

MODULE CODE: M4X02244
TITLE: Understanding old age
DATED: 30/06/2016

LEVEL: 4
CREDITS: 20

JACS CODE: C822

AIM(S)

- To develop students' understanding of key developmental, social, and cognitive theories of ageing.
- To develop understanding of the causes and impact of mental health difficulties and cognitive decline in old age from an individual, familial and societal perspective.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

- Describe the key theories that underpin our understanding of the developmental, social, and cognitive challenges of ageing;
- Identify the causes and impact of cognitive decline and dementia in old age from an individual, familial and societal perspective;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the health and social care system in an ageing UK population;
- Organise their knowledge and learning through the use of information resources and present their work at the appropriate level.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

Early module content will introduce students to the key theories of normal ageing processes, exploring the social, developmental, and cognitive challenges faced as part of the natural aging process. Students will understand that whilst "normal ageing" involves cognitive and physical decline, that many older people lead happy and fulfilling lives and navigate successfully around the challenges of retirement, physical and cognitive decline, reduced social circles and even bereavement.

We will then turn our attention to understanding the social, biological and psychological factors associated with psychological distress and mental health problems in older adulthood. The

module will explore factors associated with depression in older age, including retirement, social isolation and grief, using psychological theories to understand how individuals work through bereavement and grief.

The module will then focus on one of the most common cognitive disorders in older age, that of dementia. The module will discuss the prevalence, symptoms and causes of dementia, including Alzheimer's Disease, with a focus on developing understanding of the biological and cognitive processes associated with these diseases and the impact of these diseases not only on the individual but for those caring for people with dementia. The ways in which the UK health and social care system supports such individuals will also be explored.

The module will also include coverage of prejudicial attitudes towards older adults, exploring the impact of these attitudes on the wellbeing of older adults and identifying ways of reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with both the normal ageing process and with illnesses such as dementia.

LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY

Lectures will introduce the students to the key theories of ageing and cognitive decline, with seminars being used to introduce case studies for discussion in order to develop understanding of the impact of aging on the individual and wider social network. Guest speakers from local Dementia support organizations will be brought in to support some of these seminar discussions.

The allocation of teaching to deliver the module is:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	30	15%
Independent learning	170	85%
TOTAL	200	100%

Assessment Component 1 – Coursework: Portfolio (50%)

Students will be asked to carry out research into three charities/support organisations that work to support older people and to produce a portfolio documenting the sources of advice and support available in relation to a specific issue.

Exemplar: Produce a portfolio documenting the sources of advice and support available to older people suffering from bereavement.

Assessment Component 2 – Coursework: 1,500 word written review (50%)

Students will be provided with a recent media story related to mental health in old age and will be asked to discuss the extent to which this story is based on relevant theory and evidence.

Exemplar: Using appropriate theory and empirical evidence, review a recent media story on the impact of dementia.

Assessment Summary

Activity type	Percentage
Written exam	
Coursework	100%
Practical	
TOTAL	100%

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

Does the module contribute to ESD?	Yes
If yes please provide brief details (no more than 100 words):	
According to the Bruntland Report "Our Common Future" sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This module explores the issues surrounding an ever growing aged population and meets the QAA ESD learning outcome of encouraging students to identify the causes and possible solutions to inequity at intra and inter-generational levels.	

READING LIST (EXEMPLI GRATIA)

Essential Reading

Schaie, K. W., & Willis, S. L. (Eds.). (2010). *Handbook of the Psychology of Aging*. Academic Press.

Recommended

Baker, C. (2014). *Developing Excellent Care for People Living with Dementia in Care Homes*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Binstock, R. H., George, L. K., Cutler, S. J., Hendricks, J., & Schulz, J. H. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of aging and the social sciences*. Academic Press.

Christopher, G. (2013). *The Psychology of Ageing: From Mind to Society*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Bond, J., Peace, S., Dittman-Kohli, F. and Westerhof, G. (2007) *Ageing in Society*. London: Sage Publications.

Erber, J. T. (2011) *Aging and older adulthood*. John Wiley & Sons.

James, I. A. (2011) *Understanding behaviour in dementia that challenges: A guide to assessment and treatment*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Powell, J. L. (2006) *Social theory and aging*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Rabbitt, P. (2014). *The Aging Mind: An Owner's Manual*. London: Routledge.

Segal, L. (2013). *Out of time: The pleasures and the perils of ageing*. Verso Books.

Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2011). *An introduction to gerontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Journals

Aging and Mental Health

American journal of family therapy

Journal of Abnormal Psychology

Journal of Aging and Health

Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology

Journal of Gerontology

Websites

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>

<http://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/>

<https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>