

LEVEL 5 ASSESSMENT SPECIFICATION

Student name:	Anonymous Submission	Student ID number:	Anonymous
Programme:	BSc Psychology BSc Psychology and Counselling		
Module:	Research Methods II		
Module code:	ECPS5009	Contribution to Overall Module Assessment (%):	40%
Lecturer:	Stacey Coleman	Internal Verifier:	Dr Kate Williams
Assignment Title:	Design and conduct a research study to explore the effect of affective traits on memory for emotion-induced stimuli. RESIT	Word count (or equivalent):	2,000 words
Submission deadline:	Monday 22 nd July 2024 by 23:59pm	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	19.08.24
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. Capped Resit: Penalties for late submission: Submission after the deadline, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates. Uncapped Resit: Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 40%. Over one week late, 0%. Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel may approve a change to submission dates.		
Academic honesty / referencing:	Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you must give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, articles, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		

Module Learning Outcomes (from module syllabus)

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

- demonstrate a critical understanding of a variety of research designs including both experimental and non-experimental designs;
- identify and apply a range of quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and methods across a variety of research settings;
- demonstrate strong awareness of good practice in data management and the ethical issues associated with qualitative and quantitative research design;
- take responsibility for their own learning and skill development; including effective personal planning, self-reflection and project management skills

TASK DESCRIPTION

In groups of 4-6 students, you are required to design, conduct, and report a small research study to explore the following research question:

What is the effect of affective traits on memory for emotion-induced stimuli?

All elements of your study design and final report must indicate that you have engaged with relevant theory and literature in relation to the subject area, the development of your task to assess the number of emotion-induced words that participants can recall, and include a justified research questions, hypothesis/hypotheses and appropriate research design.

You will be expected to design and create an experimental task that will allow you to explore the research question, and to collect data.

To carry out the required level of analysis for this report, you must categorise one of your IV's into two levels and the other into three levels. Given that your variables are going to be a) an affective trait chosen by your group and b) emotion-induced stimuli, it is advised that you split the affective trait into two levels (low and high – calculated based upon the sample mean), and have emotion-induced stimuli as your three level IV (e.g., positive words, negative words, and neutral words).

By categorising participants into **either** low or high levels of [affective trait], this would become your between-subjects factor. As **all** participants will be tested on three stimuli conditions, this would become your within-subjects factor.

In order to prepare your study, you are required to source your stimuli. It is advised that **words** are used as the stimuli for this study and approximately 20 items per condition will be appropriate to use for testing memory recall. Empirical studies are a good place to start with your searching for emotion-induced words, and further guidance will be provided within the on-campus sessions for this module.

In order for participants to take part in this study, the stimuli should be displayed on a computer screen. For each condition (the three conditions being positive words, negative words, and neutral words), each individual stimulus (word) should be displayed on screen for 2000ms (2 seconds) and be separated by a blank screen for a period of 400ms. At the end of each condition (e.g., after

all positive words have been displayed), you should include a screen informing participants to think of something for one minute. After this minute has elapsed, you should prompt participants to recall / write down as many of the words they can remember. Repeat this for each condition.

You need to consider standardisation and controlling extraneous variables throughout your study – i.e., what needs to be kept **exactly** the same, and what should be presented in the same order for participants. Similarly, you need to consider counterbalancing measures throughout your study. For example, you would not want the positive words appearing first for every participant – if you then found that recall was highest for positive words than the other two conditions, it would be difficult to know whether memory for positive words is actually better or whether it was a consequence of participants always recalling positive words first without interference from later stimuli.

You should discuss both the standardisation and counterbalancing procedures employed in the write-up of your report and provide justification for their use. Your ability to consider and apply experimental research protocols to your study and report them in your methodology will be considered in the marking of your report.

As a group, you are required to choose an **affective trait** to explore and measure appropriately. Examples of relevant traits can be found below (note that this is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive – if there is another trait that you feel may be relevant, please discuss this with me).

- Emotional intelligence
- Neuroticism
- Extraversion
- Emotional regulation
- Self-esteem

In order to capture data on your chosen trait, you should make use of a standardised and validated scale. Again, we will discuss some psychometric scales during the on-campus sessions for this module, and it is expected that you bring ideas and queries with you relating to the scales you have sourced that you deem relevant to use. Remember that your choice of scale **must** be based upon your engagement with literature! It is also expected that you conduct a reliability analysis on your collected questionnaire data and compare the internal consistency with that reported from previous studies.

As you are carrying out an experimental research study, you will need to consider how to apply for Ethical Approval via the School Research Ethics Committee (SREC). We will be discussing the ethical issues associated with a lab-based/experimental study such as this one during the on-campus sessions, and you will be expected to contribute to the write up of the ethics form to submit for consideration prior to data collection. **No study** may be run, or data collected, without approval from the SREC. Therefore, whilst the ethics form does not form part of your summative assessment for this module, it is fundamental to you being able to conduct the study and complete the report.

In groups, you will work together to identify a clear and logical hypothesis, study design, and appropriate measures. You will be expected to demonstrate an awareness and application of standardised procedures for data collection, ethics, and data analysis. It is expected that each member of the research team will contribute towards the ethics form, study creation and data collection; however, the task of negotiating individual contributions to these tasks is down to the research groups to sort themselves. Only under exceptional circumstances will a student be allowed to work individually on this task at any point – a key element of learning on your course is how to work as part of a team, and that is no different when it comes to research projects.

Individually, you will be expected to analyse your study data using an appropriate analysis and write up your report. The analysis should clearly incorporate all variables analysed and the key SPSS output **MUST** be included in the appendix. Your choice of analysis will be considered when marking the report and so you must ensure that you can justify its use.

The word count limit for the final report is 2,000 words and must follow the standard APA report structure for Psychology:

Abstract

Introduction

Methods (Participants/Design/Materials/Procedure)

Results

Discussion

Reference List (in-text citations and the full reference list must adhere to APA conventions)

Appendices

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS IN THE COMPLETION OF TASKS

NOTE: The guidance offered below is linked to the five generic assessment criteria overleaf.

1. Engagement with Literature Skills

Your work must be informed and supported by scholarly material that is *relevant* to and *focused* on the task(s) set. You should provide evidence that you have accessed an appropriate *range* of sources, which may be academic, governmental and industrial; these sources may include academic journal articles, textbooks, current news articles, organisational documents, and websites. You should consider the *credibility* of your sources; academic journals are normally highly credible sources while websites require careful consideration/selection and should be used sparingly. Any sources you use should be current and up-to-date, mostly published within the last five years or so, though seminal/important works in the field may be older. You must provide *evidence* of your research/own reading throughout your work, using a suitable referencing system, including in-text citations in the main body of your work and a reference list at the end of your work.

Guidance specific to this assessment: You are expected to engage in significant wider reading to inform your choice of materials/measures and stimuli to be used to collect data for this assessment. Whilst you are

not being deterred from using secondary sources, it is far more beneficial to you to start to use more primary sources in your academic work given that this is a Level Five module and assessment. Any use of generic and non-peer-reviewed websites/sources (e.g., Wikipedia, Simply Psychology, etc.) will be heavily penalised. It is advised to include as much contemporary research as you can to provide a strong rationale for the study and a justification for your specific hypotheses. Citations in the main body of your work plus the reference list at the end should be in very good APA style.

2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills

At level 5, you should be able to demonstrate: sound knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established concepts and principles of the subject area and the way in which those principles have developed; knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the discipline. *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. meaningfully 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: *The Introduction and Discussion sections of this report are the main areas for you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the topic area, and so it is important to address any key studies and theories in these sections. You do not have a lot of space to show what you understand here, so it is important to make every word count. Do not go off on a tangent, avoid anecdote and focus upon the main empirical evidence and theory related to the topic you are exploring. In addition, the results section is important as you are demonstrating your ability to conduct and understand complex statistical analyses, as well as write the results of this study up appropriately. Your ability to understand methodological designs will also be apparent in the construction and use of your experimental task, and therefore the method section will be important in demonstrating how well you understand the use of specific software, stimuli, and measures.*

3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills

You should be able to critically analyse information, and propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis, including the critical evaluation of the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems. Your work must contain evidence of logical, analytical thinking, evaluation and synthesis. For example, to examine and break information down into parts, make inferences, compile, compare and contrast information. This means not just describing what! But also justifying: Why? How? When? Who? Where? At what cost? At all times, you must provide justification/evidence for your arguments and judgements. Evidence that you have reflected upon the ideas of others within the subject area is crucial to you providing a reasoned and informed debate within your work. Furthermore, you should provide evidence that you are able to make sound judgements and convincing arguments using data and concepts, with an understanding of the limits of knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations. Sound, valid conclusions are necessary and must be derived from the content of your work. Where relevant, alternative solutions and recommendations may be proposed.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *The Discussion is the main section to display your cognitive and intellectual skills; once you have collected data you need to be able to discuss it, not just regurgitate it. What do your findings mean? How do they relate to the previous literature or alternative evidence or theories? Avoid making bland statements that could be applied to any element of psychology – but if they are worth making, explain why. If more participants are required, explain what this would show us beyond what we already know. If a different demographic could be important, explain why it might make a difference – and support your assertions with evidence in the form of academic references.*

4. Practical Skills

At level 5, you should be able to use/deploy a range of established techniques within the discipline and apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context. You should be able to demonstrate how the subject-related concepts and ideas relate to real world situations and/or a particular context. How do they work in practice? You will deploy models, methods, techniques, and/or theories, in that context, to assess current situations, perhaps to formulate plans or solutions to solve problems, or to create artefacts,

some of which may be creative. This is likely to involve, for instance, the use of real-world artefacts, examples and cases, the application of a model within an organisation and/or benchmarking one theory or organisation against others based on stated criteria. You should show awareness of the limitations of concepts and theories when applied in particular contexts.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *The Method and Results sections are the key elements to demonstrate your practical skills for this assessment. You will be creating an experimental task from scratch so you will be fully aware of what it entails to write the method up in detail. Being able to explain what has been done, by who, and using what (exactly!) in such a limited number of words is a real skill that you will need to develop in psychology (and is essential for many transferable tasks). The Results section is also a skill area that is important to develop; not just to show that you are able to conduct complex statistical analyses, but also to show that you are aware of how to set the results of these analyses out correctly in the correct format.*

5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice

Your work must provide evidence of the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making. This includes demonstrating: professional development to advance existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable you to assume significant responsibility within organisations; that you can initiate and complete tasks and procedures, whether individually and/or collaboratively; that you can use appropriate media to effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences; fluency of expression; clarity and effectiveness in presentation and organisation. Work should be coherent and well-structured in presentation and organisation.

Guidance specific to this assessment: *This is a Level Five module and therefore it is expected that you have developed the skills necessary to write this report up to a very good standard. As in your previous year, the ability to follow the basic instructions set out in the Task Description is a key factor here, and so failing to include any of the subsections in your submitted report will be penalised heavily. You should be continuing to develop your writing style and so clear, informative, and well-constructed sentences and paragraphs are expected. In addition to this, your citation and referencing skills have also developed and therefore poor referencing will be penalised. Finally, it is expected that you will proofread carefully and submit a very professional piece of work.*

STUDENT FEEDBACK FORM

This section details the *extent* to which the assessment criteria are demonstrated by you, which in turn determines your mark. The marks available for each category of skill are shown. Lecturers will use the space provided to comment on the achievement of the task(s), including those areas in which you have performed well and areas that would benefit from development/improvement.

Generic Assessment Criteria	Marks available	Marks awarded
1. Engagement with Literature Skills		
2. Knowledge and Understanding Skills		
3. Cognitive and Intellectual Skills		
4. Practical Application Skills		
5. Transferable Skills for Life and Professional Practice		

Assessment Mark (Assessment marks are subject to ratification at the Exam Board. These comments and marks are to give feedback on module work and are for guidance only until they are confirmed.)

Late Submission Penalties (tick if appropriate)

Up to 1 week late (40% Max)

Over 1 week late (0%)

%

GENERIC ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Level 5

In accordance with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, at the end of Level 5 students will be expected to have developed sound knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established concepts and principles in their field of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed. They will have learned to apply those concepts and principles more widely outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context. They will have knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the subject area, and ability to evaluate critically different approaches to problem solving. They will possess an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences their analyses and interpretations. They will be able to use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis. They will be able to effectively communicate information, arguments and analysis in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively. They will be able to undertake further training, develop existing skills and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations. They will have the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.

Level 5	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%
Engagement with literature (including reading, referencing, academic conventions and academic honesty)	Little or no evidence of reading and/or reliance on inappropriate sources. Views and findings mostly unsupported and non-authoritative. Referencing conventions used incoherently or largely absent.	Poor engagement with essential reading. No evidence of wider reading. Reliance on inappropriate sources, and/or indiscriminate use of sources. Heavily reliant on information gained through class contact. Inconsistent and weak use of referencing.	Engagement with a limited range of mostly relevant and credible sources. Some omissions and minor errors. Referencing conventions evident though not always applied accurately or consistently.	Engagement with an appropriate range of literature, including sources retrieved independently. Some over-reliance on texts. Referencing may show minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with a wide range of literature, including sources retrieved independently. Selection of relevant and credible sources. Very good use of referencing, with no/very few inaccuracies or inconsistencies.	Engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature. Consistently accurate application of referencing.	Exceptional engagement with an extensive range of relevant and credible literature. High-level referencing skills consistently applied.
Knowledge and understanding (Sound knowledge and	Major gaps in knowledge with unsatisfactory, uncritical understanding of	Fragmentary knowledge, with only superficial critical understanding.	Limited but adequate knowledge and critical understanding of	Knowledge is reasonably detailed and accurate. A good critical	Knowledge is reasonably extensive. Exhibits very competent	Excellent, detailed knowledge and highly critical understanding of	Exceptionally detailed knowledge and outstanding critical

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critical understanding of the well-established concepts and principles in their field of study; knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in the discipline.)	the subject matter. Much irrelevant material. Substantial inaccuracies. Significantly flawed understanding of the main methods of enquiry in the discipline.	Some significant inaccuracies and/or irrelevant material. Incomplete or partially flawed understanding of the main methods of enquiry in the discipline.	the well-established concepts and principles within the subject area, with a few gaps in the selection of material. A narrow critical understanding of the main methods of enquiry.	understanding of the well-established concepts and principles and the main methods of enquiry, with minor gaps in the selection of material.	critical understanding of the well-established concepts and principles of the subject and the main methods of enquiry. Breadth and depth of knowledge.	the well-established concepts and principles of the subject and the main methods of enquiry.	understanding of the well-established concepts and principles of the subject and the main methods of enquiry. May go beyond established theories.
Cognitive and intellectual skills (Critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles; argument and judgement; the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences their analyses and interpretations.)	Wholly or almost wholly descriptive work. Little or no critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles. Failure to develop arguments, leading to illogical or invalid judgements. Unsubstantiated generalisations or opinion, made without use of any credible evidence.	Largely descriptive work, with superficial use of critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles. Weak development of arguments and judgements. Information accepted uncritically, uses generalised statements made with scant evidence and unsubstantiated opinions. Ideas sometimes illogical and contradictory.	Limited attempt at critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles, tending towards description. Some evidence to support arguments and judgements but these may be underdeveloped, with a little inconsistency / mis-interpretation or failure to fully recognise limits of knowledge.	Some critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles, though descriptive in parts. An emerging awareness the limits of their knowledge and ability to use evidence to support the argument though with some tendency to assert/state opinion rather than argue on the basis of reason and evidence. Mostly valid arguments and logical judgements.	Sound critical evaluation and analysis of concepts. Is selective in the range of evidence used and synthesises rather than describes. Ability to devise arguments that show awareness of different stances, and use evidence convincingly, to support appropriate and valid judgements.	Excellent critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles leading to logical, evidence-based, reasoned arguments and judgements. Explicit recognition of other stances and a strong awareness of the limits of their knowledge. A capacity for independent thought and ability to 'see beyond the question', suggesting some grasp of the broader field and wider concepts.	Outstanding critical evaluation and analysis of concepts and principles. Uses evidence exceptionally well to connect ideas, and support highly logical and persuasive, arguments and judgements. Evidence of independent thought and ability to 'see beyond the question', suggesting a clear grasp of the broader field and wider concepts. Perceptive recognition of

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							the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences their analyses and interpretations.
Practical skills (Apply underlying concepts and principles more widely outside the context in which they were first studied; use a range of established techniques; propose solutions to problems arising from analysis.)	Limited or no use of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Little or no appreciation of the context of the application. Limited understanding of the application of theory to practice or making appropriate links between the two. Very weak problem-solving skills outside the context in which they were first studied.	Rudimentary application of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques but without consideration and competence. Flawed appreciation of the context of the application. Weak understanding of the application of theory to practice, with only occasional evidence of making appropriate links between the two. Weak problem-solving skills outside the context in which they were first studied.	An adequate awareness and mostly appropriate application of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Basic appreciation of the context of the application. Theoretical knowledge and understanding applied in practice, but not always making logical links between the two. Can identify problems and propose basic solutions outside the context in which they were first studied.	A good and appropriate application of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Clear appreciation of the context of the application. Mainly consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and propose mostly appropriate solutions outside the context in which they were first studied.	A very good application of a range of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Very good consideration of the context of the application, with perceptive insights. Consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making appropriate links between the two. Can identify problems and propose appropriate solutions outside the context in which they were first studied. Evidence of some creativity.	An advanced application of a range of established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. The context of the application is well considered, and insightful. Consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making well-developed links between the two. Can identify problems and propose excellent, creative solutions outside the context in which they were first studied.	Exceptional levels of application and deployment skills using established methods, materials, tools and/or techniques. Consistent, accurate and logical application of theory to practice, making highly developed links between the two. Can identify routine and non-routine problems and propose quite sophisticated, creative solutions outside the context in which they were first studied.
Transferable skills for life	Communication medium is	Communication medium is poorly	Can communicate in	Can communicate	Can communicate	Can communicate	Can communicate

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and professional practice (Effectively communicate in a variety of forms to specialist and non-specialist audiences; the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.)	inappropriate or misapplied. Work is poorly structured, disorganised and/or confusingly expressed. Very weak use of language and/or very inappropriate style. Failure to work effectively as part of a group. Little or no evidence of the skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.	designed and/or not suitable for the audience. Work is poorly presented in a disjointed manner. It is loosely, and at times incoherently, structured, with information and ideas often poorly expressed. Weak use of language and/or inappropriate style. Flawed approach to group work, meeting only partial obligations to others. Limited evidence of the skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.	a suitable medium for the audience but with some room for improvement. Mostly ordered presentation and structure in which relevant ideas / concepts are reasonably expressed. Work may lack coherence in places. Can work as part of a group, meeting most obligations to others but perhaps with limited involvement in group activities. Demonstrates the basic skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making, with some areas of minor weakness.	effectively in a suitable medium for the audience, but may have minor errors. Mostly coherent, organised work, in a suitable structure and is for the most part clearly expressed. Can work effectively independently and/or as part of a team, with clear contribution to group activities. Demonstrates the skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making, with some areas of strength and some of minor weakness.	well, confidently and consistently in a suitable medium for the audience. Work is coherent, fluent, well-structured and organised. Can work very well autonomously and/or as part of a team, with very good contribution to group activities. Demonstrates very good skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making, with just occasional minor weakness.	professionally confidently and consistently in a suitable medium for the audience. Work is coherent, very fluent and is presented proficiently. Can work autonomously with initiative. Where relevant can work professionally within a team, showing leadership skills as appropriate, and meeting obligations. Demonstrates excellent skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making and an appetite for further development.	with an exceptionally high level of professionalism, highly suitable for the audience. Work is exceptionally coherent, very fluent and is presented professionally. Can work exceptionally well within a team, showing leadership skills. Demonstrates exceptional skills for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making and an appetite for further development.

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