ENTRY REQUIREMENTS
No formal qualifications are required, however, all modules are taught at university level and students should be able to read, write and speak English fluently.

Although this module is open to all, students will benefit from completing the introductory module *Foundations in Modern Psychology*. Students who are new to psychology should ensure that they have undertaken appropriate preparatory reading before the start of the course as detailed below.

AIM
To evaluate different approaches to psychopathology and the forms of treatment.

OBJECTIVES
- Review the nature and causes of the major forms of mental disorder.
- Examine the main forms of treatment and their effectiveness.
- Give an overview of the research methods used within this area of psychology, including their relative advantages and disadvantages.
- Highlight the ethical issues involved when conducting research [with particular reference to harm] and the issues that arise when trying to generalise results (for example across cultures).
- Support students to take part in the assessment process.
- Build students’ confidence in presenting their own ideas and in critical thinking.
- Support and develop students’ study skills, including note taking and essay writing.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Discuss issues of description and diagnosis.
- Describe and comment on the nature and causation of mental disorders.
- Evaluate different approaches to treatment for their effectiveness.
• Demonstrate an understanding of the development of ideas within this field, and of contemporary approaches and issues.
• Recognise a range of research methodologies that might be appropriate to the study of psychology (identifying strengths and weaknesses of core methodologies, including qualitative as well as quantitative approaches).
• Identify the ethical issues when conducting research in this area (with particular consideration of harm).
• Demonstrate an appropriate awareness of cultural considerations in the evaluation of theory and research.
• Illustrate the practical applications of research findings.
• Think critically about the subjects covered.
• Present your own ideas about issues addressed on the course.
• Discuss and implement a range of strategies to support your learning.
• Successfully plan and write essays or other assignments which have been set to support your learning on this course.

CONTENT

Description and diagnosis
Historical and philosophical aspects. What is 'normal' and what is 'abnormal'? This part of the course looks at concepts of mental health and models of abnormality. It will also discuss the assessment and diagnosis of different conditions and ask how reliable such diagnoses are.

Nature and causation of mental disorders
Medical and psychological considerations. Schizophrenia, mood disorders, phobias, obsessions and compulsions will be examined, as will disorders more usually associated with childhood such as autism and eating disorders.

Approaches to treatment
Different approaches will be evaluated for their effectiveness, including drugs and physical treatments, behavioural and cognitive therapies, and psychoanalysis and other psychotherapies.

Social policy and mental health
Legal and ethical issues. The relationship between mental disorders and the law will be discussed, as well as community care and the rights of patients.

It is expected that 75% of the syllabus content will be covered.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS
A range of teaching methods may be used e.g. lectures on the area being studied - students are encouraged to ask questions and discuss points throughout. There may also be small group exercises with feedback to the large group to provide an opportunity for clarification of ideas and discussion. Other methods may include: videos, experiments, student presentations, discussion of published articles, etc. Students will be given help with study skills.

Credit points are used to summarise and describe the amount of learning taking place for a given module. For a 30 credit point module this equates to 300 hours most of which is comprised of independent learning. Normally 44 hours would be delivered in the classroom but it may sometimes be necessary to cover a small part of the learning by other means such as directed independent learning.

As such students should also expect to build on their learning in class by undertaking guided independent study including appropriate reading and research. Further details can be found in the appropriate Course Handbook as detailed below.
METHODS OF ASSESSMENT
The assessment process gives students important opportunities to learn, to check their learning and to discuss their progress with the tutor. Consequently, students will be expected to prepare four pieces of coursework for assessment. These may take a variety of forms such as essays, case studies, reports and possibly class presentations. They will be 1,500 words in length (or the equivalent). You are encouraged to discuss with your tutor the particular topics and the type of assignment you would like to focus on in your assessments. It may be possible to accommodate your personal interests within the syllabus.

Regulations regarding assessment are detailed in the appropriate Course Handbook, which will be circulated electronically prior to the course start date. Students are strongly advised to read the Course Handbook prior to commencing their studies.

The module is part of the Psychology and Applied Psychology Certificates of Higher Education. If the course is completed successfully, 30 credit points will be awarded, which may be transferred to some degree courses.

READING
The following are examples of books that students will find interesting and useful but it is not expected that students will read them all. Course tutors will provide guidance on which books to select, some are introductory texts and some are more advanced for those people who have studied psychology before or who have studied at university before. The course lecturer may also recommend other books for use during the course.

As noted above, students who have not completed Foundations of Modern Psychology will benefit from undertaking some preparatory reading. Particularly recommended are:


More detailed or advanced:

Please note: Psychology books are frequently revised and updated. Any recent edition would be suitable to use.
INDICATIVE SYLLABUS

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The My Birkbeck website (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/) is your gateway to accessing all student support services at Birkbeck.

You may find the following links particularly useful:

- Obtaining your library/ID card: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/you/cards
- Accessing IT Services: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/computing/username
- Contacting our disability office: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/disability/disability-office
- Study skills support: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/support/study-skills

You can visit the My Birkbeck helpdesk on the ground floor of the main Birkbeck building on Malet Street (entry via Torrington Square). For details of opening hours visit: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/mybirkbeck/services/facilities/helpdesk/

You can also call the helpdesk on 020 7631 6316.

LIBRARY AND STUDY SKILLS RESOURCES

Once you have your ID card, you may use the Birkbeck library and associated resources. You may find the following web links helpful:

- For information on how best to access the resources available for psychology students through Birkbeck College Library, students may wish to work through the tutorial available at http://www.bbk.ac.uk/lib/life/
- For specific guidance for psychologists and psychology students on getting the best out the internet go to: http://www.vtstutorials.co.uk/ - and search for ‘Psychology’
- For specific guidance on how to avoid plagiarism in your course work go to https://connect.le.ac.uk/p50066682/ and press the ‘play’ button.

COURSE EVALUATION

During the course students will be asked to complete an evaluation form which gives the opportunity to provide feedback on all aspects of their learning.

WHAT CAN I DO NEXT

It is important you are clear which award the module you are enrolled on counts towards. Our website provides an overview of each Certificate award so you can decide which best suits your needs: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/study/2014/certificates/subject/psychology/

Information is available on core and option modules for each Certificate. Your choice of subsequent modules you take should be informed by this information. Modules can be taken in any order although it is recommended that certain core modules are taken first. Not all core modules have to be taken in the same year. If you need further advice you can contact the department by telephone on 0207 631 6669 or by e-mail: psychologycert@bbk.ac.uk

Revised July 2014