

Psychology Units 3 & 4

Unit 3: How does experience affect behaviour and mental processes?

This unit delves into the contributions of both classical and contemporary research in understanding the nervous system's functioning and its connection to learning and memory processes. Students explore how the nervous system facilitates interaction with the environment and investigate the impact of stress on psychological functioning, including recent studies on the gut-brain relationship. They examine mechanisms underlying learning and memory, considering various models and brain regions involved, as well as techniques like mnemonics, including cultural perspectives such as the use of place in memory by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Additionally, students undertake a self-designed scientific investigation generating primary data related to mental processes and psychological functioning, presented in a scientific poster format.

Area of Study 1: How does the nervous system enable psychological functioning?

- Analyse how the functioning of the human nervous system enables a person to interact with the external world.
- Evaluate the different ways in which stress can affect psychobiological functioning.

Area of Study 2: How do people learn and remember?

- Apply different approaches to explain learning to familiar and novel contexts.
- Discuss memory as a psychobiological process.

Unit 4: How is mental wellbeing supported and maintained?

This unit focuses on exploring the importance of sleep and its impact on mental wellbeing. Students examine the biological mechanisms regulating sleep, including the distinction between REM and NREM sleep throughout life stages. They also analyze how changes in sleep patterns and habits influence psychological functioning, drawing from classical and contemporary research on sleep. Furthermore, students delve into the definition and conceptualization of mental wellbeing, including frameworks like social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) as holistic approaches. They apply a biopsychosocial model to understand specific phobias and explore protective factors and cultural determinants that contribute to the mental wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Additionally, students conduct a self-designed scientific investigation generating primary data related to mental processes and wellbeing, presented in a scientific poster format.

Area of Study 1: How does sleep affect mental processes and behaviour?

- Analyse the demand for sleep and evaluate the effects of sleep disruption on a person's psychological functioning.

Area of Study 2: What influences mental wellbeing?

- Discuss the concept of mental wellbeing.
- Apply a biopsychosocial approach to explain the development and management of specific phobia.
- Discuss protective factors that contribute to the maintenance of mental wellbeing.

Area of Study 3: How is scientific inquiry used to investigate mental processes and psychological functioning?

- Design and conduct a scientific investigation related to mental processes and psychological functioning, and present an aim, methodology and method, results, discussion, and conclusion in a scientific poster.