

PSYCHOLOGY Access Course



Aim

This module will introduce you to some psychological theory and encourage you to develop critical analysis skills.

Course Content

You will take five units of study:

- **Unit 1: Introduction to Psychology**
A three credit unit which introduces the subject and considers the purpose and study of psychology. You will be introduced to the major theoretical approaches and will evaluate research in terms of ethical considerations, using the work of key theorists.
- **Unit 2: The Psychology of Health**
This three credit unit help you to understand psychological theory in relation to health and illness. You will critically assess how ill health can impact behaviour, and explore different theories of coping with illness. Aspects of the nature nurture debate will be covered and you will also look at theoretical explanations for Dementia.
- **Unit 3: Bio-Psychology**
In this three credit unit you will look at the key features and functions of the brain, the spinal cord, neurons, neurotransmitters and the automatic nervous system. You will consider the effects of drugs and their effectiveness on these structures, as well as the impact of brain damage on specific functions within the brain, using case studies to illustrate these.
- **Unit 4: Abnormal Psychology**
You will evaluate psychological definitions of abnormality in this three credit unit, considering the validity and reliability of methods of definition and classification. Disorders examined may include anxiety, depression, eating disorders, schizophrenia and obsessional compulsive disorder.
- **Unit 5: Psychology and Therapy**
This three credit unit is designed to help you understand key models used to explain mental illness and key therapeutic approaches used for mental health issues. Using the same disorders as those covered in the Abnormal Psychology unit it focuses on the application of therapeutic practice, whereas the former unit focuses on academic interpretation and measurement of mental illness.

Approaches to Study

As well as teacher-led classes there will also be plenty of discussions and activities to support and develop your subject knowledge and independent research skills, using a range of current sources for Psychology and associated research approaches.

Assessment

The assessment for the course is carried out across all three units:

- **Unit 1:** presentation and process diary
- **Unit 2:** essay of 2000 words
- **Unit 3:** 1.5 hour unseen exam

Recommend Reading and Preparation

You are not expected to have studied psychology previously but will need to be able to communicate clearly and be confident with numbers. Useful preparation would be reading relevant articles in broadsheet newspapers and watching documentaries on current issues. Expect to be challenged!

Qualification Requirements in English and Maths

If you are aiming at progressing into higher education you will need to have English and Maths GCSEs at Levels 4 – 9 for university entrance. If you do not already have these you will be enrolled as a part-time student on the Access course and you can take these alongside your Access course at no extra charge. You may take these in either the first or second year of your Access course. You may decide to take them both from your first year, so that you have a chance to re-take them if you do not achieve the required grades.

Hours:

The course is available either full-time (approx. 12 hours per week over three days for one year) or part-time (approx. 6 hours per week over one day for two years).

Examination Board

Laser Learning Awards

Qualifications

You will need a Level 4 in English and Maths or be willing to gain these on the Access course; or Level 2 in Functional Skills in English and Maths

When to Apply

You can apply at any time. Interviews are held from October to June and the course begins in September. At Interview we check that the course will suit your needs.

Subjects

You can find out more about Access subject options by visiting our website at www.stvincent.ac.uk under 'Higher Education' and 'Access to University'.

Child Care

There is a nursery at St Vincent College for babies and young children up to four years old, run by YMCA Fairthorne Manor. This is free for those on benefits.

Financial Support

Some support for your studies (eg books, stationery, travel) is available for most students on benefits.

Advice and Guidance

You will be able to consult our Careers and Higher Education Manager for impartial advice about university or careers.

For start dates and further information, contact:

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Tel: 023 9258 8311

e-mail: info@stvincent.ac.uk

Web: www.stvincent.ac.uk