

unit guide

Extended Essay

PSY3340

<http://www.sbu.ac.uk/psycho/teaching/extessay-main.shtml>

Faculty of Arts and Human Science

2008-2009

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1. UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Extended Essay
Unit Level:	3
Unit Reference Number:	PSY3340
Credit Value:	1
Student Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	4
Private Study Hours:	146
Pre-requisite Learning:	Completion of level 2 or equivalent
Co-requisite Units:	None
Course(s):	Single Honours Psychology (Developmental or Clinical pathways) Graduate Diploma in Psychology
Year and Semester	2007 Semester 1 or 2
Unit Co-ordinator:	Hillary Katz
UC Contact Details:	Ext: 8165 katzh@lsbu.ac.uk E336
Teaching Team & Contact Details:	Named advisors from staff
Subject Area:	Psychology
Summary of Assessment Method:	Essay

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION

This unit provides the opportunity to write an essay on a topic of current interest in Psychology. The essay must review and evaluate in significant depth relevant research and theoretical papers. As well as discussing factual information, you may wish to contrast different approaches to the topic; critically consider the methods used in research and the interpretation of findings; and discuss conceptual issues, theories and ongoing debates.

The choice of topic is open *so long as it differs from that of your Honours Project or essay in another unit and corresponds to your field of study if you are on a given pathway*. You will be expected to undertake an extensive review of recent work in the area

3. AIMS OF THE UNIT

On completion of the unit students will be able:

- to undertake an in-depth review of the literature on a given topic in Psychology
- to evaluate findings, debates and theories in connection with that topic
- to formulate an individual understanding of relevant issues and concepts
- to summarise and evaluate current research in an area of Psychology
- to defend and develop insights into relevant approaches and theoretical conclusions

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the unit you should be able to:

4.1 Knowledge and understanding

- Seek current information about a current topic in Psychology
- Evaluate research and related work in that area
- Consider critically methods, findings and concepts
- Relate finding to theory and debates in that area

4.2 Intellectual skills

- Formulate a coherent topic and study plan
- Organise and evaluate information from relevant sources
- Write a clear evaluative review and argument
- Handle advanced concepts in psychological research and thinking

4.3 Practical skills

- Use databases and other sources of information effectively
- Select, organise and synthesise information

4.4 Transferable skills

- Study independently
- Seek advice and co-operate with advisors
- Use evidence appropriately
- Access information using IT resources

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

Proposal	pass/fail
4,000 word essay	90%
Annotated bibliography	10%

5.1 Essay Format

- The essays should be word-processed.
- It should be structured appropriately (as described in the course guide) with a cover page containing the title, your student number and name of your advisor, followed by an abstract of about 100 words, the main body, references and annotated bibliography (see Section 7.4) .
- Lines should be double-spaced.
- Pages should be numbered and stapled together.
- Two copies of the essay should be submitted.

5.2 Originality of work, referencing and plagiarism

Aside from the limited use of quotes and paraphrasing, the essays should consist of ideas that you have arrived at and express independently. The content should be derived from appropriate sources and reflect your own understanding of the material. Full and accurate referencing is essential.

An electronic copy of the essay must be submitted to Turnitin. Instructions for this are provided on Blackboard.

5.3 Notes about submitting coursework

Coursework deadlines are published on AHS Faculty website. The extended essay which must include the annotated bibliography must be submitted to the school office in borough road (B203).

However, the proposal and draft of the essay should be given or send directly to the advisor who you will be assigned

1. When handing in the extended essay, you must:

- complete the coursework submission form and attach it to the front of your coursework;
- take the coursework to the Faculty Office. Your submission form will be date stamped and a receipt issued. Please keep all receipts;
- keep a copy of your essay.

Students may be required to provide electronic copy of written work submitted. In such instances, the individual student will be written to requesting electronic submission. Failure to provide electronic copy within TWO WEEKS of a written request will result in the work being deemed an incomplete submission, and no mark will be given. The work will then have to be referred for a capped mark. When extenuating circumstances have already been accepted for a unit, this will not negate the proper investigation of any component of that unit for any allegation of academic misconduct, nor the subsequent imposition of any appropriate penalty for proven misconduct.

2. You must not hand the essay to your unit co-ordinator or other lecturer.
3. Unless you have obtained a formal extension from your year tutor, coursework submitted:
 - up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the pass mark (40%);
 - more than two weeks after the deadline will not be marked.
4. Extensions are only granted for valid reasons (see Course/Field guide). Concrete evidence (e.g. medical certificate) will normally be required by the Year Tutor. If you want an extension of the deadline date, you must:
 - get a copy of the form for late submission from the School Office;
 - fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date;
 - supply the Year tutor with relevant documentary evidence;
 - ask the Year Tutor to fill in Part B – the decision whether to agree the request rests with the Year Tutor;
 - attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it (keep a copy for your records).
 - each extension form is only valid for one piece of coursework.

The maximum extension is two weeks.

6. FEEDBACK

Regular feedback about the development of your essay is available from your advisor during the course of the semester with specific feedback on the proposal and annotated bibliography as well as a draft (see schedule below).

Feedback on the completed essay will normally be given 15 working days after submission.

7. INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

7.1 Overview of the main content

The unit requires the preparation of an extended essay developed in conjunction with discussions over the course of the semester with an advisor to whom you will be assigned. Formal meetings with the advisor must take place, during which time your ideas and progress will be reviewed, and feedback given about work submitted to him or her.

You will be asked to suggest (or choose*) a topic or topic area in the first meeting of the unit, but then, on the basis of discussion with the advisor you are assigned, you will refine or develop the initial idea, leading to a written proposal for the essay.

*Some members of staff may provide suggestions for topics which you might consider adopting.

You are free to suggest a topic for your essay as long the advisor finds it acceptable, both as an academic idea and according to his or her expertise. As stated before, the issue or question it addresses should be (a) of current interest in Psychology (and relevant to developmental or clinical Psychology if you are on those pathways), (b) of suitable scope and depth, and (c) be supported by a reliable body of evidence that will make evaluation of the topic possible.

7.2 Your advisor

The Unit co-ordinator will try to allocate an advisor whose interests correspond reasonably well with your topic; however, close matches in terms of academic expertise may not always be possible. There may, therefore, be instances where you might wish to adjust your topic after initial discussion with your advisor.

It is entirely your responsibility to arrange appointments with your advisor, and act on suggestions and aims you agree. Both you and your advisor should be clear about what you will accomplish by the next time you meet.

You should keep written notes of all discussions with your advisor, which summarise what was said, suggestions made and points on which action is agreed. (A sheet is provided at the end of this document on which you can keep track of this information.)

It is not the responsibility of your advisor to set up appointments or chase you up at the different stages (as set out below) for the help with and feedback on the development of the essay.

7.3 The essay

The extended essay should do more than collate and summarise information from the literature. It should show evidence that literature has been carefully selected and evaluated in a way that leads to fresh insights and conclusions about the topic. Given the freedom involved with the choice of topic, it is not possible to say what the content of the essay should be. It might emphasis empirical facts arising from experiments or clinical observations; compare different approaches, critique methods and/or consider conceptual issues, theory and debates. But in all cases, your work must clarify or extend understanding of the topic.

The essay is ultimately a report about the state of knowledge in a given area. It is an argument you make following on a systematic inquiry into a topic, and therefore, it must show evidence of your efforts to understand, organise and evaluate available information. Needless to say the essay must be clearly written and appropriately referenced.

7.3.1 Choosing a topic

The extended essay requires a great deal of effort, so it is advisable that you select a topic that interests you, i.e., one that you will be motivated to pursue, and perhaps one that might contribute to your future education, research or employment.

Your essay (as well as discussion with your advisor) will benefit from a preliminary review of the literature before you settle on a topic. Searches of journals using Psych Info and other databases are invaluable; however, so too might be selected texts or chapters, which can help you to orient your inquiry, especially initially. Flexibility and openness to new facts and the reformulation of your ideas are a vital part of writing an essay, so be prepared to alter your views as your understanding develops.

7.3.2 Essay proposal

Significant familiarity with the literature is necessary before you write a proposal, not least because your work will be based on what has gone on before, and you must address concepts and facts as they exist. You should begin to read and organise relevant literature in a manner that sets out major findings and ideas. Doing this should stimulate your own thinking and in conjunction with discussions with your advisor help establish a viable plan.

It may be necessary to limit the scope of your initial idea in order make the essay manageable and capable of focussing in sufficient depth on the topic of interest. What is required of the essay is not a cursory review of a broad topic, such as 'therapeutic treatments of depression' but an evaluation of a state of knowledge about the topic.

The proposal for the essay should give information on:

- A specific research question or topic
- Past research on the topic
- The direction your essay will take
- A rationale for your decision
- Bibliography of reading

The proposal will be marked pass-fail. It should be handed-in to your advisor by Friday of week 4. A pass mark must be achieved before continuing with the essay.

7.3.3 Annotated bibliography¹

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents that contain information relevant to your topic and useful in its exposition. Each citation is followed by a brief statement which informs the reader of its relevance and value. It includes one or more sentences that (a) evaluate the authority or background of the author, (b) explain how the work illuminates your topic and (c) compare or contrast it with others cited.

The annotated bibliography should be handed-in directly to your advisor by the end of week 8, and a copy included with the final submission of your essay.

SAMPLE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY FOR A JOURNAL ARTICLE

Waite, L. J., Goldschneider, F. K., & Witsberger, C. (1986). Nonfamily living and the erosion of traditional family orientations among young adults. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 541-554.

The authors use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that non-family living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of non-family living.

7.3.4 Draft of essay

A draft of your essay should be submitted to your advisor by week 9. Invaluable feedback can be obtained at this point about both its content and style. You cannot expect your advisor to comment on a draft later than this date, and under no circumstance will he or she indicate, nor should his or her comments be taken as indicating, the mark the essay will ultimately receive.

7.4 Overview of types of classes

The formal structure of the unit consists of an introductory seminar followed by tutorials to be arranged with the advisor you are assigned

¹ Adapted from - <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>

7.5 Importance of self-managed learning

You can expect to receive significance guidance from your advisor at every stage of work, but it is your responsibility to do reading, thinking and writing necessary to develop a successful essay. The discussions you have with and the guidance you receive from your advisor will only be as good as the effort you make in providing suitable material. Failing to undertake work in a timely manner (as outlined below) will create disadvantages for you that are entirely avoidable. You should see, not avoid, your advisor if you are having difficulty with any part of the work because he or she is there to help you.

8. THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

This unit involves structured, self-managed study. While you will be expected to work independently on your essay, guidance and feedback will be available from your advisor. In addition, the Unit co-ordinator will provide general support and guidance about the tasks involved, especially in the first 2 weeks.

Major stages of the unit are:

- Attend initial lecture concerning operation and aims of unit
- Undertake initial literature search
- Submit topic or question to be addressed
- Agree topic with assigned advisor
- Continue to read appropriate literature
- Write and receive feedback on essay proposal
- Revise plan as necessary before undertaking further work
- Hand-in and receive feedback on ONE draft of the extended essay
- Hand-in final essay

8.1 Schedule and deadlines

Week	Activity	Deadline		Notes
		Semester 1	Semester 2	
1	Introductory lecture Get topic area from students	Friday, 19 th September	Friday, 30 th January	Discuss aims and structure of Unit
2	Allocation of advisors	By Wednesday, 1 st October	By Wednesday, 4 th February	Name of advisor posted on Blackboard.
3	See advisor to agree working title and discuss sources of information.	During advisor's office hours	During advisor's office hours	Student to arrange appointment with advisor by week 3
4	Complete and hand in essay proposal.	Friday, 17 th October	Friday, 20 th February	Hand in or e-mail essay proposal directly to advisor.
5 – 6	Receive feedback from advisor on essay plan	During advisor's office hours	During advisor's office hours	Set up an appointment for week 6
8	Submit draft of annotated bibliography	Friday, 7 th November <i>or earlier</i>	Friday, 20 th March <i>or earlier</i>	Hand in directly to advisor.
9	Submit draft of essay to advisor	Monday, 17 th November	Tuesday, 24 th March	Student must arrange appointment with advisor.
11	Feedback from advisor on draft of essay	No later than 2 weeks after submission	No later than 2 weeks after submission	Arrange with advisor
13	Submit final version of essay (include annotated bibliography)	Tuesday, 6 th January	Tuesday, 12 th May	<u>Hand-in to Faculty office.</u>

9. LEARNING RESOURCES

9.1 Optional Materials

Given the diversity of possible topics, specific texts relating to content cannot be suggested. However, the following references may be useful as general guidance in writing psychology essays.

Parrott III, L. (1999), How to Write Psychology Papers? (2nd Ed). New York: Longman

Preece, R. (1994), Starting Research: An Introduction to Academic research and Dissertation Writing. Pinter publishers.

Redman, P. (2001) Good Essay Writing: A Social Sciences Guide (2nd Ed.), Milton Keynes: Open University with Sage.

Scott, J.M., Koch, R.E., Scott, G.M. and Garrison, S.M. (1999) The Psychology Student Writer's Manual, London: Prentice Hall

Smith, T. R. (2005) Principles of Writing in Psychology, Palgrave

Stott, R., Snaith, A., Rylance, R. (2001), Making Your Case: A Practical Guide To Essay Writing. Harlow: Longman.

NOTES

[Click and replace]

10. **EXTENDED ESSAYS:** RECORD OF SESSIONS WITH ADVISOR

Your name:

Advisor's name:

	Date of session	Questions/ issues to be discussed	Actions agreed
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			