



**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**Developmental Psychology
(MSc Experimental Psychology)
928C8
15 Credits
Autumn Term 2017**

Module Convenor: Dr Dave Smalley



Most of the questions you need answers to about this module are either in this document or on the Study Direct site. Please read it fully and carefully before your first lecture.

Note: Developmental Psychology is a compulsory module for students in the MSc Experimental Psychology programme. The module material has been designed to be accessible to students who have not previously studied psychology.

HOW TO USE THIS MODULE HANDBOOK

This document is designed to be used in tandem with the Developmental Psychology Study Direct site. In this document you will find information on the module aims and learning outcomes (p2), the teaching structure (p3-4), module assessment (p5-6), and seeking support (p7). You should refer to the Study Direct site for the module outline (including the timetable), essential reading, and forums to post your questions. Lecture capture recordings and additional reading will also be available on Study Direct, organised by week, as the module progresses.

MODULE AIMS

This module aims to give students an overview of child development from birth through adolescence. It will examine contemporary research in five main areas of development: social and communicative (e.g. language acquisition); cognitive (e.g. mathematics development); social cognitive (e.g. moral development); emotional (e.g. processing and regulating affect); and biological (e.g. temperament).

MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the module, a successful student should:

1. Understand and demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of the major contemporary issues in developmental psychology
2. Understand the key concepts in developmental research
3. Appreciate the challenges of conducting developmental research
4. Gain experience in critiquing and reviewing journal articles written for a developmental psychology audience

TEACHING STRUCTURE

CONTACT TIME AND TEACHING METHODS

Opportunities for learning on this module are as follows:

Teaching Method	Session length	Frequency
Lectures	1 hour	Twice weekly in weeks 1-12
Seminars	2 hours	Weeks 1-7 and 9-11
Independent learning	As required	As required

Please see your timetable on Sussex Direct for details of when and where your lectures and seminars will be held.

Lectures

Lectures will be presented by members of faculty with research and teaching expertise in developmental psychology. The lecturers aim to illustrate the nature of developmental psychology as a science and to present a critical approach to understanding and evaluating research. Lectures will generally go beyond the essential reading by providing additional background, a review of key concepts and issues. To get the most out of your lectures, you are expected to read the assigned essential reading(s) **BEFORE** each lecture. More often than not, this reading will additionally help you in your seminars.

To avoid disruption to the majority, please try to arrive 5 minutes before the start time of the lecture.

Seminars

There will be 10 2-hour seminars. Each lecturer will be leading the seminars that fit most closely with his or her research area and expertise. The goal of the seminars is to provide an opportunity for discussion—either for clarification or to “go beyond” the basic module material. As such, it is expected that these discussions will allow us to examine the material in more depth than in lectures. The seminars also aim to enhance your ability to think critically about developmental psychology and evaluate, summarize and connect contemporary topics within the field. You are expected to read the assigned readings **BEFORE** each seminar. You are encouraged to come to each seminar with questions and comments to share during the discussion about these readings.

Independent Study

University learning places emphasis on you finding out things for yourself. Not everything you will need to know will be covered in the classroom. You need to become familiar with the material you are guided towards, but you also need to learn to ‘manipulate’ that material: apply it to new domains, compare and contrast across topics, synthesise it, evaluate it, consider its relevance to issues of interest to you, supplement it, etc. In other words, you are expected to be able to identify gaps in your knowledge/understanding and engage in self-directed independent study without prompting. This is especially relevant when writing your essay and preparing for the exam.

MODULE TIMETABLE

An outline of module lectures and seminars is shown on the Developmental Psychology Study Direct site.

MODULE READING

The core text for this module is:

Siegler, R., Deloache, J., Eisenberg, N., & Saffran, J. (2014). *How Children Develop* (4th edition). NY: Worth.

There are other textbooks that offer similarly excellent coverage of the module topics, including:

Berk, L. E. (2006). *Child Development*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Smith P. K., Cowie H., & Blades M. (2007). *Understanding Children's Development, 4th Edition*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.

Essential readings for both lectures and seminars on this module are listed in the outline on Study Direct. This can be found under the 'Important information about the module' section. The readings themselves can be accessed from the relevant week's Study Direct subsection.

ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

You are expected to be 'in attendance' at the University for the full duration of the published term dates for your course of study. That means you should be regularly attending lectures, seminars, etc. and committing time to your studies to be in a position to comply with academic and administrative expectations.

The university has an 80% attendance policy in place, so it's really important that you let us know if you are ill or cannot attend classes so that we can register this as a notified absence.

If you are unable to attend your seminars or workshops, you need to send an email to psychologyabsence@sussex.ac.uk setting out the following information:

- Workshop(s) that you will be absent from (list all of them)
- Tutor name
- Brief reason for absence

Please see the following link for further information:

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/attendance>

MODULE ASSESSMENT

This module is assessed by means of:

	Weighting for Total Mark	Weighing on Exam
Coursework Essay	15%	
Final Unseen Exam	85%	
20 multiple choice questions		20%
2 essay questions		80%
	100%	100%

Coursework essay

All students are required to submit an essay on **one of the following three titles** by Wednesday of week 8 by 4pm.

1. How does child temperament relate to subsequent adjustment?
2. What is required for a child to learn a new word? How can you test that a child has really learned a new word?
3. How can parents help children become effective regulators of their emotions?

Although the preparatory reading for seminars 3, 5 and 7 has been selected with the essay questions in mind, please note that **you are expected to read beyond these sources** to ensure that your essay provides an up-to-date critical review of literature relevant to the set question.

The essay has a word limit of 2,000 words. This means that any words over the 2,000 word limit will not contribute towards your essay grade. The title and references section do not count toward your word count but in-text references do.

Essay feedback will adhere to a standardised structure as follows:-

1. One or two sentences outlining particularly strong elements of the essay.
2. Two areas for improvement with (where possible) suggestions as to how to improve these elements of your essay writing.
3. A rubric that displays how well you have met each of the coursework essay marking criteria: Writing, Organisation/Structure, Knowledge/Understanding, and Critical Evaluation.

We limit the areas of improvement identified by the marker to help guide you in making adjustments that should help you access higher grades in future. If you have any difficulties interpreting your feedback fully, it is strongly recommended that you get in touch with the marker to discuss. There will be special sessions timetabled for you to do this once essays have been returned and these will be advertised on Study Direct.

Unseen exam

The formal examination element of this module is a two hour exam with three components:-

1. 20 multiple choice questions – these test the breadth of your knowledge of module content
2. 2 essay questions – these test the depth of your understanding in two areas. These questions require you to identify contemporary debates in the literature and evaluate the strength of research in the area.

Once timetabled, examination details will be displayed on the exam notice board on the Pevensey 1 upper mezzanine and on Sussex Direct.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Assessments deadlines and methods of submission can be found on your assessment timetable via Sussex Direct.

Information on the following can be found at the link below:

- Submitting your work
- Missing a deadline
- Plagiarism and Collusion - Academic Misconduct
- Late penalties
- Exceptional circumstances
- Exams
- Help with managing your studies and competing your work
- Assessment Criteria

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/psychology/internal/students/examinationsandassessment>

A variety of assessment modes are used to develop and test different types of knowledge, skills and aptitudes. The assessment modes have been approved to test the course and module learning outcomes. Written submissions usually form an integral part of assessment at all levels. Written submissions include essays, reports, logs etc as appropriate to the module and the skills that you are being expected to develop. Examinations usually focus more on your ability to use your knowledge of the subject, rather than simply testing your memory for facts. Feedback is provided to support you in future assessments.

Unseen examinations are typically used to assess your level of knowledge and/or understanding of the discipline without the support of textbooks, notes or internet resources, unless these have been specifically permitted by the examination rubric. For students registered with the Student Support Unit an alternative mode may be approved as a Reasonable adjustment with the Student Support Unit.

However, when, in accordance with the academic judgement of the School, where an unseen exam has been approved for a module to assess competence standards, learning outcomes and any accreditation requirements, an alternative mode may not be approved as a Reasonable Adjustment for a student registered with the Student Support Unit. If you have any concerns, please discuss these with the Student Support Unit, who will liaise with the school.

SEEKING SUPPORT

QUESTIONS AND SUPPORT

Students should **always use the relevant Study Direct forums** for all module related questions. If you are in any doubt as to which forum you should use consult the flowchart in the 'Have a question?' section on Study Direct. However, if your question relates to a personal issue or an individual need for support, please contact either your academic advisor (for more general concerns) or the module convenor, Dr Dave Smalley, via email: davidsm@sussex.ac.uk.

Any procedural queries (e.g. how to submit your essay) should be directed to the School of Psychology Professional Services Office in Pev1 2A13 or via psychology@sussex.ac.uk.

STUDENT EVALUATION

The module convenor will create opportunities for you to provide feedback (online, on paper, and/or in person) on your experience of the module during the term. In addition, you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation questionnaire at the end of every term, and this will provide an opportunity for you to comment on each module as well as the course overall.