

ECPS4022 Skills for Success in Psychology

Week 3: Being a good communicator of knowledge

"Knowing something is not enough; psychologists must be able to communicate it clearly, ethically and persuasively."

Session 1 (2 Hours): Writing as a psychology student

- **Session Aim**
- To develop students' understanding of the requirements of writing for assessment.

Aim of Assessment

- Essays
- Report writing
- Exams
 - The principle is the same
- For you (students): To convey your mastery of the subject area being assessed
- For us (academics): To judge you based upon transparent criteria

Assessment Proforma

LEVEL 4 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:	Anonymous	Student ID number:	NA
Programme:	BSc (Hons) Psychology BSc (Hons) Psychology with Placement Year BSc (Hons) Psychology with Counselling BSc (Hons) Psychology with Criminology		
Module:	Skills for Success in Psychology		
Module code:	ECPS4022	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	100%
Lecturer:	Associate Professor Paul B. Hutchings	Internal Verifier:	Dr Ceri Phelps
Assignment Title:	Component One: Portfolio	Word count (or equivalent):	Six elements (equivalent to 3,000 words)
Submission deadline:		Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark:		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)

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

- Demonstrate the essential skills required to be a resilient and successful independent learner;
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant literacy and practical skills related to a range of assessments;
- Use suitable technology to support and enhance learning experience within Psychology.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Use of Generative AI in Assessment

(Lecturer to indicate Yes or Not against each element)

RESEARCH	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in research and data analysis.	Yes ☒ No ☐
STRUCTURE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to support you in structuring your submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings, etc.	Yes ☒ No ☐
PROOFREADING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to check your own text/creation for grammatical and syntactical mistakes, including getting suggestions to rephrase your work.	Yes ☒ No ☐
WRITING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create text for submission.	Yes ☐ No ☒
CREATIVE	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create creative materials, such as images.	Yes ☒ No ☐
PROGRAMING	For this assessment, you can use Generative AI to create and check code.	Yes ☒ No ☐
NONE	For this assessment, you are not allowed to use any type of Generative AI support. This includes research support, structure support, writing/proofreading support and creative support.	☐

You are required to produce a professional portfolio that documents your developing academic and professional skills through this module. Over the course of this module you have the opportunity to complete a number of Module Learning Activities (MLAs). For your portfolio you must select six of these MLAs. It is important that you choose at least one MLA for each of the following learning outcomes and include a short statement (<50 words) indicating which of the below your chosen MLA relates to and why.

- demonstrate your developing understanding of the essential skills required to be a resilient and successful independent learner;
- demonstrates your developing understanding of relevant literacy and practical skills related to a range of assessments;
- demonstrates your developing ability to use suitable technology to support and enhance learning experience within Psychology.

Your portfolio must be professionally presented and include a cover sheet, table of contents, and page numbers.

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 4, you should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with your area(s) of study. *Knowledge* relates to the facts, information and skills you have acquired through your learning. You demonstrate your *understanding* by interpreting the meaning of the facts and information (knowledge). This means that you need to select and include in your work the concepts, techniques, models, theories, etc. appropriate to the task(s) set. You should be able to explain the theories, concepts, etc. to show your understanding. Your mark/grade will also depend upon the *extent* to which you demonstrate your knowledge and understanding.

Guidance specific to this assessment: Your portfolio should demonstrate your developing knowledge and understanding of relevant academic and professional skills.

Level 4	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (3 rd / Pass)	GOOD (2.2 / Pass)	VERY GOOD (2.1 / Merit)	EXCELLENT (1 st / Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (1 st / Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Knowledge and understanding (Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles of a subject.)	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject matter. Inclusion of irrelevant material. Substantial inaccuracies.	Gaps in knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles, with flawed or superficial understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material.	Limited knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles within the subject area. Some elements may be missing.	Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles is accurate with a good understanding of the field of study but lacks depth and/or breadth.	Competent knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles. Exhibits very good understanding.	Excellent knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject.	Exceptional, detailed knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles

Level 4	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (3 rd / Pass)	GOOD (2.2 / Pass)	VERY GOOD (2.1 / Merit)	EXCELLENT (1 st / Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (1 st / Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Knowledge and understanding (Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles of a subject.)	Major gaps in knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject matter. Inclusion of irrelevant material. Substantial inaccuracies.	Gaps in knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles, with flawed or superficial understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material.	Limited knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles within the subject area. Some elements may be missing.	Knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles is accurate with a good understanding of the field of study but lacks depth and/or breadth.	Competent knowledge of the basic underlying concepts and principles. Exhibits very good understanding.	Excellent knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles of the subject.	Exceptional, detailed knowledge and understanding of the basic underlying concepts and principles

Level 6	FAIL	MARGINAL FAIL	SATISFACTORY (3 rd / Pass)	GOOD (2.2 / Pass)	VERY GOOD (2.1 / Merit)	EXCELLENT (1 st / Distinction)	EXCEPTIONAL (1 st / Distinction)
Category	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-84%	85-100%
Knowledge and understanding (Coherent and detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of the subject area, at least some of which is informed by the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.)	Major gaps in knowledge and systematic understanding of the subject matter. Substantial inaccuracies. No awareness of knowledge of the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.	Gaps in knowledge, with only superficial systematic understanding. Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. No awareness of knowledge of the latest research and/or advanced scholarship within the discipline.	Limited knowledge and systematic understanding of the relevant concepts and principles within the subject area which to some limited extent, is informed by current research and scholarship.	Knowledge is reasonably detailed, accurate with a good systematic understanding of the field of study and to some extent, current research and scholarship.	Knowledge is reasonably extensive coherent and detailed. Exhibits very good understanding of the breadth and depth of established views, and the work is, at least in part, well-informed by current research and scholarship.	Excellent coherent and detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of the principles and theories of current research and scholarship. Clear awareness of challenges to established views and the limitations of the knowledge base.	Exceptionally coherent and detailed knowledge and systematic understanding of the principles and theories of the subject, well-informed by current research and scholarship. A critical, sophisticated and nuanced awareness of the ambiguities and limitations of knowledge.

Activity 1: Reading the Proforma (30 minutes)

- Can be carried out and discussed in groups
 - Read the proforma in its entirety
 - What strikes you as key requirements for this assessment based upon the Generic Level Four criteria?

Activity 2: Marking an Essay (1 hour)

- You will be given three essays on the same topic
 - Assess each essay against the Level Four criteria you have looked at in Activity 1 and give each essay a mark
 - What feedback would you give to the writer?
- You will have the same amount of time that we have to assess... 20 minutes per assessment

Session 2 (2 Hours): Finding Your Academic Voice

- **Session Aim**

- To develop students' ability to move beyond copying information and instead engage critically with sources.

Why Students May Struggle With Writing

- Think good writing appears instantly.
- Think academic writing should sound complicated.
- Think using long words means writing critically.

- Paralysis!

The first step is to take one!

What is Paraphrasing?

- Translating ideas into your own language.
- Preserving meaning.
- Demonstrating understanding.
- Avoiding patch-writing.
- An intellectual skill, not simply changing words.

What is Synthesis?

- Many students summarise sources individually.
- Psychologists synthesise.
- Example:
 - Instead of:
- Smith (2010) says A. Jones (2012) says B.
- While Smith (2010) suggests A, Jones (2012) argues B, highlighting ongoing debate within the literature. For example, they differ in X, but additional research by Davies (2012) suggests Smith is correct.

Developing Academic Voice

- Confidence in writing.
- Evidence-based claims.
- Academic caution.
- Avoiding unsupported assertions.

Activity 3 (MLA9): The Synthesis Puzzle (40 minutes)

- Two papers on the same topic:
- Does social media affect wellbeing?
- In groups, review the information in the papers and identify elements that can be brought from both papers into a summary that addresses the question.

Activity 4: AI as a Research and Writing Tool (15 mins)

- Put the two papers from the previous activity into an AI tool and ask it to write a summary.
 - Is meaning preserved?
 - Is critical thinking visible?
 - Is academic integrity maintained?
-
- What is the difference between demonstrating knowledge and demonstrating understanding?

Session 3 (2 Hours): Presenting With Confidence

- **Session Aim**
- To develop students' confidence in verbal communication, presentation skills and professional self-expression whilst introducing principles of effective public speaking.

Why Communication Matters in Psychology

- Writing is an important part of being a psychology graduate
 - The ability to convey knowledge and information in a sustained way
- No different for other forms of communication
 - Presenting research findings
 - Working with clients
 - Conducting interviews
 - Team meetings
 - Professional discussions
 - Conference presentations

Presentation Anxiety

- Fear of judgement
- Imposter syndrome
- Perfectionism
- Self-consciousness
- Cognitive distortions

Confidence develops through exposure and practice rather than waiting to feel ready.

What Makes a Memorable Presentation?

- Structure
- Storytelling
- Audience engagement
- Visual design
- Vocal delivery
- Body language
- Credibility

Professional Communication

- Clear explanations
- Audience awareness
- Professional language
- Active listening
- Responding to questions

Activity 5: What Does A Bad Presentation Look Like? (15 mins)

- In groups, design the worst presentation slide that you can
 - Identify what is wrong with it, why, and what a better alternative could be

An Intro to Preseenting well

- PEOPLE THINK THAT PRESENTATIONS ARE EASY WHEN THEY CAN ACTUALLY BE REALLY DIFFICULT
- LOTS OF EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT ANXIETY HAS A HUGE INFLUENCE ON HOW PEOPLE PRESENT AND THIS CAN THEN THEN IMPACT ON THEIR MARKS WHICH CAN MAKE THEM WORSE AND THEN IT BECOMES A SELF-PHULFILLING PROFECY WHICH DOESN'T ALLOW STUDENTS TO SHOW THEIR FULL LEVELS OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING SO THEY THEN BECOME MORE ANXIOUS AND THIS CAN HAVE A HUGELY DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THEIR MENTAL HEALTH AND IMPACT ON OTHER AREAS OF THEIR STUDIES.
- THE OTHER THING THAT PEOPLE OFTEN DO IS TO TO ALMOST WRITE THEIR ORAL PART OF THE PRESENTATION AND THEN READ FROM THE SLIDE OR A SCRIPT THAT CONTAINS THE WORD ON A SLIDE AND THIS REALLY BORES THE AUDIENCE.
- ESPECIALLY IF THEY DO IT IN A REALLY BORING AND MONOTONOUS TONE OF VOICE THAT MAKES IT SOUND LIKE THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT AND PUTS THE AUDIENCE TO SLEEP.

Tips for Presenting Well

- The hook – what is your presentation about?
- The main points – clear, concise, and simple
- The conclusion – what do you want your audience to take away from your presentation?
- Slides should support, not replace, your oral presentation
 - A few words per point, not a paragraph
 - Use visuals that support your presentation
 - Rule of thumb = 1-2 minutes per slide (10 minute presentation = 5-10 slides)
 - Practice! Good for delivery, timing, confidence

Activity 6 (MLA10) Confidence Ladder Challenge (40 mins)

- Level 1:
 - Speak to another student in the class who you do not know well.
- Level 2:
 - Speak to a small group.
- Level 3:
 - Speak to the class.
- Reflection: How does each of the levels make you feel and how can you feel more confident at each level?

Week 3 Potential Portfolio Evidence (MLAs)

- Possible portfolio artefacts:
 1. MLA9 The synthesis puzzle (Activity 3)
 2. MLA10 Confidence ladder challenge (Activity 6)

- The overarching Week 3 question that will continue throughout the entire module is:

"How can I develop my wider skills to clearly communicate my knowledge and understanding through multiple assessment formats?"

"Knowing something is not enough; psychologists must be able to communicate it clearly, ethically and persuasively."