



## UNSW Course Outline

# PSYC5009 Abnormal Psychology - 2024

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## General Course Information

**Course Code :** PSYC5009

**Year :** 2024

**Term :** Hexamester 2

**Teaching Period :** KF

**Is a multi-term course? :** No

**Faculty :** Faculty of Science

**Academic Unit :** School of Psychology

**Delivery Mode :** Online

**Delivery Format :** Standard

**Delivery Location :** Distance Education

**Campus :** Sydney

**Study Level :** Postgraduate

**Units of Credit :** 6

### Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

## Course Details & Outcomes

### Course Description

This course will provide a contemporary view of issues associated with human mental health and psychopathology. It will introduce and discuss the notion of abnormality in behaviour, how a range of mental disorders are diagnosed, the prognosis and treatment in human mental

disorders as well as the stigma and media coverage of mental health. There will be an emphasis on the current experimental and theoretical research and evidence based clinical practice. The course is appropriate for students with knowledge of advanced statistics and research methods in Psychology. The course content will be delivered via asynchronous (pre-recorded) lectures, synchronous tutorials, readings and self-paced modules and quizzes.

## **Course Aims**

The course aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the nature and aetiology of major mental disorders such as schizophrenia, anxiety and depression, as well as psychological and biological theories that attempt to account for these disorders. The prevalence, treatment and prognosis and the nature and aetiology of major mental disorders such as eating disorders, child psychopathology, anxiety disorders, depression, and others will be discussed. This course provides fundamental knowledge for further studies and research in psychology, and it is particularly relevant to clinical psychology programs.

## **Relationship to Other Courses**

To enrol in PSYC5009, completion of the PSYC5001-PSYC5004 sequence is required.

# Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Identify and compare the empirical evidence related to the causes of mental disorders and medical and psychological treatments for specific disorders.
CLO2 : Evaluate, summarise and effectively communicate theories and empirical evidence in the field of abnormal psychology utilising the scientific method.
CLO3 : Analyse and interpret the evidence for aetiology, underlying mechanisms, diagnostic criteria and treatment of mental disorders.
CLO4 : Recognise the impact of prejudice, attitudes and discriminatory behaviours on the aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders.
CLO5 : Explain and discuss the outcomes of experimental research and data analysis in abnormal psychology using various formats and different contexts.
CLO6 : Apply theories and empirical evidence within the field of abnormal psychology research to discuss personal, social and organisational issues in applied settings.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Identify and compare the empirical evidence related to the causes of mental disorders and medical and psychological treatments for specific disorders.	• Weekly Quizzes
CLO2 : Evaluate, summarise and effectively communicate theories and empirical evidence in the field of abnormal psychology utilising the scientific method.	• Oral Presentation • Critical Analysis
CLO3 : Analyse and interpret the evidence for aetiology, underlying mechanisms, diagnostic criteria and treatment of mental disorders.	• Oral Presentation • Critical Analysis
CLO4 : Recognise the impact of prejudice, attitudes and discriminatory behaviours on the aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders.	• Weekly Quizzes
CLO5 : Explain and discuss the outcomes of experimental research and data analysis in abnormal psychology using various formats and different contexts.	• Oral Presentation • Critical Analysis
CLO6 : Apply theories and empirical evidence within the field of abnormal psychology research to discuss personal, social and organisational issues in applied settings.	• Oral Presentation • Critical Analysis

## Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

# Learning and Teaching in this course

Moodle contains lectures, tutorials, content topic materials, assessment materials, and any updated information. You are expected to check Moodle regularly. You are also expected to check your UNSW email regularly. All news updates and announcements will be made on the 'Announcements' forum on the Moodle page and/or by email. You must check Moodle and your student emails regularly to keep up to date.

Given that the course content and all assessable components are delivered online, you must ensure that you have access to a computer with a stable internet connection and a browser capable of handling the features of the Moodle eLearning website and any of its content. No special consideration will be granted due to internet connection or computer issues arising from personal technical issues. If an internet disconnection takes place during an assessment/exam, there will be no way of changing a mark, and these will be allocated according to the progress that was saved. To help you establish whether your computer/internet access is suitable for the online exam/s, a test quiz is available. This quiz will not contribute to final marks and can be completed multiple times to test computer/internet connection prior to assessments/exams.

NOTE: THIS COURSE REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT WEEKLY ASSESSABLE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MOODLE. You are expected to engage with all materials delivered each week. There will be a combination of formative and summative assessments throughout the course. The expected level of engagement is approximately 20 hours per week (in the 6-week term). Average engagement levels are as follows (a) 2-2.5 hours of engagement with the lecture content (5-6 lectures per week); (b) Tutorial attendance, 3 hours per week including preparation for the tutorial discussion. Note we recommend that you complete the synchronous tutorial, however completion of the recorded asynchronous tutorial will also be accepted; (c) 4.5 hours to complete the assigned activities, including revision modules; (d) 4.5 hours to complete the assigned weekly readings that accompany the content for each lecture topic; (e) 4-5 hours to complete the weekly assessments (secured quizzes) and prepare for the major assessments.

***Under no circumstances will employment be accepted as an excuse not to meet expectations for class participation or assessments.*** Remember, the term times are very short, so it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not fall behind with the ongoing assessment demands of the course.

**Tutorial Attendance:** Attendance and participation in tutorials is compulsory. All tutorials will be delivered in an online mode, through Blackboard Collaborate. Given that this is a fully online

course, it is understood that some students may be unavailable at the designated live tutorial time. Therefore, you will be required to participate in the tutorial either synchronously (as the tutorial is streamed live) or asynchronously (a recorded version of the tutorial). NB: Engagement with online tutorials and timely completion of asynchronous online tutorials is essential in accordance with UNSW Assessment Implementation Procedure. You are expected to be aware of the UNSW Assessment policy and understand how to apply for special consideration within the Graduate Diploma Special consideration policies and procedures if you cannot complete an assignment/exam due to illness and/or misadventure. It is expected that students have read through the Graduate Diploma in Psychology (5331) Guide.

## Additional Course Information

### Learning and teaching activities

This is a fully online course, all materials, lectures and tutorials are delivered through Moodle.

The course web page is available through Moodle: <https://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/login/index>. Login with your student number and password, and follow the links to the PSYC page.

The course will be delivered over six weeks, covering six major topic areas. The major topics will be delivered in Weeks 1 to 6, with a new topic presented each week. Students are expected to engage with all materials delivered each week. There will be a combination of formative and summative assessments throughout the course. The expected level of engagement is approximately 20 hours per week, including preparation for the weekly quizzes and written assessments.

Each week students can expect the following:

**Lectures** will be digitally recorded. Links to the lecture recordings will be available on the course web page. Lecture slides will be also available on the Moodle course page. This will be broken down into 6 lectures covering the main concepts for each sub-topic of the week.

**Online tutorials** will be held in weeks 1-6. There are six (6), two (2) hour tutorials delivered through Blackboard Collaborate on the Moodle course page each week. All tutorials will be live streamed for synchronous participation and recorded for asynchronous participation, should a student be unable to join the synchronous tutorial at the designated time. Students will be able access the recorded tutorials, including a transcript of tutor and student contributions, for the remainder of the course. Tutorial discussions are based on lecture content and readings. In order

to participate in class discussions, you will need to prepare for tutorials by reviewing the available materials.

**Online activities:** Each week there will be a range of online activities, including formative revision quizzes and interactive learning modules. These activities will allow students to explore the topics of the week in greater depth and provide formative assessment for the students and revision opportunities.

**Readings:** There will be assigned readings each week that cover the major topic of the week. Students will need to read scientific journal articles in order to prepare for the online tutorials. In addition, as part of this preparation students are encouraged to post one comment/discussion point on the Study Group Forum and reply to the comment of at least two other students in the course.

**The general discussion forum** connects students in the course to encourage discussion of weekly content, revision, or topics of interest with each other. Regular engagement in the Study Group Forum will help students gain an understanding of the material, critique the contributions of fellow students, and help develop written communication skills.

**The Q and A forum** provides students with an opportunity to question and clarify the concepts and ideas mentioned in the lectures and readings. Students are strongly encouraged to engage with this forum by posting questions or comments, and reading, answering, or replying to other students' posts to enhance understanding of the content, critical thinking, and written communication skills.

**Formative topic revision quizzes** are available for students that provide an opportunity to evaluate understanding of course material on a weekly basis. Timely completion of the weekly quizzes will assist students in gaining a proper understanding of each topic so that this knowledge can be built on.

# Assessments

## Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Weekly Quizzes Assessment Format: Individual	10%	Start Date: Thursday Week 1-6 at 7am Due Date: Sunday Week 1-6 at 11:59pm
Oral Presentation Assessment Format: Individual	40%	Start Date: Week 1 Due Date: Week 3
Critical Analysis Assessment Format: Individual	50%	Start Date: Week 1 Due Date: Week 5

## Assessment Details

### Weekly Quizzes

#### Assessment Overview

You will be required to complete 6 quizzes under official exam conditions. Quizzes are conducted under timed conditions and are designed to be taken without reference to lecture notes or study resources. These quizzes will cover the content of the lectures and readings. The quizzes will be held in weeks 1-6 and will cover content presented in the week they are released. The weekly quizzes form part of a continuous assessment. The top five grades out of the six quizzes will be used to count towards the final weekly quiz grade which accounts for 10% of the course mark. The purpose of this assessment is to test your level of comprehension regarding the course material. Your marks and solutions will be provided on completing each quiz.

#### Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Identify and compare the empirical evidence related to the causes of mental disorders and medical and psychological treatments for specific disorders.
- CL04 : Recognise the impact of prejudice, attitudes and discriminatory behaviours on the aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders.

#### Assessment Length

20 multiple choice questions

#### Submission notes

Moodle quiz

#### Assessment information

Not applicable

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

## **Oral Presentation**

### Assessment Overview

The purpose of this assessment is to allow you to discuss and explain the research evidence, clinically significant behaviour, diagnostic criteria and treatment of a mental disorder to a lay audience.

You will record and submit a 15–20-minute oral presentation to communicate your findings to the class. The assessment information will be available on the first day of the course. The assessment is due in Week 3. You will receive feedback through annotated rubric and a series of written comments. You will prepare for this assessment by participating in tutorial activities and reviewing the course materials.

### Course Learning Outcomes

- CL02 : Evaluate, summarise and effectively communicate theories and empirical evidence in the field of abnormal psychology utilising the scientific method.
- CL03 : Analyse and interpret the evidence for aetiology, underlying mechanisms, diagnostic criteria and treatment of mental disorders.
- CL05 : Explain and discuss the outcomes of experimental research and data analysis in abnormal psychology using various formats and different contexts.
- CL06 : Apply theories and empirical evidence within the field of abnormal psychology research to discuss personal, social and organisational issues in applied settings.

### Assessment Length

15-20 minutes

### Submission notes

Video file

### Assessment information

Not applicable

### Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable



# Critical Analysis

## Assessment Overview

The purpose of this assessment is to write a critical analysis of literature about different mental disorders.

You will evaluate and discuss how the diagnostic criteria, aetiology, and treatment of these disorders are connected, and you will outline the strengths and limitations of the research.

You will discuss the link between mental health disorders which share similar diagnostic criteria and reflect on the difficulty of the diagnostic model.

The word limit for this assessment is 2000 words. The assessment information will be available on the first day of the course. The assessment is due in Week 5. You will receive feedback through annotated rubric and a series of in-text comments. You will prepare for this assessment by participating in the tutorial activities and reviewing the course materials.

## Course Learning Outcomes

- CL02 : Evaluate, summarise and effectively communicate theories and empirical evidence in the field of abnormal psychology utilising the scientific method.
- CL03 : Analyse and interpret the evidence for aetiology, underlying mechanisms, diagnostic criteria and treatment of mental disorders.
- CL05 : Explain and discuss the outcomes of experimental research and data analysis in abnormal psychology using various formats and different contexts.
- CL06 : Apply theories and empirical evidence within the field of abnormal psychology research to discuss personal, social and organisational issues in applied settings.

## Assessment Length

2000 words

## Submission notes

Text file

## Assessment information

Not applicable

## Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

# General Assessment Information

Not applicable

## Grading Basis

Standard

## Requirements to pass course

Not applicable

# Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 11 March - 17 March	Lecture	Classification and treatment of mental disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classification of mental disorders and introduction to DSM-5</li><li>• Introduction to psychological therapies</li><li>• Introduction to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.</li></ul>
	Tutorial	Online tutorial discussion based on lectures and readings. You will have the opportunity to engage with the literature and debate the strengths and limitations of the predominant classification system for mental disorders and discuss the theories underpinning the main psychological therapies.
Week 2 : 18 March - 24 March	Lecture	Childhood disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Internalising and externalising disorders in childhood</li><li>• Psychological therapies for children</li><li>• Neurodevelopmental disorders</li></ul>
	Tutorial	This module will provide an overview of internalising and externalising difficulties in childhood, treatment for childhood disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders, with particular focus on Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
Week 3 : 25 March - 31 March	Lecture	Depression and mood disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classification and statistics of depressive disorders</li><li>• Statistics and prevalence</li><li>• Bipolar disorders</li></ul>
	Tutorial	Online tutorial discussion based on lectures and readings. You will have the opportunity to engage with the literature to discuss the social, biological and cognitive contributions to the development and maintenance of depression and other mood disorders.
Week 4 : 1 April - 7 April	Lecture	Anxiety, OCD, trauma- and stressor-related disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anxiety disorders</li><li>• OCD and related disorders</li><li>• Trauma- and stressor-related disorders</li></ul>
	Tutorial	Online tutorial discussion based on lectures and readings. This module will provide an overview of the symptoms, aetiology, maintenance and treatment of a range of anxiety disorders, PTSD, OCD and other related disorders. You will also be exposed to a range of models of anxiety and how these models inform treatment.
Week 5 : 8 April - 14 April	Lecture	Schizophrenia <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders</li><li>• Causes and statistics</li><li>• Treatment</li></ul>
	Tutorial	Online tutorial discussion based on lectures and readings. You will have the opportunity to discuss and debate pertinent issues such as legislation that governs the treatment of people with schizophrenia as well as the portrayal of schizophrenia in popular culture.
Week 6 : 15 April - 21 April	Lecture	Personality disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overview and classification</li><li>• Assessment, etiology and treatment</li><li>• Borderline personality disorder and psychopathy</li></ul>
	Tutorial	Online tutorial discussions based on lectures and readings. You will discuss the classification, causes and treatment of personality disorders, as well as borderline personality disorder and psychopathy.

## Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

## General Schedule Information

Each week this course typically consists of 2-2.5 hours of lecture material, 2 hours of face to face tutorials, and 4.5 hours of online activities. Students are expected to take an additional 5-6 hours each week of self-determined study to complete assessments, readings, and quiz preparation.

## Course Resources

### Prescribed Resources

*Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach*, Barlow, Durand and Hofmann. Cengage, 8th edition. E-book and Mindtap resources are provided on Moodle.

### Recommended Resources

Not applicable

### Additional Costs

Not applicable

## Course Evaluation and Development

In order to gather comprehensive student feedback on the course, we utilise the anonymous myExperience survey as one of the primary methods. This survey provides a structured platform for students to share their thoughts, opinions, and suggestions regarding various aspects of the course. Additionally, students are encouraged to email their feedback directly to the program authorities for further discussion and consideration. The myExperience survey will be administered towards the end of the course to capture students' experiences and perspectives. The survey will cover different dimensions of the course, including teaching quality, course materials, assessments, and overall learning environment. The anonymous nature of the survey ensures that students can express their feedback freely and honestly.

Once the survey responses are collected, they will be analysed. The analysis will involve examining both quantitative and qualitative data to identify common themes, patterns, and areas for improvement. Quantitative data, such as ratings responses, will be aggregated and

summarised to gain a quantitative overview of student satisfaction and areas of concern. Qualitative feedback, such as open-ended comments, will be carefully reviewed and categorised to extract valuable insights and specific suggestions.

Based on the findings from the analysis, appropriate actions will be taken to address the identified areas for improvement. These actions may include revising course materials, adjusting teaching approaches, providing additional support resources, or modifying assessment methods.

Feedback from students is considered a valuable asset in shaping the course. We aim to create a more student-centred learning experience by actively seeking and incorporating student input. The feedback students provide serves as a catalyst for continuous improvement and ensures that the course responds to their needs and expectations.

## Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Lecturer	Lidija Krebs-Lazendic					No	Yes
Administrator	Deliana Freky					No	No

## Other Useful Information

### School Contact Information

For GD Psych courses (PSYC5001 - PSYC5010), please email: [gdpsychology@unsw.edu.au](mailto:gdpsychology@unsw.edu.au).

For GCChildDev courses (PSYC5111 - PSYC5116), please email: [gcchilddev@unsw.edu.au](mailto:gcchilddev@unsw.edu.au)