

Psychology

Exam Planner

*Your guide for exam goal-setting,
preparation and success.*



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Subject: Psychology

EXAM DATE

GOAL

Topic: How does the nervous system enable psychological functioning?	Do I have it in my notes?	Note-making deadline	Memorising deadline
The roles of different subdivisions of the central and peripheral nervous systems in responding to, and processing and coordinating with, sensory stimuli received by the body to enable conscious and unconscious responses, including spinal reflexes			
The role of neurotransmitters in the transmission of neural information across a neural synapse to produce excitatory effects (as with glutamate) or inhibitory effects (as with gamma-amino butyric acid [GABA]) as compared to neuromodulators (such as dopamine and serotonin) that have a range of effects on brain activity			
Synaptic plasticity – resulting from long-term potentiation and long-term depression, which together act to modify connections between neurons (sprouting, rerouting and pruning) – as the fundamental mechanism of memory formation that leads to learning			
Internal and external stressors causing psychological and physiological stress responses, including the flight-or-fight-or-freeze response in acute stress and the role of cortisol in chronic stress			
The gut–brain axis (GBA) as an area of emerging research, with reference to the interaction of gut microbiota with stress and the nervous system in the control of psychological processes and behaviour			
The explanatory power of Hans Selye’s General Adaptation Syndrome as a biological model of stress, including alarm reaction (shock/counter shock), resistance and exhaustion			
The explanatory power of Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman’s Transactional Model of Stress and Coping to explain stress as a psychological process (primary and secondary appraisal only)			
Use of strategies (approach and avoidance) for coping with stress and improving mental wellbeing, including context-specific effectiveness and coping flexibility			

Topic: How do people learn and remember?	Do I have it in my notes?	Note-making deadline	Memorising deadline
Behaviourist approaches to learning, as illustrated by classical conditioning as a three-phase process (before conditioning, during conditioning and after conditioning) that results in the involuntary association between a neutral stimulus and unconditioned stimulus to produce a conditioned response, and operant conditioning as a three-phase process (antecedent, behaviour and consequence) involving reinforcement (positive and negative) and punishment (positive and negative)			
Social-cognitive approaches to learning, as illustrated by observational learning as a process involving attention, retention, reproduction, motivation and reinforcement			
Approaches to learning that situate the learner within a system, as illustrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing where learning is viewed as being embedded in relationships where the learner is part of a multimodal system of knowledge patterned on Country			
The explanatory power of the Atkinson-Shiffrin multi-store model of memory in the encoding, storage and retrieval of stored information in sensory, short-term and long-term memory stores			
The roles of the hippocampus, amygdala, neocortex, basal ganglia and cerebellum in long-term implicit and explicit memories			
The role of episodic and semantic memory in retrieving autobiographical events and in constructing possible imagined futures, including evidence from brain imaging and post-mortem studies of brain lesions in people with Alzheimer's disease and aphantasia as an example of individual differences in the experience of mental imagery			
The use of mnemonics (acronyms, acrostics and the method of loci) by written cultures to increase the encoding, storage and retrieval of information as compared with the use of mnemonics such as sung narrative used by oral cultures, including Aboriginal peoples' use of songlines			

Topic: How does sleep affect mental processes and behaviour?	Do I have it in my notes?	Note-making deadline	Memorising deadline
Sleep as a psychological construct that is broadly categorised as a naturally occurring altered state of consciousness and is further categorised into REM and NREM sleep, and the measurement of physiological responses associated with sleep, through electroencephalography (EEG), electromyography (EMG), electro-oculography (EOG), sleep diaries and video monitoring			
Regulation of sleep-wake patterns by internal biological mechanisms, with reference to circadian rhythm, ultradian rhythms of REM and NREM Stages 1–3, the suprachiasmatic nucleus and melatonin			
Differences in, and explanations for, the demands for sleep across the life span, with reference to total amount of sleep and changes in a typical pattern of sleep (proportion of REM and NREM)			
The effects of partial sleep deprivation (inadequate sleep either in quantity or quality) on a person's affective, behavioural and cognitive functioning, and the affective and cognitive effects of one night of full sleep deprivation as a comparison to blood alcohol concentration readings of 0.05 and 0.10			
Changes to a person's sleep-wake cycle that cause circadian rhythm sleep disorders (Delayed Sleep Phase Syndrome [DSPS], Advanced Sleep Phase Disorder [ASPD] and shift work) and the treatments of circadian rhythm sleep disorders through bright light therapy			
Improving sleep hygiene and adaptation to zeitgebers to improve sleep-wake patterns and mental wellbeing, with reference to daylight and blue light, temperature, and eating and drinking patterns			
Topic: What influences mental wellbeing?	Do I have it in my notes?	Note-making deadline	Memorising deadline
Ways of considering mental wellbeing, including levels of functioning; resilience, as the ability to cope with and manage change and uncertainty; and social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB), as a multidimensional and holistic framework for wellbeing that encapsulates all elements of being (body, mind and emotions, family and kinship, community, culture, country, spirituality and ancestors) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people			
Mental wellbeing as a continuum, with an individual's mental wellbeing influenced by the interaction of internal and external factors and fluctuating over time, as illustrated by variations for individuals experiencing stress, anxiety and phobia			

The relative influences of factors that contribute to the development of specific phobia, with reference to gamma-amino butyric acid (GABA) dysfunction and long-term potentiation (biological); behavioural models involving precipitation by classical conditioning and perpetuation by operant conditioning, and cognitive biases including memory bias and catastrophic thinking (psychological); and specific environmental triggers and stigma around seeking treatment (social)			
Evidence-based interventions and their use for specific phobia, with reference to the use of short-acting anti-anxiety benzodiazepine agents (GABA agonists) in the management of phobic anxiety and breathing retraining (biological); the use of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and systematic desensitisation as psychotherapeutic treatments of phobia (psychological); and psychoeducation for families/supporters with reference to challenging unrealistic or anxious thoughts and not encouraging avoidance behaviours (social)			
The application of a biopsychosocial approach to maintaining mental wellbeing, with reference to protective factors including adequate nutritional intake and hydration and sleep (biological), cognitive behavioural strategies and mindfulness meditation (psychological) and support from family, friends and community that is authentic and energising (social)			
Cultural determinants, including cultural continuity and self-determination, as integral for the maintenance of wellbeing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples			
Topic: How is scientific inquiry used to investigate mental processes and psychological functioning?	Do I have it in my notes?	Note-making deadline	Memorising deadline
Psychological concepts specific to the selected scientific investigation and their significance, including definitions of key terms			
Characteristics of the selected scientific methodology and method, and appropriateness of the use of independent, dependent and controlled variables in the selected scientific investigation			
Techniques of primary quantitative data generation relevant to the selected scientific investigation			
The accuracy, precision, repeatability, reproducibility and validity of measurements			
The health, safety and ethical guidelines relevant to the selected scientific investigation			

The nature of evidence that supports or refutes a hypothesis, model or theory			
Ways of organising, analysing and evaluating primary data to identify patterns and relationships, including sources of error and uncertainty			
Authentication of generated primary data using a logbook			
Assumptions and limitations of investigation methodology and/or data generation and/or analysis methods			
Criteria used to evaluate the validity of measurements and psychological research			
Conventions of science communication: scientific terminology and representations, symbols, formulas, standard abbreviations and units of measurement			
Conventions of scientific poster presentation, including succinct communication of the selected scientific investigation and acknowledgements and references			
The key findings and implications of the selected scientific investigation			

Practice Schedule

PRACTICE EXAM	DEADLINE
Practice Exam 1	
Practice Exam 2	
Practice Exam 3	
Practice Exam 4	
Practice Exam 5	
EXAM DATE:	

Congratulations!

You're ready! Now relax and think about how good it will feel leaving the exam room knowing the hard work has paid off. Congratulations and good luck (not that you need it)!



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