



CORPORATE AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

MODULE SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data					
Module Title	Parapsychology and Anomalous Experiences				
Module Code	USPJKL-20-3	Level	3	Version	1
Owning Faculty	Health and Life Sciences	Field	Psychology		
Contributes towards	Psychology - BSc(Hons) Psychology with Criminology - BSc(Hons) Psychology with Law - BSc(Hons) Psychology with Sociology - BSc(Hons)				
UWE Credit Rating	20	ETCS Credit Rating	10	Module Type	Standard
Pre-requisites	None		Co- requisites	None	
Excluded Combinations	N/A		Module Entry requirements	N/A	
Valid From	September 2012		Valid to	September 2018	

CAP Approval Date	23 March 2012
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Part 2: Learning and Teaching	
Learning Outcomes	<p>On successful completion of this module students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically evaluate psychological approaches to the understanding of anomalous experiences (such as hallucinations, out-of-body experiences or mystical experiences). (Component A) • Make informed methodological critiques of research in anomalistic psychology. (Component B, element 1) • Develop and demonstrate understanding of research methods and experimental design. (Component B, element 1) • Demonstrate independent learning and surface research skills. (Component B, element 2) <p>In addition the educational experience may explore, develop, and practise <u>but not formally discretely assess</u> the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe major approaches in anomalistic psychology. • Define key constructs in anomalistic psychology. • Develop critical thinking. • Develop debating skills and contribution to group discussion.
Syllabus Outline	<p>The syllabus will be divided into four sections that will focus on critical thinking skills, methodological issues in psychology research, explanations and models in anomalistic psychology and the evaluation of specific anomalous experiences. An example outline follows.</p>

	<p>SECTION ONE: Introduction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction and historical overview 2) Pseudoscience and critical thinking 3) Methodological issues <p>SECTION TWO: explanations and models</p> <p><i>Cognitive explanations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4) perception 5) memory 6) reasoning <p><i>Individual differences:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7) Intelligence and creativity 8) Locus-of-control and personality traits <p><i>Other models:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9) Mental health 10) Developmental models 11) Neurological models <p>SECTION THREE: parapsychology (with a focus on experimental design and contemporary debate):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12) Extrasensory-perception (ESP) – the ganzfeld experiments and meta-analyses 13) ESP – other paradigms 14) Psychokinesis – experimental protocols and critical analysis 15) Healing and prayer 16) Mediumship <p>SECTION FOUR: Specific anomalous experiences and conclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17) Out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences 18) Apparitions and hallucinations 19) Mystical experiences, peak experiences and flow 20) Alien abduction experiences 21) Summing up and philosophical and wider issues. <p>This outline relates to the chapter structure of a recent textbook, <i>Anomalistic Psychology</i> (Holt et al., 2012).</p>
<p>Contact Hours/Scheduled Hours</p>	<p>Material will be delivered through a combination of lectures and seminars. Each lecture (one-hour-long) will be immediately followed by a seminar (one-hour-long) to facilitate discussion and the analysis of case studies and key experiments.</p> <p>Students will also be required to demonstrate independent learning by contributing to an online discussion forum following each seminar, where they can share ideas and any links to relevant material and research that they have found in relation to specific questions.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p>	<p>Scheduled learning: Students will participate in a lecture followed by a seminar, which will orientate students to the key issues, debates and concepts in a given area, followed by further discussion and exploration of these by students. Total contact time will be about 40 hours.</p> <p>Independent learning: Students will engage in independent thinking and research in relation to a particular question following each lecture and seminar for about an hour and will post their findings in an online discussion forum. Total time spent so doing will be about 20 hours.</p> <p>The remaining time (approximately 140 hours) will be spent engaging with essential reading and assignment preparation and completion.</p>

Reading Strategy	<p>Essential reading: Any essential reading will be indicated clearly, along with the method for accessing it, e.g. students may be expected to purchase a set text, be given a study pack or be referred to texts that are available electronically, or in the Library. The module guide will also reflect the range of reading to be carried out.</p> <p>Further reading: Further reading is advisable for this module, and students will be encouraged to explore the titles held in the library on this topic plus relevant journal articles. A current list of such titles will be given in the module guide and revised annually. However, students will also be given guidance on how to identify relevant sources for themselves, for example through bibliographical databases.</p>
Indicative Reading List	<p>The following list is offered to provide validation panels/accrediting bodies with an indication of the type and level of information students may be expected to consult. As such, its currency may wane during the life span of the module specification. However, as indicated above, CURRENT advice on readings will be available via other more frequently updated mechanisms.</p> <p>Indicative reading list</p> <p>Brugger, P. & Mohr, C. (2008). The paranormal mind: How the study of anomalous experiences and beliefs may inform cognitive neuroscience. Special issue, <i>Cortex</i>, 44, 1291-1396.</p> <p>Cardeña, E., Lynn, S. & Krippner, S. (2000). <i>Varieties of anomalous experience: Examining the scientific evidence</i>. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.</p> <p>Crawley, S., French, C. & Yesson, S. (2002). Evidence for transliminality from a subliminal card guessing task. <i>Perception</i>, 31, 887–892.</p> <p>Farias, M., Claridge, G. & Lalljee, M. (2005). Personality and cognitive predictors of New Age practices and beliefs. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i>, 39, 979–989.</p> <p>French, C. (2003). Fantastic memories: The relevance of research into eyewitness testimony and false memories for reports of anomalous experiences. <i>Journal of Consciousness Studies</i>, 10, 153–174.</p> <p>French, C., & Wilson, K. (2007). Cognitive factors underlying paranormal beliefs and experiences. In S. Della Sala (Ed.), <i>Tall tales about the mind and brain: Separating fact from fiction</i> (pp. 3–22). Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Gianotti, L., Faber, P. & Lehmann, D. (2002). EEG source locations after guessed random events in believers and skeptics of paranormal phenomena. <i>International Congress Series</i>, 1232, 439–441.</p> <p>Goulding, A. (2005). Healthy schizotypy in a population of paranormal believers and experients. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i>, 38, 1069–1083.</p> <p>Gow, K., Lang, T. & Chant, D. (2004). Fantasy-proneness, paranormal beliefs and personality features in out-of-body experiences. <i>Contemporary Hypnosis</i>, 21, 107–125.</p> <p>Greyson, B. (2000). Dissociation in people who have near-death experiences: Out of their bodies or out of their minds? <i>Lancet</i>, 355, 460–463.</p> <p>Holt, N. J., Simmonds-Moore, C. A., Luke, D. & French, C. (2012). <i>Anomalistic Psychology</i>. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.</p> <p>Hyman, R. (2010). Parapsychology's Achilles heel: Persistent inconsistency. In S. Krippner & H. Friedman (Eds.), <i>Debating psychic experience: Human potential or human illusion</i> (pp. 43–52). Oxford: Praeger.</p>

	<p>Irwin, H. (2009). <i>The psychology of paranormal belief: A researcher's handbook</i>. Hatfield: University of Hertfordshire Press.</p> <p>Irwin, H., & Watt, C. (2007). <i>An introduction to parapsychology (5th ed.)</i>. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.</p> <p>Johns, L. (2005). Hallucinations in the general population. <i>Current Psychiatry Reports</i>, 7, 162–167.</p> <p>Kohls, N. & Walach, H. (2007). Psychological distress, experiences of ego loss and spirituality: Exploring the effects of spiritual practice. <i>Social Behavior and Personality</i>, 35, 1301–1316.</p> <p>Lawrence, T., Edwards, C., Barraclough, N., Church, S. & Hetherington, F. (1995). Modelling childhood causes of paranormal belief and experience: Childhood trauma and childhood fantasy. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i>, 19, 209–215.</p> <p>Murray, C. & Wooffitt, R. (Eds.). (2010) Anomalous experiences and qualitative research. Special Issue, <i>Qualitative Research in Psychology</i>, 7(1), 1–83.</p> <p>Roe, C. (1999). Critical thinking and belief in the paranormal: A re-evaluation. <i>British Journal of Psychology</i>, 90, 85–98.</p> <p>Schick, T. & Vaughn, L. (1995). <i>How to think about weird things: Critical thinking for a new age</i>. London: Mayfield.</p> <p>Smith, J. (2010). <i>Pseudoscience and extraordinary claims of the paranormal: A critical thinker's toolkit</i>. London: Wiley-Blackwell.</p> <p>Spanos, N. & Moretti, P. (1988). Correlates of mystical experience and diabolical experiences in a sample of female university students. <i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i>, 27, 105–116.</p> <p>Wiseman, R., & Greening, E. (2005). 'It's still bending': Verbal suggestions and alleged psychokinetic ability. <i>British Journal of Psychology</i>, 96, 115–127.</p> <p>Wiseman, R. & Watt, C. (2006). Belief in psychic ability and the misattribution hypothesis: A qualitative review. <i>British Journal of Psychology</i>, 97, 323–338.</p>
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Part 3: Assessment	
Assessment Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment has been chosen to encourage reflection, critical analysis and evaluation. • The summative assessment (assessment that contributes to module mark) includes three components: 1) A timed essay that will require students to critically evaluate theoretical models in anomalistic psychology, drawing on empirical evidence; 2) A critical review that will require students to focus their critical analysis on a particular research paper, evaluating its methodology, aims and arguments; and 3) an online, student-led discussion that follows each seminar, in relation to a particular question, which will enable debate, the development of argument and cited support. • Opportunities for formative assessment (<u>does not contribute to module mark</u>) and feedback will arise through seminars, through work in pairs, in groups and in interaction with lecturers on a one-to-one basis. • The assessment criteria for the timed essay and the critical review will follow the indicative qualities as outlined in the assessment guidelines in the Programme Handbook for Psychology. The timed

	essay (in controlled conditions) will last for one hour. The critical review will have a word count of 2500 words. The assessment criteria for the online discussion will be based on each student making an informed contribution to each discussion.	
Identify final assessment component and element	Component A – timed essay	
% weighting between components A and B (Standard modules only)	A:	B:
	45%	55%
First Sit		
Component A (controlled conditions) Description of each element	Element weighting (as % of component)	
1. Timed essay (1 hour)	100%	
Component B Description of each element	Element weighting (as % of component)	
1. Critical review (2500 words)	80%	
2. Participation in post-seminar online discussion	20%	
Resit (further attendance at taught classes is not required)		
Component A (controlled conditions) Description of each element	Element weighting (as % of component)	
1. Timed essay (1 hour)	100%	
Component B Description of each element	Element weighting (as % of component)	
1. Critical review (1 hour)	80%	
2. Participation in post-seminar online discussion (post hoc)	20%	
If a student is permitted an EXCEPTIONAL RETAKE of the module the assessment will be that indicated by the Module Description at the time that retake commences.		