity.

EXAMINATIONS

There is a ninety-minute exam for each Level 3 course. The examination assessment contributes 75% towards the overall assessment for the theory courses. Please note that you must write legibly in examinations. Scripts that cannot be read because of extremely poor handwriting will not be marked. The theory courses are examined by essay questions. Students are asked to write one essay answer from a selection of three essay questions in each of two sections. Note that the January course assessments are provisional until approved by the External Examiners in June.
LEVEL 3 THEORY COURSES
LECTURE TIMETABLE

First Half-Session

The following timetable shows the times and locations for the lectures. Details on the tutorials will be provided separately.

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<td>9-10am</td>
<td>Meston MT1</td>
<td>Psychological Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed’day</td>
<td>9-10am</td>
<td>King’s College F7</td>
<td>Perception</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>9-10am</td>
<td>King’s College F7</td>
<td>Biological Psychology</td>
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Second Half-Session

The following timetable shows the times and locations for the lectures. Details on the tutorials will be provided separately.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>9-11am*</td>
<td>King’s College F7</td>
<td>Social Psychology</td>
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<td>N.B.</td>
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<td>Weeks 1-6 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed’day</td>
<td>9-11am*</td>
<td>King’s College F8</td>
<td>Developmental Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
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<td>Weeks 1-6 only</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>9-10am</td>
<td>King’s College F7</td>
<td>Memory and Language</td>
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Note
All students take each theory course and associated tutorials. The only exceptions are

Neuroscience: Perception and Biological Psychology (first semester)
Memory and Language (second semester)

Non-graduating students: options agreed with Advisor of Studies
FIRST
HALF-SESSION
LEVEL 3 PS3011 CREDITS 15

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Aims

The main aim of this course is to outline and evaluate various methods of psychological assessment and discuss the application of psychological tests to important settings such as clinical psychology. The course also aims to provide you with an understanding of psychometric theory, which is important to understand key issues in assessment. The course includes some historical background to developments in psychological assessment, considers applications of psychological assessment in a wide range of settings, and includes discussion of legal and ethical issues surrounding test administration and interpretation. This course will develop skills in thinking critically about psychological assessment techniques, and link theoretical and applied aspects of psychometrics and psychological assessment.

Learning Outcomes

Be able to evaluate critically in written essays and group discussions the following topics relating to the course syllabus:
1. Principles of psychometrics
2. The merits of different methods of psychological assessment.
3. The issues associated with using and interpreting tests.
4. Ethical and legal issues surrounding use of psychological assessment.
5. Different assessment techniques to measure cognitive abilities and mood.
6. The advantages and disadvantages of different forms of assessment in clinical, neuropsychological and occupational situations.

Staff

Prof Louise Phillips (Course co-ordinator)
Prof Louise Phillips, Prof John Crawford (Course lecturers)
Various staff (tutorials)

Assessment

1 ninety-minute written examination (75% of assessment)
Essay (20% of assessment)
Essay plan (5% of assessment)

Teaching methods

Lectures, tutorial.
Lecture syllabus

Note that weblinks for each lecture and questions to aid analysis of course material are available via MyAberdeen.

Introduction to assessment (LP)
History of psychological testing, standardisation and norming, test bias

Basic psychometrics (JC)
Reliability, validity and norms

Assessing abilities (JC)
Theories and measurement of intelligence

Assessing mood (JC)
Measurement of anxiety and depression

Occupational assessment (LP)
How organizations select future employees: autobiographical data, interviews, cognitive ability tests, personality tests, work samples, assessment centres

Basic methods of clinical neuropsychological assessment. (LP)
Uses of clinical neuropsychological assessment, assessing cognitive dysfunction: intelligence, memory, language; assessing executive functions

Measurement and interpretation issues in neuropsychological assessment.(LP)
Procedures of neuropsychological assessment, assessment of deficits and changes in psychological functioning, evaluation and interpretation of neuropsychological assessment data, problems in clinical assessment

Assessment in old age and dementia (LP)
Psychological contributions to diagnosing and assessing dementia, problems of differential diagnosis, assessing cognition, functional capacity and quality of life in old age

Forensic and legal aspects of psychological assessment. (LP)
Psychological assessment evidence in court, specific aspects of legal assessment, assessment of malingering

Recommended reading

General texts on assessment

**Neuropsychological assessment**


**Progress Requirements**

Students are expected to attend tutorials, prepare for and participate in a tutorial activity, and submit a written assignment. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”.
LEVEL 3 PS3012 CREDITS 15

PERCEPTION

Aims
To present experimental data and associated theories relating to selected areas of visual, haptic, nociceptive and tactile perception.

The course will start with conceptual issues related to perception, outlining relationship between sensation and perception in relation to sensory illusions. Historical approaches to quantifying the relationship between the physical parameters of the stimulus and psychological percept such as Weber’s (1795-1878), Fechner’s (1801-1887) and Stevens’ (1906-1973) laws are discussed. The course will then continue with details of more recent observations and models related to perception of features such as colour and structure. Other topics such as eye movements, aging, visual masking and haptic perception are also discussed.

Learning Outcomes

Academic Excellence:
To have an in depth understanding of the following:

1. How the perception of surface colours is affected by the number of different retinal photopigments. Abnormal perception of colour in cases of acquired and congenital colour vision deficiencies.
2. Parameters affecting the detection of basic structures. What are the spatial and temporal properties for the detection of simple achromatic gratings?
3. The changes that occur during healthy ageing in vision – from perception to neural reorganization.
4. Parameters that are important for face recognition and encoding.
5. Touch and pain perception from the skin to the brain.
7. The visual masking paradigm and how it can be used to study temporal aspects of perception.
8. How the neural representation of perceptual space can be studied...

Critical Thinking and effective communications:
Be able to evaluate critically in oral debates, written reports and a degree examination the topics stated above. In particular, you will be required to conduct a literature search on evidence related to a particular debate topic and critically assess a number of scientific journal and media reports.

Learning and personal development:
You will be expected to prepare material related to your assigned debate topic prior to your workshop in your own time, and discuss the strengths and
limitations of a set of scientific issues reported in the media. Feedback will be provided through peer assessment and on the written assignment.

Active Citizen: You will be made aware of how basic research findings from visual perception are used in attracting people’s attention or to modify their behaviour. These include, advertising, marketing, and hazard avoidance.

Staff

Prof. A. Sahraie (Course Co-ordinator)
Dr. F. Hermens
Dr. K Pilz
Various staff (tutorials)

Assessment

Peer-assessed debate during the workshop (5%)
Submitted 600 word summary of the workshop debate (20%)
1 Ninety-minute written examination (75%). Examination will consist of two sections, each containing 3 questions. You will be required to write 2 essays, one from each section. The list of topics that may be covered in each section is given above.

Teaching Methods

Lectures, workshop.

Workshop: Scientific research is publicised within the media on daily basis. The reports are often based on recent findings published in the scientific literature. This representation in the popular media is often biased and void of the caveats discussed by experimenters. Moreover, it is often the case that not all the research limitations are reported by the scientists. You will be allocated a recent report from the popular media in advance of your workshop. You will need to analyse the report in relation to the relevant scientific literature and discuss your findings in a small group in the workshop. Following the workshop you will need to submit a 600 word summary of the strengths and limitations of the publicised work, aimed at the University community.

Lecture Syllabus

Section A

Lecture 1 (Prof. Sahraie): Introduction to course, principles of Psychophysics
What is threshold sensitivity? Methods for psychophysical determination of thresholds for detection.

Lecture 2 (Prof. Sahraie): Colour perception.
Differences in perception of light intensity and wavelength. Photo-pigment types and encoding of wavelength. L, M & S signals and colour opponency.

**Lecture 3** (Prof. Sahraie): *Colour perception (colour vision abnormalities).*
Colour vision abnormalities. Assessment of changes in colour vision.

**Lecture 4** (Prof. Sahraie): *Spatial vision (contrast sensitivity)*
Use of sinusoidal gratings in visual sensitivity experiments and the determination of the contrast sensitivity function (CSF). Spatial and temporal characteristics of human visual system.

**Lecture 5** (Dr. Hermens): *Eye movements.*
Why people (and some animals) make eye movements? What are the different types of eye movements? How does the visual system decide what to look at next?

**Section B**

**Lecture 6** (Dr. Hermens): *Visual masking.*
What is visual masking? Discussion of the applications and types of visual masking. What is the masking function and why is it of interest?

**Lecture 7** (Dr. Karin Pilz): *Healthy ageing and changes in visual perception*
Visual changes that occur during healthy ageing on the basis of perception, neuronal properties and cortical pathways.

**Lecture 8** (Dr. Karin Pilz): *Face recognition in the human brain*
Are faces ‘special’? What kind of information is important to encode and recognize faces and how are faces processed in the brain?

**Lecture 9** (Dr. Karin Pilz): *Tactile perception and pain*
Skin anatomy and the physics of cutaneous stimulation, somatosensory cortex and tactile perception, and the emergence of pain.

**Lecture 10** (Dr. Hermens): *Perception of visual and haptic space.*
What are visual and haptic space and how to measure each?

**Recommended Reading**

There is no single text book for this course. Material will be covered from a number of standard textbooks given below. In addition, a number of journal articles will be referenced during the lectures. Copies of the articles can be obtained either from the library or via e-journal links.


**Progress Requirements**

Students are expected to attend workshops, actively participate in debates, and submit a piece of written work. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”.
LEVEL 3  PS3014  CREDITS 15

BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Aims

The aim of this course is to extend on previous coverage concerning the biological basis of behaviour and cognition. The lectures on psychopharmacology will provide accounts of the mechanisms underlying the effects of a number of different psychoactive drugs, and the role of psychopharmacology in increasing understanding of both normal and abnormal brain function will be discussed. The following six lectures (lectures 7-12) focus on brain function and memory, and examine whether biological data on brain function can and should be applied to criminal justice settings – for example, to help establish guilt or innocence.

Learning outcomes

Academic excellence: To further knowledge of the relationship between biological processes affecting the brain and normal and abnormal behaviour and cognition.

Critical thinking and effective communication: Students will learn to critically evaluate topics related to biological psychology and to communicate this in coursework and exam essays.

Learning and personal development: Students will acquire skills to understand and evaluate different approaches to research in biological psychology.

Active citizenship: The course will help to give students a better appreciation of the multiple causes of abnormal behaviour and cognitive processes, as well as developments in the application of biological psychology to many real-life circumstances.

Staff

Dr. Sutherland (Course co-ordinator)
Dr. Allan, Dr Sutherland (Course lecturers)
Various staff (tutorials)

Assessment

1 ninety-minute written examination (75% of assessment)
Essay (20% of assessment)
Tutorial activity (5% of assessment)

Teaching Methods

Lectures, tutorial.
Lecture syllabus

Lectures 1 – 6  Human Psychopharmacology  Dr Sutherland


Lecture 4. The neurotransmitter dopamine. The role of dopamine in Parkinson’s disease and schizophrenia. The role of dopamine in pleasure/reward behaviour and drug dependence.

Lecture 5 The neurotransmitter serotonin. The effects of serotonergic agonists and antagonists on mood, cognition and social behaviours. Serotonin and depression. Hallucinogenic / psychedelic drugs.


Recommended textbook


Lectures 7 – 12  Biological Psychology in the Dock  Dr Allan

Lecture 7. The mind: what is it, and where is it?

Lecture 8. The mind: why timing is everything.

Lecture 9. Do we remember the truth and nothing but the truth? (Part 1)

Lecture 10. Do we remember the truth and nothing but the truth? (Part 2)

Lecture 11. On the fit between biological data and psychological models of memory.

Lecture 12. Biological psychology in the courtroom: a cautionary tale
Recommended reading

Specific readings will be provided by Dr Allan for each lecture

Progress Requirements

Students are expected to attend tutorials, prepare for and participate in a tutorial activity, and submit a written assignment. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”. 
SECOND
HALF-SESSION
LEVEL 3  PS3517  CREDITS 15

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Aims

To introduce students to a range of topics in experimental social psychology. The course will commence with a brief conceptual overview of experimental social psychology. Consideration will then be given to a range of core topics in social cognition. The historical context of each topic will be covered prior to an analysis of contemporary theoretical and empirical research.

Learning Outcomes

- Academic excellence: Students will be able to describe major social psychological theories and central findings from contemporary research in core topics in the area.
- Critical thinking and effective communication: Students will be able to evaluate and articulate how research in social psychology can inform societal issues.
- Learning and personal development: Students will learn the skills to understand and evaluate the scientific basis of claims regarding everyday social phenomena.
- Active citizenship: Students will become aware of the moral and ethical implications of social psychological theory and research.

Staff

Professor Neil Macrae (Course co-ordinator and lecturer)
Dr Lynden Miles (lecturer)
Various Staff (tutorials)

Assessment

1 ninety-minute written examination (75% of assessment)
Written assignment (20% of assessment)
Tutorial activity (5% of assessment)

Teaching Methods

Lectures and tutorial.

Lecture Syllabus (6 x 2 hour lectures)
Lectures 1  Social Perception and Action
Lectures 2  Embodiment
Lectures 3  Stereotyping
Lectures 4  Mind Perception
Lectures 5  Affective Forecasting
Lectures 6  Consciousness

Recommended Reading
Lists of specific references to review and journal articles will be given with each lecture.

Progress Requirements
Students are expected to attend tutorials, prepare for and participate in a tutorial activity, and submit a written assignment. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”.
LEVEL 3 PS3518 CREDITS 15

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Aims
To consolidate and extend students’ knowledge of a number of core areas of developmental psychology.

This course will examine both historical and contemporary issues and findings in perceptual development, language development, social and emotional development, and developmental psychopathology. The course will also cover a number of key conceptual issues including the role of nature versus nurture in human development, modularity and modularization, and the contribution of research on atypical development to our understanding of normal functioning.

Learning Outcomes
Be able to evaluate critically in written class and examination assessments, oral presentations, and group discussions the following topics relating to the course syllabus:

1. Academic Excellence: Students will develop an appreciation of social, cognitive and biological factors in children’s development; the role of nature versus nurture in the development of language, and theory of mind; modularity, modularization, and social input; and, the historical context of studies examining the development of social cognition and infancy and the advances made in this field.

2. Critical Thinkers and Effective Communicators: Students will develop the ability to think critically in the following areas: (1) Perceptual Development: Research methods appropriate to the study of neonatal looking preferences; theories of neonatal preference for the human face (2) Language Development: Stages of language acquisition through infancy and early childhood; theories of language acquisition (Chomsky’s theory, information processing theory, learning theory, modelling, and evidence from Sign Language) (3) Social and Emotional Development: Research methods appropriate to the study of children’s understanding of other people; the development of children’s theory of mind; developmental watersheds in children’s appreciation of mental states; social, cognitive, and biological factors affecting the development of children’s understanding (4) Developmental psychopathology: the developmental trajectories of perceptual, language, and social and emotional processing in children with Williams Syndrome and Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Cognitive-level explanations of autism.
Students will be given the opportunity to become effective communicators by preparing and delivering oral presentations to their peers and tutor in one of the areas above.

3. Learning and personal development: Students will be given the opportunity to acquire skills (through group discussion, library work, oral presentations and essay writing) that will help them to critically evaluate theories and research within core areas of developmental psychology.

4. Active Citizenship: The emphasis of this course is social cognition and the factors that affect the development of those abilities that facilitate interactions with other human beings.

Staff

Dr Hosie (Course co-ordinator and Lecturer)
Dr Hosie and various staff (tutorials)

Assessment

1 ninety-minute written examination (75% of assessment)
Written assignment (20% of assessment)
Tutorial activity (5% of assessment)

Teaching Methods

Lectures, tutorial.

Lecture Syllabus

The lecture course begins with a discussion of those psychological attributes that are critical to our understanding of what it is to be ‘human’. The lectures focus upon:

(1) Perceptual development (in particular those studies examining early looking preferences for the human face). The different research methodologies used by studies in this field are discussed and theoretical explanations for early face preferences are evaluated.

(2) Language acquisition. The stages involved in language development during infancy and childhood are discussed. Theoretical explanations of language acquisition are evaluated (e.g., Chomsky’s theory, information processing theory, learning theory, modelling). The contribution of studies of natural sign language to our understanding of language development is also considered.

(3) Social and Emotional Development. The ages at which infants and children’s demonstrate an awareness of different mental states (e.g. intentionality, desire, pretense, belief) is considered and the question of developmental watersheds in children’s conceptual understanding is
discussed. The types of methodology used to examine children’s mental states is also discussed and special consideration is given to the role of the false-belief task in children’s understanding of belief states. The social, cognitive, and biological factors that might affect children’s awareness of mental states is also examined.

(4) Developmental Psychopathology. These lectures focus upon the abilities of children with Williams Syndrome (WS) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The lectures on Williams Syndrome focus upon the unusual developmental trajectories of the perceptual, social, and language abilities of children with this disorder. The lectures on Autism examine the unusual cognitive profiles of children with ASD as well as the major cognitive-level explanations for this disorder (i.e. the theory of mind hypothesis, executive dysfunction, and weak central coherence). Similarities and differences between WS and ASD are also discussed.

(5) In light of the material covered, students at the end of the course are invited to reflect upon a number of key conceptual issues, including: (i) the role of social, cognitive and biological factors in human development; (ii) Nature versus nurture; modularity versus modularisation; (iii) the contribution of atypical development to our understanding of normal functioning. Finally, the findings of the course are discussed within an historical context, with the aim of illustrating to students the extent of the progress that has been made within different fields of developmental psychology in recent years.

**Recommended Reading**

A reading list will be distributed at the beginning of each lecture module.

**Progress Requirements**

Students are expected to attend tutorials, prepare for and participate in a tutorial activity, and submit a written assignment. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”.
LEVEL 3 PS3519 CREDITS 15

MEMORY AND LANGUAGE

Aims

To consolidate and extend previous coverage of cognitive material by presenting a discussion and critique of experimental data relevant to: learning and memory, autobiographical memory, and language processing.

Learning Outcomes (Lectures 1 to 6)

- Academic excellence: Students will be able to describe major theories of memory (e.g. working memory, autobiographical memory) and major findings from human memory research (e.g. characteristics of short and long-term memory, dual-task interference effects in working memory, effects of memory distortion in autobiographical memory).
- Critical thinking and effective communication: Students will be able to evaluate different theoretical accounts of human memory and communicate this through coursework and written exams.
- Learning and personal development: Students will learn the skills to understand and evaluate memory research in applied areas such as clinical and legal settings.
- Active citizenship: Students will become aware of moral and ethical controversies in memory research, such as the unreliability of eyewitness testimony.

Learning Outcomes (Lectures 7 to 12)

- Academic excellence: Students will be able to describe models of three key aspects of language processing (sentence parsing, language production and dialogue). They will be able to describe how competing accounts differ, and the empirical evidence to support them. In addition, they will be able to describe how current research into language has been shaped by its historical context.
- Critical thinking and effective communication: Students will be able to critically evaluate the contrasting accounts of language processing (for example, garden path versus constraint-based models of sentence parsing), and will be required to communicate this through coursework and exams.
- Learning and personal development: Students will learn the skills to understand and evaluate different approaches to language research.
- Active citizenship: Students will become aware of how linguistic factors can aid or impede understanding between speakers and within communities.
**Staff**

Dr D Pearson (Course co-ordinator)
Dr D Pearson, Dr A Cleland (Course lecturers)
Various Staff (tutorials)

**Assessment**

1 ninety-minute written examination (75% of assessment)
Written assignment (20% of assessment)
Tutorial activity (5% of assessment)

**Teaching methods**

Lecture, tutorial.

**Lecture Syllabus**

**Lectures 1-6 Dr Pearson**

This series of lectures will focus on some of the key issues in the cognitive study of human learning and memory. Initially there will be a discussion of historical and conceptual issues in memory research, including the establishment of experimental techniques for investigating memory, the historical development of metaphors for the mind, and the technological developments which influenced the origins of cognitive psychology. After this the main focus will shift on to multi-store models of memory, and the characteristics of short and long term memory will be examined. This will include a description of the phonological loop and visuo-spatial sketchpad components of working memory, and a discussion of how general attentional or central executive resources may be involved in the short-term retention and processing of information. Psychological theories of forgetting will be discussed and evaluated. The course will also examine how information is organised within long-term memory, and whether it is valid to distinguish between episodic and semantic stores of knowledge. Final consideration will be given to theories and applications of Autobiographical Memory research, including consideration of Eyewitness Memory.

The specific coverage of topics will be as follows:

Lecture 1: Historical and Conceptual Issues in Memory Research
Lecture 2: Working Memory
Lecture 3: Theories of Forgetting
Lecture 4: Amnesia and Long-Term Memory
Lecture 5: Autobiographical Memory
Lecture 6: Eyewitness Memory
Lectures 7-12

Dr Cleland

These lectures will begin with an introduction to the key issues in psycholinguistics, and will place these debates within their historical context, focusing on the influence of figures such as Chomsky. The lectures will go on to examine how people piece together the meaning of a sentence from its syntactic structure. In particular it will focus on two competing accounts of sentence processing; the “garden path” and the “constraint-based” models. The course will also cover the processes that underlie language production, examining how it is that speakers select individual words to express an idea, and how they order those words within a sentence. Finally, the course will focus on factors that influence how people communicate in a dialogue setting.

The breakdown of lectures will be as follows:

Lecture 1: Historical and Conceptual Issues in Language Research
Lecture 2: Syntactic parsing 1: Garden Path Theory
Lecture 3: Syntactic parsing 2: Constraint-based Models
Lecture 4: Language production 1: Word production
Lecture 5: Language production 2: Sentence production
Lecture 6: Dialogue

Major sources of reading


Additional references will be given out at each lecture.

Progress Requirements

Students are expected to attend tutorials, prepare for and participate in a tutorial activity, and submit a written assignment. Students failing to undertake these activities will be deemed to be ‘at risk’ and may be withdrawn from the course. For information about the implications of receiving a fail mark for course work, or failing to submit course work, see “Level 3 General Handbook”.