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# VCE UNITS INFORMATION

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## VCE Psychology Units 1 and 2

### CONTENT

#### Unit 1

Human development involves changes in thoughts, feelings and behaviours. In this unit, students investigate the structure and functioning of the human brain and the role it plays in the overall functioning of the human nervous system. Students explore brain plasticity and the influence that brain damage may have on a person's psychological functioning. They consider the complex nature of psychological development, including situations where psychological development may not occur as expected. Students examine the contribution that classical and contemporary studies have made to an understanding of the human brain and its functions, and to the development of different psychological models and theories used to predict and explain the development of thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

#### Unit 2

A person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours are influenced by a variety of biological, psychological and social factors. In this unit, students investigate how perception of stimuli enables a person to interact with the world around them and how their perception of stimuli can be distorted. They evaluate the role social cognition plays in a person's attitudes, perception of themselves and relationships with others. Students explore a variety of factors and contexts that can influence the behaviour of an individual and groups. They examine the contribution that classical and contemporary research has made to the understanding of human perception and why individuals and groups behave in specific ways.

### OUTCOMES

#### Unit 1

- Students should be able to describe how understanding of brain structure and function has changed over time, explain how different areas of the brain coordinate different functions, and explain how brain plasticity and brain damage can change psychological functioning
- Students should be able to identify the varying influences of nature and nurture on a person's psychological development, and explain the different factors that may lead to typical or atypical psychological development
- Students should be able to investigate and communicate a substantiated response to a question related to brain function and/or development, including reference to at least two contemporary psychological studies and/or research techniques

#### Unit 2

- Students should be able to compare the sensations and perceptions of vision and taste, and analyse factors that may lead to the occurrence of perceptual distortions
- Students should be able to identify factors that influence individuals to behave in specific ways, and analyse ways in which others can influence individuals to behave differently
- Students should be able to design and undertake a practical investigation related to external influences on behaviour, and draw conclusions based on evidence from collected data