

Unit 1

How to make the most of this module

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1.1 Outcomes for Unit 1

Once you have worked through this unit you should be able to:

- describe the experiential learning cycle
- collect all the contact information of you campus and learning facilitator
- compile a study schedule for yourself using the guidelines provided



1.2 Embedded knowledge

Here we state what the underlying clusters of information, organising principles or major themes are that you will encounter in this unit.

1.2.1 Definitions

Look for the definitions and explanations of these words and concepts in the margin and the text:

experiential learning	narrative
contact information	definitions
study schedule	theories

1.3 Reading

1.3.1 Introduction

We will first discuss how to use this *Learner's Guide*, before we plunge into the nitty gritty of social psychology. If you follow the steps and suggestions carefully, you will enjoy a most delightful journey through the field of social psychology. Careful study of **Unit 1 will hold the key to the successful completion of this module.**

1.3.2 Experiential learning

Seeing that social psychology describes and explains everyday social phenomena, we have decided to use **experiential learning** as a the learning strategy in this guide. This



Reading

experiential learning to gain knowledge, information, comprehension, or skills through your own experience

strategy can briefly be explained as follows:

Experiential learning values your individual experience and knowledge that you have prior to the formal study of the subject matter. It asks of you to be an active participant in the learning process. The responsibility for learning is yours! Experiential learning, by its very nature, uses a wide variety of learning methods. Different individuals feel more comfortable with different learning methods. You must direct and plan your learning according to learning methods that will work for you. You will also notice that the different units have different styles. This is because they were written by different authors. Some writing styles will suit you learning style better than others. We hope that, in terms of style, that there is something for everybody in the *Learner's Guide*. The *Learner's Guide* is not designed to equip you with study methods or skills. For that we refer you to PSY5003, *Learning, memory & perception*, or suggest that you consult with a student counsellor on your campus to help you develop study skills most appropriate to who you are.

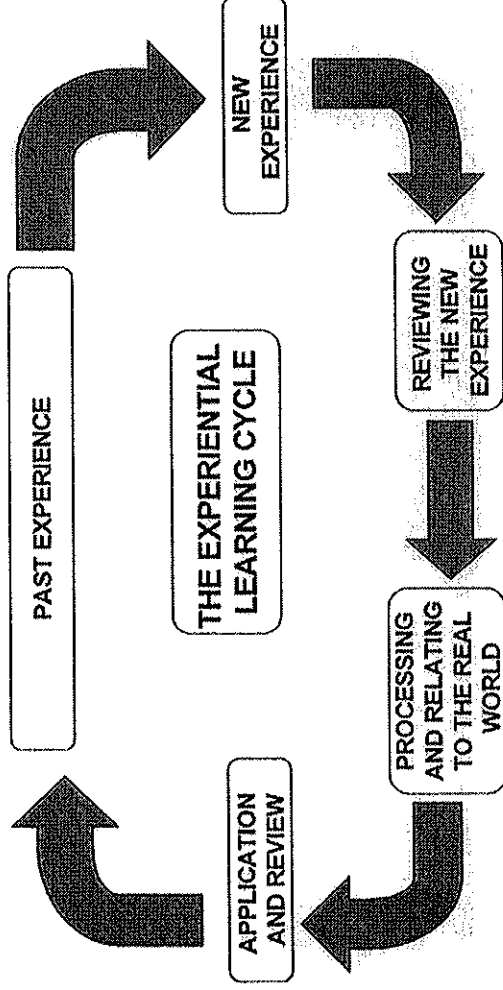
Experiential learning aims to counter the tendency of learners to only memorise the work or facts. You will also have to understand concepts and get involved in learning activities. Make sure that, whatever method of learning you employ you, include:

memorising (association, repetition, self-testing),
understanding (listening, questioning, discussing, comparing, problem solving)
 and
doing (practice, demonstration, teaching others, trial and error, doing and reviewing, roll plays).

The *Learner's Guide* will be your companion to you to assist you to incorporate all of these three aspects into your learning process.

Experiential learning involves reviewing experience, sharing and comparing that experience and learning from it. It can be represented in terms of the following diagram:

Diagram 1.



To assist you to identify your own experiences that relate to the academic content of this module, we have written a story or *narrative* about a day in the life of a young learner, perhaps someone who is a bit like you. This story may remind you of similar experiences that you have had. You can use your own experiences to understand social psychology better. The story we have written is found on page 25 of this guide. The lines of the story are numbered on the left of the text in intervals of five. In each unit the lines of the story that are relevant to that particular unit will be indicated, so that you can easily refer back to them. You can use the content of our story or you can make use of the opportunity to write down your own, personal experience of a similar situation. Either of these then represents the **past experience** part of the experiential learning cycle.

After the story you will be presented with **definitions**, **theories**, formal explanations and key research relevant to the subject matter. This represents the **new experience** in the experiential learning cycle. New experience is all the new things that you learn in the module, that you didn't learn previously.

narrative
the telling of
a story
relating of a
number of
events

definitions
statements
of the
meaning of
a word,
phrase, or
term
theories
theoretical
explanation
systems

After relating the past experience and reading the new experience, you have to **review** it. You must do this on your own by completing the **practical tasks** in the text. It will help you to **process** the information and **relate it to the real world**. This phase is crucial because this is where learning takes place. Here you must make connections and apply the new learning for yourself. Questions that will help you with the processing of the information will be posed in the text. You will not be assessed on the answers to these questions. They are there for you learning! Remember from the key to the icons that **practical tasks** are indicated by this icon:



practical task

If you are in a position to **share** your insights in a group, we suggest strongly that you do so. Peer learning takes place in this way and a greater understanding develops through the creative process of discussion. After such a discussion you can write down your new understanding in the space provided. Because we realise that it could be difficult for distance learners to form groups, this step is optional, but highly recommended. Distance learners may replace this by telling friends and family about aspects of social psychology. They may find it very interesting and it helps you to make sure that you understand it. One must understand something before one can explain it!

To state in differently, you must use your new learning to understand real life situations. These situations may be outside of your personal experience. It could include wider socio-political phenomena such as labour unrest.

The last step in the experiential learning cycle is **applying and reviewing**. You will be guided in this by comparing what you have learned with the assessment criteria stated for each unit. The assessment criteria should be seen as a guide. You do not have to hand it in. After this, the new knowledge and insights that you have acquired, can be

considered past experience and the process can start again.

Assessment criteria are provided for this module at the end of each unit. They show you what you assessment tasks you should be able to perform to prove that you have mastered the outcomes at the beginning of each unit. The outcomes show you what you should be able to do after learning that unit. Make sure that you can perform what is required by these before you go onto the next unit.

1.3.3 Planning your learning

1.3.3.1 Notional hours

This module is designed to be completed in 90 notional hours. A notional hour is an OBE concept where one Unit ideally is equal to 10 notional hours of learning, but practically the length of units may vary. These hours should be sufficient for all the learning activities. You will notice that the units are of different length. Make sure that you are aware of the amount of notional hours required to complete each unit. (See the table on p19) The notional hours are sufficient for all the learning activities in the module, except the optional reviewing (sharing) at the end of each unit. It is, however, recommended that you do review the work again by following the guidelines under **Sharing (optional reviewing)** at the end of each unit. The optional activities are to be done outside the designated notional hours. These notional hours are typically spread over nine academic weeks.

1.3.3.2 Interacting with your learning facilitator

For contact learners there will be five contact sessions of one hour each. These sessions will be used to deal with questions arising from your reading of the work. This means that you will have to prepare for the contact session beforehand. Remember, you take responsibility for your own learning. Contact learners, you should find out what the time and venue are for each of these sessions from your learning facilitator on your campus. Distance learners, who can not attend the contact sessions, can use these five hours to do generate their own questions around problem areas in the work. You should

then contact your learning facilitators in this regard. If you can not go to a campus near you, you are welcome to use the phone to discuss questions with your learning facilitator. As we have mentioned before, this *Learner's Guide* fulfills the function of your learning facilitator away from campus, but contact with a real person is always valuable.

Whether you are a contact learner or a distance learner you must familiarise yourself with the contact telephone number as well as the consultation hours of your lecturer. Vista University functions on a multi-campus system and it is not possible to provide this information for all campuses in this *Learner's Guide*. You must obtain this information yourself. You can get this information by phoning your campus or visiting the sub-department on your campus. Write this information in the front of this *Learner's Guide* in the space provided on p3. We encourage you to make use of the consultation hours. (From our study of social psychology we know that the best learning takes place during face-to-face contact in a one-to-one situation).

The contact numbers of the various campuses are:

Campus (In alphabetical order)	Telephone number	Fax number
Bloemfontein	(051) 505 1111	(051) 505 1205
East Rand	(011) 748 0500	(011) 969 4935
Mamelodi	(012) 842 3400	(012) 842 3633
Port Elizabeth	(041) 408 3111	(041) 464 2859
Sebokeng	(016) 930 5000	(016) 988 2560
Soweto	(011) 938 1701	(011) 938 1490
VUDEC	(012) 322 1303	(012) 322 3243
Welkom	(057) 396 4112	(012) 396 3331

Phone your campus and ask to speak to the sub-head of the Psychology Sub-Department or anyone else in the Sub-Department. They will be able to direct you to you *Social Psychology (Psy5505)* learning facilitator. A space is provided at the beginning of this *Learner's Guide* (p3) Where you can enter all the contact information.

1.3.3.3 Learning material

This module relies on the *Learner's Guide* as the only compulsory course material. You do not have to buy any additional text books. (Buying a dictionary, however, is recommended highly. It is an investment for life! If you need information about a good dictionary to buy, you can contact your campus librarian or your learning facilitator for advice.) This *Learner's Guide* fulfills the function of your learning facilitator away from campus. You must provide your own pen and A4 paper for the completion of the assessment tasks.

1.3.4 The study schedule

The proposed study schedule will help you plan your study programme to help you finish your studies within the indicated time frame. It should also help you to view each unit within the context of the module as a whole. It is simply a suggested work plan. You should design your own according to your personal style and needs as well as the skills you have acquired in *Learning, memory & perception (Psy5003)*. We suggest that you set up a schedule similar to this one for yourself for each of the units in this module. It is always better to work consistently. Do not think that you will manage to complete this module successfully if you leave all your learning activities to the last moment. Your learning facilitator can assist you in drawing up your study schedule.

	TITLE	CREDITS	Date (optional) & number of notional hours
1	How to use this <i>Learner's Guide</i>	0,3	3 notional hours
2	Introduction to social psychology	0,5	5 notional hours
3	Person perception and the Attribution theory	1,4	14 notional hours
	<i>Contact session</i>	0,1	1 notional hour
4	Attitudes	0,7	7 notional hours
5	Prejudice	0,7	7 notional hours
	<i>Contact session</i>	0,1	1 notional hour
	<i>Assessment Task 1</i>	0,8	8 notional hours
6	Aggression	1,2	12 notional hours
	<i>Contact session</i>	0,1	1 notional hour
7	Prosocial behaviour	1,1	11 notional hours
	<i>Contact session</i>	0,1	1 notional hour
8	Affiliation	1,1	11 notional hours
	<i>Contact session</i>	0,1	1 notional hour
	<i>Assessment Task 2</i>	0,8	8 notional hours
	<i>Total:</i>	9	90 notional hours

1.4 Assessment criteria for Unit 1

The assessment questions for Unit 1 are found on p115 of the *Learner's Guide*. The questions that you have to answer are based on the outcomes for this unit. Guidelines for the successful completion of your assessment are provided with the assessment.

1.5 Conclusion

We, the authors of this module and your learning facilitators hope that you have found Unit 1 both informative and illuminating. You are now well prepared to enter the exciting world of social psychology. Enjoy the journey!