Module Template for New and Revised Undergraduate Modules[1]

Module Code	PSU34550
Module Name	THE THEORY AND APPLICATION OF BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS
ECTS credit weighting	5 ECTS
Semester taught	Semester 1
Module Coordinator/s	Professor Olive Healy
Module Learning Outcomes with embedded Graduate Attributes	1. Explain the theoretical foundations and philosophical assumptions underpinning behaviour analysis and its contribution to contemporary psychology. PLO 1, 2, 3 2. Differentiate and accurately apply fundamental concepts of behaviour analysis, including respondent and operant learning processes, reinforcement, stimulus control, and aversive control, using appropriate examples. PLO 1, 2, 5 3. Critically evaluate the empirical evidence supporting behaviour analytic principles and interventions within broader socio-historical and intellectual contexts. PLO 3, 5, 8 4. Analyse functional relations between behaviour and environmental variables using behaviour analytic frameworks. PLO 3, 5, 6 5. Evaluate the application of behaviour analytic approaches across clinical, educational, neurodevelopmental, and everyday settings, considering ethical and societal implications. PLO 8, 9 6. Explain contemporary developments examining interactions between behavioural processes and neurobiological mechanisms. PLO 1, 2 7. Communicate behaviour analytic concepts effectively in written and oral forms using the discourse of psychology. PLO 7 8. Reflect critically on the contribution, limitations, and future directions of behaviour analysis within psychological science and professional practice. PLO 3, 5, 10
Module Content	This module introduces students to the science of behaviour analysis and examines how behavioural principles contribute to understanding human behaviour and promoting positive behaviour change. Behaviour analysis is one of the most extensively researched approaches within psychology and has informed evidence-based interventions across healthcare, education, organisational settings, and everyday life. Students will explore the conceptual and historical foundations of behaviour analysis, including the study of respondent and operant learning, reinforcement, antecedent stimulus control, and aversive processes. The module examines how behaviour is influenced by interactions between individuals and their environments and introduces functional approaches to understanding behavioural relations.

[1] An Introduction to Module Design from AISHE provides information on designing and re-designing modules.

	The module emphasises the translation of basic behavioural principles into applied practice. Students will consider how behaviour analytic approaches have been used to improve quality of life and address socially significant issues across a range of contexts, including paediatric healthcare, neurodevelopmental conditions, education, acquired brain injury, dementia care, and the assessment and treatment of behaviours that challenge. The integration of behavioural science with contemporary developments in neuroscience is also explored, highlighting emerging understandings of the relationships between learning processes, brain function, and behaviour. Through engagement with theory, empirical research, and real-world applications, students will develop an appreciation of behaviour analysis as both a scientific discipline and a helping profession. The module encourages critical reflection on the strengths, limitations, ethical considerations, and future contributions of behaviour analysis to contemporary psychology and society.
Teaching and Learning Methods[2]	Teaching strategies The module will be delivered through a combination of: Weekly lectures introducing key theoretical concepts and empirical findings; Interactive discussions and guided questioning; Case-based learning activities illustrating applications across clinical and educational contexts; Critical appraisal of research articles; Directed independent reading and self-study activities; Online learning resources to support consolidation and revision. Where relevant, examples will be drawn from diverse populations and applied settings to demonstrate the broad scope of behavioural science. Assessment design Teaching activities are designed to support students in progressing from foundational knowledge acquisition to the application and evaluation of behaviour analytic principles in real-world contexts. Lectures provide conceptual grounding in the philosophy, theory, and empirical foundations of behaviour analysis, while interactive discussions and case examples illustrate how behavioural principles can be used to understand and influence human behaviour across clinical, educational, and everyday settings. The written assignment has been intentionally designed as a real-world assessment that requires students to apply behaviour analytic concepts to a behaviour or response class of their choosing. Rather than focusing primarily on literature review, students are asked to demonstrate their understanding of behavioural principles by analysing functional relations, identifying relevant learning processes, and proposing theoretically coherent

[2] Trinity-INC provides tips and resources on how to make your curriculum more inclusive.

interventions. This approach promotes deeper learning by requiring students to synthesise knowledge, engage in problem-solving, and transfer principles from the classroom to meaningful real-world phenomena.

Assessment Details[3]
Please include the following:

- **Assessment Component**
- **Assessment description**
- **Learning Outcome(s) addressed**
- **% of total**

It is recommended that module co-ordinators consider assessment types used across the year to ensure varied assessment methods.

Please describe both formative and summative assessment components, noting how the assessment(s) enable learning and enable demonstration of the achievement of the learning outcomes. Please include % weighting of summative assessment components, which should be carefully balanced between groupwork and individual components.

Each Assessment component should be clearly aligned to the learning outcomes. Please outline each assessment component, and the assigned LO(s) in the table below.

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	LO Addressed	% of total
Written Assignment	Critical evaluation of a behaviour analytic concept, application, or contemporary issue using empirical literature. Assessment of theoretical knowledge, application of concepts, functional analysis, and critical understanding of behaviour analysis.	LO 1-8	100

Outline how you would address academic integrity and AI-specific assessment considerations. Refer to the Centre for Academic Practice GenAI and Academic Integrity hub for guidance. (max 200 words).

Students will be supported in understanding appropriate academic practices, including accurate citation, paraphrasing, and critical engagement with scholarly sources. Guidance will be provided regarding the ethical and transparent use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools in accordance with Trinity College policies.

[3] https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment/

Where GenAI tools are permitted, students remain responsible for verifying the accuracy of information, ensuring originality of submitted work, and demonstrating independent critical thinking. Assessments requiring evaluation, synthesis, and application of concepts have been designed to emphasise authentic demonstration of understanding and minimise over-reliance on AI-generated content.

Contact Hours and Indicative Student Workload[4]

Consider how much time an average student needs to invest in the elective to demonstrate the learning outcomes at threshold level. Take into account attendance and time for preparation, including self-study, for all teaching, learning and assessment associated with the module. Workload should be commensurate with ECTS size, which is equivalent to 100-125 student learning hours.

Contact hours: 11 (11 weeks × 1 hour lectures)
Independent Study (preparation for course and review of materials): 74
Independent Study (preparation for assessment, incl. completion of assessment): 40

Inclusive Curriculum

All modules should be inclusive for all students who learn differently. Please respond to the following questions (i.e. ensuring the course supports engagement and representation of all students)

	PLEASE TICK
1. Have you reviewed the teaching / assessment methods and materials for possible barriers to learning, e.g. students with English as a second language, disabilities, significant external responsibilities, students with IT issues / requiring specific accessibility software etc.?	☒
2. Have you adapted your resources and teaching materials taking into account Trinity's Accessible Information Guidelines (https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials.php)?	☒
3. Does the content of your module address diversity? For example, including a diverse demographic profile of authors, diversity of ideas and perspectives, or representation (e.g. pictures of conditions on different skin tones), or by acknowledgement of the homogenous context of the discipline/topic?	☒
4. Highlight at least two ways which your course/module incorporates principles of inclusivity and accessibility into the curriculum design	

[4] https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment_workload/

	Teaching and assessment materials have been developed in line with Trinity's Accessible Information Guidelines. The module incorporates inclusivity through: Presenting information in multiple formats, including lectures, visual materials, discussion activities, and guided readings; Drawing on examples from diverse populations and applied contexts to acknowledge variation in human experience; Encouraging critical consideration of ethical issues, diversity, and the societal implications of psychological knowledge and intervention. These approaches support equitable participation and representation for all students. *(i.e. supports engagement and representation of **all** Trinity students, presents information and content in a variety of ways, and offers variety and options of assessment type. See:* Universal Design for Learning - AHEAD *for more information and guidance, and* Inclusive Curriculum - Equality - Trinity College Dublin (tcd.ie) *for insights from Trinity students)*
Indicative Reading List (approx. 4-5 titles)	Pierce, W. D., & Cheney, C. D. (2017). Behavior Analysis and Learning (6th ed.). Taylor & Francis. Baldwin, J. D., & Baldwin, J. I. (2001). Behavior Principles in Everyday Life. Pearson. Schneider, S. M. (2012). The Science of Consequences: How They Affect Genes, Change the Brain, and Impact Our World. Prometheus Books. Bailey, J., & Burch, M. (2006). How to Think Like a Behavior Analyst: Understanding the Science That Can Change Your Life. Erlbaum. Leslie, J. C., & O'Reilly, M. F. (2003). Behavior Analysis: Foundations and Applications to Psychology. Psychology Press.
Module Pre-requisite	None
Module Co-requisite	None
Are other Schools/Departments involved in the delivery of this module? If yes, please provide details.	No