



VCE PSYCHOLOGY 2005–2008: UNIT 3 SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

This sample course outline represents one possible teaching and learning sequence for Unit 3.

Week	Area of Study	Key knowledge	Key Skills	Possible activities and assessment tasks
1	1. Brain and nervous system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> structure of the cerebral cortex: cerebral hemispheres, corpus callosum 		
2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> functions of the 4 lobes in the control of motor, somatosensory, visual and auditory processing in humans: frontal lobe (incl. Broca's area), parietal lobe, occipital lobe, and temporal lobe (incl. Wernicke's area) hemispheric specialisation: cognitive and behavioural functions of right and left hemispheres, non-verbal versus verbal and analytical functions, findings of research on intact brains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain the functions of the 4 lobes of the brain (frontal, temporal, parietal, occipital) distinguish between the role of the right and left cerebral hemispheres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> using balloons and textas, have students inflate the balloons and then draw and label the four lobes read about the use of the Wada Test for hemispheric specialisation
3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> brain research methods and their value and limitations including case studies, brain stimulation, brain recording and imaging techniques, including EEG, CT, PET, MRI, and Fmri ethical principles in the conduct of brain research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse data from brain research to establish the value and limitations of the methods investigate the use, protection and security of participant confidentiality, voluntary participation and informed consent in psychological research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine early research by Walter Hess, Wilder Penfield, Roger Sperry, and Hans Burger compare their work to contemporary research against a background of ethical principles in conducting brain research

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4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> divisions of the nervous system: central nervous system, peripheral nervous system (somatic and autonomic) roles of the sympathetic and parasympathetic divisions of the ANS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compare the roles of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> tape several A3 sheets of paper together; trace the outline of a person laying on it; draw and label the divisions of the nervous system
5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the physiological systems involved in arousal (fight-flight response), uses and limitations of the polygraph physiological and psychological effects of prolonged or intense arousal, relationship between stress and disease, the general adaptation syndrome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate the evidence for the relationship between stress and disease 	<p>Outcome 1: (40 marks) any one of the six assessment tasks outlined on p.24 of the study design</p>
6	2. Visual perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characteristics of the visual perception system: the processes of reception, transduction, transmission, selection, organisation and interpretation of stimulus information 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> draw a concept map of the stages of visual perception and the links between them
7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> response to light and the concept of thresholds (absolute and differential) organisation in visual perception as evidenced in art, signs, and symbols: Gestalt principles (figure-ground, closure, similarity, proximity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain the distinction between absolute and differential thresholds use evidence to explain the principles of visual perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERA on measurement of a sensory threshold use artwork, signs or symbols to demonstrate Gestalt principles
8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> depth perception – binocular cues (retinal disparity, convergence) and monocular cues (accommodation, and pictorial cues: linear perspective, interposition, texture gradients, relative size, height in the visual field) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> make written annotations on a copy of an artwork that shows all five depth cues

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visual constancies (size, shape, brightness, orientation) 		
9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effect of context and past experience on perception through perceptual set 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERA: Bugelski & Alampay's ambiguous Rat/Man figure to demonstrate perceptual set
10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> distortions of visual perception by illusions: Muller-Lyer and Ames Room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explain visual illusions as distortions of perception 	<p>Outcome 2: (30 marks) any one of the six assessment tasks on p.24 of the study design</p>
11	3. States of consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consciousness as the awareness of objects and events in the external world and the subject's own existence and activities concepts of normal waking consciousness and altered states of consciousness in terms of: attention, awareness, content limitations, controlled and automatic processes, perceptual and cognitive distortions, emotional awareness, self-control, time orientation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine and evaluate the study by Neisser & Becklen (1975) concerning the role of selective attention in normal waking consciousness
12		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> measurement of physiological responses which can indicate different states of consciousness including: electrical activity of the brain, heart rate, body temperature, and galvanic skin response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compare methods used to measure levels of awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> write a short essay of 200-300 words outlining the key physiological differences between NWC and ASC
13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> methods used to study sleep: electroencephalogram (EEG), electromyograph (EMG), electro-oculogram (EOG) characteristics and patterns of sleep: rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use EEG measurements to identify the characteristics and significance of each stage of sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> construct a table that summarises the key differences between REM and NREM sleep

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14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • psychological and physical effects of sleep deprivation • sleep phenomena: insomnia, hypersomnia, sleep apnea, nightmares, night terrors, sleep talking, sleep walking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and describe sleep phenomena from given characteristics 	<p>Outcome 3: (30 marks) any one of the six assessment tasks on p.24 of the Study Design</p>
15	REVISION FOR JUNE EXAM			
16	JUNE EXAM			