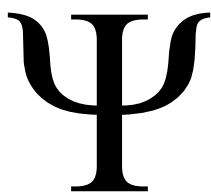




Academic Discipline: Psychology & Counselling



BSc (Hons) Psychology

BSc (Hons) Psychology and Counselling

Module ECPS5014 Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences

**Llawlyfr Modiwl | Module Handbook
2025-2026**

Module ECPS5014 Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences

Module Leader: Dr Judith Marshall

Contact details: email: judith.marshall@uwtsd.ac.uk

Phone: 01792 482013

Appointments: email for an appointment

This handbook has been designed to provide you with the necessary information required for your progression throughout the module. It is very important that you keep this in a safe place as it is your essential guide to module content and the learning outcomes required to complete the module.

Good luck with your studies. If you have any queries regarding this module, please contact me as the module leader.

Dr Judith Marshall

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**ECPS5014 Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences:
Module Information**

This is a Level Five module and therefore requires a high level of both commitment and independent thought. It is important that you attend lectures and seminars each week, and absolutely vital that you keep up with the readings required for each week. In addition, you are expected to carry out wider reading.

The Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences module introduces and develops important content required by the BPS for Level 5 Psychology study. If you have been introduced to a topic at level four, this module will develop it to meet specific requirements. Specifically, it will draw upon areas of individual differences and developmental psychology to consider theory and research appropriate to understand how humans develop; for example, how and why might individuals differ from each other? What similarities and differences might there be across age populations, and across cultures?

As this is a level five module, it is expected that students will engage fully with the relevant theories in order to apply them to the module topics and the assessments.

Module Code	ECPS5014
Title	Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences
Date	25/05/2022
Level	5
Credits	20
Pre-Requisites	None

AIM(S)

- To develop a critical understanding of psychological explanations of both typical and atypical human lifespan development, with a consideration of associated methodological and ethical issues.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the difference between typical and atypical development and the associated psychological theories and debates surrounding these issues.
- Critically evaluate explanations and issues in individual differences research, including personality and intelligence.
- Demonstrate critical understanding of theory and research to critically discuss individual differences across culture and the lifespan.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and skill development, including effective personal planning, self-reflection, and project management skills.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

This module will bring together the two core GBC curriculum areas of Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences, focused on a coherent development of critical understanding of relevant theories and methodological issues across the lifespan including:

- Critical evaluation of theories of typical and atypical social, emotional, and cognitive development across the lifespan.
- Critical examination of theory and psychometric approaches within the field of individual differences, including personality and intelligence.
- Ethical and methodological issues associated with researching within developmental psychology and individual differences, including methods of psychometric assessment.
- Critical consideration of explanations of developmental and mental health disorders across the lifespan.

Study Time Allocation

The study time for the module is divided as follows:

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

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Component 1

(Tick one)

☐ Written exam ☒ Coursework ☐ Practical

Mode of assessment	Volume	Weighting
Essay	2,500	50%

Assessment Component 2

(Tick one)

☐ Written exam ☒ Coursework ☐ Practical

Mode of assessment	Volume	Weighting
Case Study Report	2,500	50%

Assessment Summary

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

This module is a core requirement for Graduate Basis for Chartership (GBC) accreditation with the British Psychological Society (BPS) as set out in documentation to the BPS February 2018.

INDICATIVE READING LIST

INDICATIVE READING LIST		
Module Title	Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences	
Classification	Reading List entry	Electronic*
Books		
Essential	Berk. (2018). <i>Development through the lifespan</i> (Seventh edition.). Pearson Education.	☒
Essential	Cashin, A. (2020). <i>Young people, adults and autism spectrum disorder</i> . Nova Medicine & Health	☒
Essential	Maltby, Day, L., & Macaskill, A. (2017). <i>Personality, individual differences and intelligence</i> (Fourth edition.). Pearson.	☒
Essential	Packer, M. J. (2021). <i>Child development: Understanding a cultural perspective</i> .	☐
Further	Arnett. (2014). <i>The Oxford handbook of emerging adulthood</i> (Arnett, Ed.; First edition.). Oxford University Press.	☒
Further	Boyd, & Bee, H. L. (2019). <i>Lifespan development</i> (Eighth Edition, Global edition.). Pearson.	☒
Further	Chamorro-Premuzic. (2015). <i>Personality and individual differences</i> (Third edition.). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.	☐
Further	Pulkkinen, & Kokko, K. (2017). <i>Human development from middle childhood to middle adulthood : growing up to be middle-aged</i> . Routledge.	☒
Further	Smidt. (2013). <i>The developing child in the 21st century : a global perspective on child development</i> (2nd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203483640	☒
Further	Warner Schaie, Schaie, K. W., & Willis, S. L. (2016). <i>Handbook of the psychology of aging</i> (8th ed.). Elsevier.	☒
Journals		
Further	<i>Adolescence</i>	☒
Further	<i>Aging and Mental Health</i>	☒
Further	<i>British Journal of Developmental Psychology</i>	☒
Further	<i>British Journal of Educational Psychology</i>	☒
Further	<i>British Journal of Social Psychology</i>	☒
Further	<i>Child Development</i>	☒
Further	<i>Child Development Perspectives</i>	☒
Further	<i>European Journal of Aging</i>	☒
Further	<i>Journal of Intellectual Disabilities</i>	☒
Further	<i>Psychology and Aging</i>	☒

Readings

The class sessions will provide you with a framework of information – it is your wider reading that will help you to develop a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Each class session comes with a series of readings, some are ‘essential’ and others ‘additional’. It is expected that you will carry out the essential reading for the lectures and seminars as we go along (it is a good idea to check the week before, and spend some time going over the essential reading before each session, to aid your understanding of the topic during the lecture). The additional readings will provide depth to your knowledge, and you are encouraged to engage with as many of these readings as possible.

Whilst you should refer to the Psychology Student Handbook for specific details, this excerpt from the handbook sets out what is expected of your work at Level 5. The points which are most important for this assignment are highlighted:

At Level 5 it is expected that students will demonstrate the following qualities:

- More highly developed ability to complete a variety of written tasks effectively, including discursive essay, reports, and case study presentations.
- Be able to participate orally in a variety of different groups and settings in a confident and articulate fashion.
- Be able to use language with increasing complexity and sophistication.
- Be practised in hypothesis formation and knowledgeable about the means for testing hypotheses.
- Have the capacity to develop a major research interest evolving from the course and to prepare for an involvement with it.
- Be able to apply a range of theoretical models.
- Be able to synthesise theories, concepts and information in relatively novel ways.
- To have become more practised in critically appraising the competing claims of alternative primary and secondary sources.
- A growing ability to manage learning in a self-organised manner with a particular view to the importance of achieving desired outcomes within limited time periods.

The following pages set out the lecture structure. However, **it is essential that you** familiarise yourself with the Developmental Psychology and Individual differences Moodle section, so that you know which lecture topics AND seminar topics you need to prepare for each week.

Lecture One:

Introduction/Early Attachment and Relationships

This lecture will provide an overview of the module. Classic theories of early attachment will be critically discussed as we consider processes involved in forming early social attachments with caregivers and will explore potential psychosocial implications of secure and poorer attachment styles during the lifespan.

Main Themes:

- Early attachment theories
- Ethological theory, Cupboard love theory
- Bowlby's maternal deprivation hypothesis, Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'
- Attachment styles and Relationships

Essential Readings

Berger, K.S. (2007). *The developing person through the lifespan*. New York: Worth. *Chapter 1 (pp 3 – 32), Chapter 2 (pp 33 – 60) Chapter 7 (pp 179 – 203).*

Or Santrock, J. W. (2009). *Life-span development* (International Edition). London. McGraw-Hill. *Chapter 1 (pp 4 – 42), Chapter 6 (pp 179-198).*

Additional Readings

Candel, O.-S., & Turliuc, M. N. (2019). Insecure attachment and relationship satisfaction: A meta-analysis of actor and partner associations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 147, 190–199.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.04.037>

Lecture Two:

Cognitive Development

In this lecture we will focus on Piaget's theory of cognitive development in childhood and explore the research evidence upon which this theory is based. We will also take a sociocultural view by exploring on Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development.

Main Themes:

- Piaget's theory
- Vygotsky's theory
- A cultural perspective of cognitive development
- Research evidence, strengths & limitations of Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories

Essential Readings

Packer, M. J. (2021). Child development: Understanding a cultural perspective.

Santrock, J. W. (2009). *Life-span development* (12th ed). London. McGraw-Hill. *Chapters Five, Seven, and Nine and Eleven.*

Additional Readings

Oyserman, D. (2011). Culture as situated cognition: Cultural mindsets, cultural fluency, and meaning making. *European review of social psychology*, 22(1), 164-214.

Lecture Three:

Moral Development

In this lecture we will explore the concept of moral understanding. We will examine different theoretical explanations for the development of moral reasoning, focusing on key theories, along with the strengths and weaknesses of each theory. Further perspectives are represented by Freud's theory of moral development, Bandura's Social Learning theory and proposed biological bases for moral reasoning. The historical and sociocultural context of the theories will be acknowledged.

Main Themes

- Moral reasoning, moral understanding, and moral behaviour
- Piaget's theory
- Kohlberg's theory
- Gilligan's theory
- Sociocultural contributions
- Freud's psychoanalytic theory of moral development
- Bandura's social learning theory
- Biological mechanisms in moral development

Essential Readings

Berger, K.S. (2007). *The developing person through the lifespan*. New York: Worth.

Gross, R. (2010). *Psychology: the science of mind and behaviour* (6th ed). London: Hodder Education. Chapter 35 (pp 546 - 561).

Keenan, T. & Evans, S. (2009). *An introduction to child development*. London: SAGE. Chapter 12 (pp 297 - 318).

Thornton, S. (2008). *Understanding human development. Biological, social and psychological processes from conception to adult life*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 12 (pp 506 – 562).

Additional Readings

Blum, L. A. (1988). Gilligan and Kohlberg: Implications for Moral Theory. *Ethics*, 98(3), 472-491

Lecture Four:

Language Development

During this topic we will critically consider explanations of language acquisition in childhood and consider factors that can impede the development and use of language

Main Themes

- Language and the brain
- Chomsky's nativist theory
- Cognitive and Social explanations of language
- Factors that impede the development of language use

Reading

Ambridge, B., & Lieven, E. V. M. (2011). *Child Language Acquisition: Contrasting Theoretical Approaches* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511975073>

Rowland, C. (2014). *Understanding child language acquisition* (1st ed.). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203776025>

Saxton, M. (2017). *Child language : acquisition and development* (Second edition.). SAGE.

Lecture Five

Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood: Identity development and life decisions

This week will continue our exploration of psychosocial development through the lifespan, focusing upon the challenges of adolescence and early adulthood. We will identify specific issues relating to developing a sense of adult identity, and consider how well classic theories stand in contemporary society.

Main Themes

- Adolescent identity development – a critical view
- Arnett's view of 'Emerging Adulthood'
- Classic models of young adulthood – Levinson etc.

Essential Readings

Berger, K. S. (2017). *Developing Person through the Life Span (10th edition)*. MacMillan Publishing.

Santrock, J. W. (2014). A topical approach to life-span development
7th ed. New York : McGraw-Hill

Additional Reading

Bee, H. L., Boyd, D. R. (2003). *Lifespan development (3rd ed.)*. Boston : Allyn & Bacon 2003

Lecture Six:

Atypical cognitive development: *Autism Spectrum Disorder*

During this topic we will discuss psychological explanations of causes, diagnoses of autistic disorders, and treatments and interventions. We will consider the impact of ASD and a diagnosis of ASD on individuals' development into adulthood.

Main Themes

- What is autistic spectrum disorder? What are the symptoms?
- When can it be diagnosed?
- Assessment
- Treatment and Care

Essential Reading

Doyle, B. T., Doyle Inland, E. (2004). *Autism spectrum disorders from A to Z: assessment, diagnosis & more*. Arlington, Tex.: Future Horizons.

Additional Reading

Khalid, K. A. A. (2013). *A practical guide to mental health problems in children with autistic spectrum disorder: it's not just their autism*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Zager, D. (2005). *Autism spectrum disorders : identification, education, and treatment (3rd ed)*.. Mahwah, N.J. ; London : Lawrence Erlbaum.

Lecture Seven:

Atypical cognitive development: *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)*

During this topic, we will be discussing one of the most diagnosed learning disorders. We will consider a range of aspects, including definitions of ADHD, psychological assessment and diagnosis, proposed aetiology, and patterns of progression through the lifespan.

Main Themes

- Psychological assessment and diagnosis
- Proposed aetiology of ADHD
- Effects of early life experiences on development through the lifespan

Essential Readings:

Conrad, P. (2006). *Identifying hyperactive children: the medicalization of deviant behavior*. Aldershot : Ashgate

Lloyd, G., Stead, J., Cohen, D. (2007). *Critical new perspectives on ADHD*. London: Routledge.

Additional Readings

Hughes, L., Cooper, P. (2007). *Understanding and supporting children with ADHD : strategies for teachers, parents and other professionals*. London : Paul Chapman

Lecture Eight

Cognitive Functioning in Later Adulthood

This lecture will explore psychological explanations for age differences in cognitive processing. We will be discussing specific aspects of cognition and assembled cognition, along with a consideration of coping with cognitive limitations in later life, with comparison to younger and mid-life adults. We will also focus upon how psychosocial aspects change towards and during later life. We will discuss models of social interaction and relationships during older age. We will identify the key challenges faced by individuals entering old age and consider whether it is inevitably a time of decline and decay.

Main Themes

- Processing speed, Attention, Memory
- Intelligence, expertise, creativity and wisdom
- Coping with cognitive limitations
- Explanations of cognitive performance and change
- Psychosocial challenges in old age
- Social interactions and relationships
- Explanations of positive and negative ageing

Essential Reading

Berger, K.S. (2007). *The developing person through the lifespan*. New York: Worth..

Or

Santrock, J. W. (2009). *Life-span development (12th Edition)*. London. McGraw-Hill.
 Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2001). *An Introduction to Gerontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge

Schaie, K. W., Willis, S. L. (2013). *Handbook of the psychology of aging (8th ed.)*. London : Elsevier

Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2012). *The psychology of ageing: An introduction*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (Chapter 3)

Additional Readings

Erber, J. T. (2013). *Aging and older adulthood (3rd ed.)*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell 2013

Verhaeghen, P. (2011). Cognitive Processing and Ageing. In *I. Stuart-Hamilton, An Introduction to Gerontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Vink, D., Aartsen, M. J. & Schoevers, R. A. (2008). Risk factors for anxiety and depression in the elderly: A review. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 106, 29–44.

Woods, B. (2011). The Psychology of Atypical Ageing. In *I. Stuart-Hamilton, An Introduction to Gerontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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Lecture Nine:

Psychological wellbeing and adult development: Common Personality/Mental Health disorders in adulthood

This topic focuses upon how personality, and personality disorders, might differ across the lifespan. We will consider how life events, as well as other factors influence the manifestation of personality traits. We will also discuss how personality disorders effect people in later stages of their lives.

Main Themes

- Personality stability and change across the lifespan
- Personality disorders across the lifespan

Reading

Ferguson, C. J. (2010). A Meta-Analysis of Normal and Disordered Personality Across the Life Span. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol. 98, No. 4, 659–667

Gomez, V., et al. The influence of personality and life events on subjective well-being from a Lifespan Perspective. *Journal of Research in Personality* (2009), doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2008.12.014

Lucas R. E, Donnellan, M. B. (2011). Age Differences in Big Five Behavior Averages and Variabilities Across the Adult Lifespan: Moving Beyond Retrospective, Global Summary Accounts of Personality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 101, No. 4, 847–861

Schwaba, T., & Bleidorn, W. (2017). Individual Differences In Personality Change Across the Adult Lifespan. *Journal of Personality*.

Lecture Ten:

The Dementias

This week we will explore the different types of dementia, their suggested causes. We will consider the changes that occur in the brain and the presenting symptoms along with prognoses for people with a dementia and how people might live with a dementia.

Main Themes

- Psychological symptoms
- Biological changes
- Proposed causes
- Diagnosis
- Medical treatments
- Psychosocial treatments
- Other neurological diseases that can cause dementia

Essential reading

Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2012). *The psychology of ageing: An introduction*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (Chapter 6)

Schwertner, E., Pereira, J. B., Xu, H., Secnik, J., Winblad, B., Eriksdotter, M., & Religa, D. (2022). Behavioral and psychological symptoms of dementia in different dementia disorders: a large-scale study of 10,000 individuals. *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*, 87(3), 1307-1318.

Additional Reading

Lamont, R. A., Nelis, S. M., Quinn, C., Martyr, A., Rippon, I., Kopelman, M. D., & Clare, L. (2020). Psychological predictors of 'living well' with dementia: findings from the IDEAL study. *Aging & mental health*, 24(6), 956-964.