



MODULE SPECIFICATION

Part 1: Basic Data					
Module Title	Anomalous Experiences and Mental Health				
Module Code	USPK67-15-3	Level	3	Version	1
Owning Faculty	Health and Applied Sciences	Field	Psychology		
Contributes towards	Psychology – BSc (Hons) + Psychology combinations				
UWE Credit Rating	15	ECTS Credit Rating	7.5	Module Type	Standard
Pre-requisites	None		Co- requisites	None	
Excluded Combinations	N/A		Module Entry requirements	N/A	
Valid From	September 2014		Valid to	September 2020	

CAP Approval Date	28/03/2014
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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) • Develop and demonstrate understanding of research methods and experimental design in this area. (Component B) • Reflect critically on the evidence-base for phenomena and integrate different psychological methods and approaches in their understanding of phenomena (Component A and B) • Demonstrate independent learning and surface research skills. (Component B) <p>In addition the educational experience may explore, develop, and practise <u>but not formally discretely assess</u> the following capacities to:</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

The syllabus will be divided into two themes in which critical thinking skills and methodological issues in psychology research will be emphasised throughout: 1) explanations and models in anomalistic psychology; 2) the evaluation of specific anomalous experiences. An example outline of topics follows.

SECTION ONE: Introduction

- 1) Definitions and historical overview.
 - Pseudoscience and critical thinking
 - Methodological issues in the study of anomalous experiences and beliefs

SECTION TWO: explanations and models

- 2) Neurocognitive explanations (for anomalous experiences and beliefs):
 - Perceptual errors (e.g. apophenia)
 - Memory (e.g. false memories)
 - Reasoning errors (e.g. misjudging probability)
- 3) Individual differences:
 - Intelligence and creativity
 - Illusion of control and personality traits
- 4) Developmental models:
 - Magical thinking in childhood
 - Childhood abuse and dissociation
- 5) Mental health:
 - Anomalous experiences and schizophrenia
 - Spirituality and health
- 6) The psi hypothesis:
 - Extrasensory-perception (ESP)
 - Psychokinesis – experimental protocols and critical analysis

SECTION THREE: Specific anomalous experiences and conclusion:

- 7) Mediumship (*anomalies of 'self'*)
 - Phenomenology, prevalence and correlates
 - Dissociative Identity Disorder and mediumship
- 8) Healing and prayer (*anomalies of 'wellness'*)
 - The use of psychic healing (e.g. Reiki), its phenomenology and evidence base
 - The placebo effect
- 9) Out-of-body experiences and near-death experiences (*body anomalies*)
 - Bodily illusions (e.g. phantom limbs, tilted room illusion)
 - Phenomenology, neurological correlates, survival models
- 10) Apparitions and hallucinations (*perceptual anomalies*)
 - Prevalence, types, phenomenology, psychological explanations
- 11) Mystical experiences and flow (*anomalies of time and space*)
 - Prevalence, phenomenology, after effects,
 - Psychopharmacology (e.g. psilocybin research), neurobiology
- 12) Lucid dreams and sleep paralysis and conclusion (*sleep anomalies*)
 - Prevalence, types, phenomenology, psychological explanations

This outline relates to the chapter structure of a recent textbook, *Anomalistic Psychology* (Holt et al., 2012).

Through completion of this module students will demonstrate qualities and transferable skills for employment, including the ability to:

- Communicate effectively, both face-to-face and in writing
- Present ideas clearly
- Analyse and understand complex information, from different perspectives
- Critically evaluate information
- Retrieve and organise information from different sources.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle primary source material critically. • Solve problems and reason scientifically to consider alternative approaches and solutions. • Make critical judgements and evaluations to gain different perspectives on a question. • Be sensitive to contextual and interpersonal factors, including behaviour and social interaction.
Contact Hours	<p>As a 15-credit module this module assumes 150 hours of study on the part of the student.</p> <p>Scheduled learning for this project will be approximately 36 hours and may take several forms. Material will be delivered through a combination of lectures and seminars. Each lecture will be followed by a seminar to facilitate discussion and the analysis of case studies and key experiments.</p> <p>Independent learning – Students are expected to spend 114 hours on independent learning tasks and preparation of assessments. Students will be required to demonstrate independent learning by regularly contributing to an online blog and discussion forum, where they can share ideas and any links to relevant material and research that they have found in relation to specific questions.</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods	<p>A variety of approaches will be used with the aim of maximising the active engagement of students. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Seminars • Online blogs and discussion <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 36 hours.</p> <p>Independent learning: Students will engage in independent thinking and research in relation to particular topics for about an hour and will post their findings in an online blog and discussion forum. Total time spent so doing will be about 30 hours. Regular feedback on the blog is designed to improve students' writing and critical evaluation skills.</p> <p>The remaining time (approximately 84 hours) will be spent engaging with essential reading and assignment preparation and completion.</p> <p>TEL: A culture of continuous learning will be developed through the implementation of online discussion boards and blogs to facilitate independent learning and the communication of ideas and resources between students. MyUWE and Blackboard, the university supported learning portal and virtual learning environment, will be used to support students' learning, conduct activities, organise and communicate learning materials. Students will be able to engage with the material, other students and members of staff through these systems and make use of the various functionalities built into them (e.g., blogs, journals, audio, video, discussion boards, wikis, etc.) as appropriate and useful for the module learning.</p>
Key Information Sets Information	<p>Key Information Sets (KIS) are produced at programme level for all programmes that this module contributes to, which is a requirement set by HESA/HEFCE. KIS are comparable sets of standardised information about undergraduate courses allowing prospective students to compare and contrast between programmes they are interested in applying for.</p>

Key Information Set - Module data					
<i>Number of credits for this module</i>					15
Hours to be allocated	Scheduled learning and teaching study hours	Independent study hours	Placement study hours	Allocated Hours	
150	36	114	0	150	0

The table below indicates as a percentage the total assessment of the module which constitutes a -

Written Exam: Unseen written exam, open book written exam, In-class test

Coursework: Written assignment or essay, report, dissertation, portfolio, project

Practical Exam: Oral Assessment and/or presentation, practical skills assessment, practical exam

Please note that this is the total of various types of assessment and will not necessarily reflect the component and module weightings in the Assessment section of this module description:

Total assessment of the module:	
Written exam assessment percentage	50%
Coursework assessment percentage	50%
Practical exam assessment percentage	0%
	100%

Reading Strategy

Essential reading: Any essential reading will be indicated clearly, along with the method for accessing it, e.g. texts will be available electronically. The module guide will also reflect the range of reading to be carried out.

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.

Indicative Reading List

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.

Books

Cardeña, E., Lynn, S. & Krippner, S. (2012) *Varieties of anomalous experience: Examining the scientific evidence*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Holt, N. J., Simmonds-Moore, C. A., Luke, D. & French, C. (2012) *Anomalistic Psychology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

French, C., & Stone, A. (2013) *Anomalistic Psychology*. Basingstoke: Palgrave

MacMillan.
Smith, J. (2010) *Pseudoscience and extraordinary claims of the paranormal: A critical thinker's toolkit*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.

Journal articles

Brugger, P. & Mohr, C. (2008). The paranormal mind: How the study of anomalous experiences and beliefs may inform cognitive neuroscience. *Cortex*, 44 (special issue) pp. 1291-1396.

Johns, L. (2005) Hallucinations in the general population. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 7, pp. 162–167.

Murray, C. & Wooffitt, R. Eds. (2010) Anomalous experiences and qualitative research: an introduction to the special issue. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 7(1), pp. 1–83.

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 two components: 1) Creation of a blog post and contribution to an online, student-led discussion, in relation to a particular question that follows each seminar. This will enable debate, the development of argument, the evaluation of research and cited support; 2) A timed essay that will require students to critically evaluate theoretical models in anomalistic psychology, drawing on empirical evidence. This will be a seen essay that could require students to focus their critical analysis on one of the blog topics and extend their critical evaluation of it. • 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 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 assessment criteria for the online discussion will be based on each student making an informed contribution to each discussion and writing a number of clear and coherent blog posts (of about 200 words each). These will also be marked according to the assessment guidelines in the Programme Handbook for Psychology. Feedback will be ongoing and will aim to improve students' writing and critical evaluation skills.
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Identify final assessment component and element		
% weighting between components A and B (Standard modules only)	A: 50%	B: 50%
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)	

2. Participation in post-seminar blogs and online discussion	100%
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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)
2. Participation in post-seminar blogs and online discussion (post hoc)	100%

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.