



PSYC11008 *Biological Foundations of Psychology*

Term 1 - 2020

Profile information current as at 14/12/2025 12:40 pm

All details in this unit profile for PSYC11008 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

In this unit you will be introduced to the biological bases of human behaviour. The content of the unit examines: the structures and functions of the brain and nervous system; sensory and perceptual processes; learning and memory; states of consciousness; and neurological disorders. The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) states that graduates of psychology must be able to comprehend and apply a broad range of knowledge including the neurological elements underpinning human experience and behaviour. The brain and nervous system are significant factors which contribute to the aetiology of psychological disorders and the maintenance of mental health. Consequently, a sound understanding of biological principles is essential to psychology students seeking future careers either as clinicians or as researchers. A further competency required by APAC is the ability to analyse and critique psychological theory and research, and be able communicate these findings in a written format. Psychologists are expected to become "scientist-practitioners" and you will learn how to conduct basic literature searches and communicate your findings in short written assessments using conventional APA style and formatting.

Details

Career Level: *Undergraduate*

Unit Level: *Level 1*

Credit Points: 6

Student Contribution Band: 10

Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: 0.125

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

There are no requisites for this unit.

Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).

Offerings For Term 1 - 2020

- Adelaide
- Bundaberg
- Cairns
- Online
- Rockhampton
- Townsville

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Undergraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

[Regional Campuses](#)

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

[Metropolitan Campuses](#)

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 10%

2. **Online Quiz(zes)**

Weighting: 60%

3. **Essay**

Weighting: 30%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the [University's Grades and Results Policy](#) for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from Have your say survey

Feedback

Students reported that the content was made relevant by incorporating examples and case studies.

Recommendation

Continue to incorporate case studies to illustrate the relevance of course content.

Feedback from Have your say survey

Feedback

Students reported that the first few weeks were challenging and suggested that students could be informed that later content is easier.

Recommendation

The first few weeks are content heavy and include material related to neuroanatomy and neurochemistry. It is recommended that students be informed that early lectures serve as a foundation for later content and once the foundation is formed, learning becomes somewhat easier.

Feedback from Have your say survey

Feedback

Some students stated it was difficult to know what was expected of them in assessments.

Recommendation

Next term it would be worthwhile taking students through the marking rubric and explaining what is required.

Feedback from Have your say survey

Feedback

Several students commented that the on-campus tutors were instrumental in doing well in this unit.

Recommendation

Continue to offer on-campus tutors where possible. Continue to offer Zoom tutorials for distance students.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the major theories and principles underpinning biological psychology
2. Conduct a basic literature search on a topic in biological psychology and compose a brief written submission which summarises current research
3. Develop the capacity to link principles of biological psychology to perception, cognition, emotion and behaviour.

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes

 N/A Level  Introductory Level  Intermediate Level  Graduate Level  Professional Level  Advanced Level

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes		
	1	2	3
1 - Online Quiz(zes) - 60%	•		•
2 - Written Assessment - 10%		•	
3 - Essay - 30%	•	•	•

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes		
	1	2	3
1 - Communication		•	
2 - Problem Solving			
3 - Critical Thinking	•	•	•
4 - Information Literacy		•	
5 - Team Work			
6 - Information Technology Competence	•	•	
7 - Cross Cultural Competence			
8 - Ethical practice			
9 - Social Innovation			
10 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures			

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 - Online Quiz(zes) - 60%			•			•				
2 - Written Assessment - 10%	•					•				
3 - Essay - 30%	•		•	•		•				

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

PSYC11008

Prescribed

Psychology. Fifth Australian and New Zealand edition.

Edition: 5th (2019)

Authors: Burton L, Westen, D, & Kowalski, R.

Wiley

Milton , Queensland , Australia

ISBN: 9780730363262

Binding: eBook

PSYC11008

Supplementary

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association. Seventh edition

Edition: 7th (2020)

Authors: American Psychological Association

American Psychological Association

Washington DC , Washington , USA

ISBN: 9781433832161

Binding: Paperback

Additional Textbook Information

Paper copies of both texts are available for purchase at the CQUni Bookshop here: <http://bookshop.cqu.edu.au> (search on the Unit code)

The eText of *Psychology. Fifth Australian and New Zealand* can be purchased and downloaded from WileyDirect. Use this url: <https://www.wileydirect.com.au/buy/psychology-5th-australian-and-new-zealand-edition/> \

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is a new 7th edition. There are also hardcover and spiral-bound versions.

An e-text version is available through VitalSource:

<https://www.vitalsource.com/products/publication-manual-of-the-american-psychological-v9781433832185>

[View textbooks at the CQUniversity Bookshop](#)

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Chris Crawford Unit Coordinator

c.j.crawford@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction and overview - 09 Mar 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Introduction and overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perspectives in psychology Axons to actions Basic constructs and curiosity 	Chapter 1 (pages 5 - 34)	

Week 2 - Neurons: the basic building blocks - 16 Mar 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Neurons: the basic building blocks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Components of the axon Action potential Synapses Neurotransmitters Hormones Peptides 	Chapter 3 (pages 136 - 152)	

Week 3 - Brain bits - 23 Mar 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Brain bits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terminology Central and peripheral nervous systems Hindbrain Midbrain Forebrain Focus on the forebrain 	Chapter 3 (pages 153 - 177)	

Week 4 - Making sense of the senses - Part A - 30 Mar 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Making sense of the senses Part A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and common factors for the senses 		
Vision - Aye for an eye <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics of light Mechanics of the eye LGN Visual cortex Perceptual disturbances Blindness 	Chapter 4 (pages 202 - 232)	Journal Summary Due: Week 4 Monday (30 Mar 2020) 9:00 am AEST

Week 5 - Making sense of the senses - Part B - 06 Apr 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Making sense of the senses Part B		
Hearing - here ear <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physics of sound Mechanics of the ear Broca's area Wernicke's area Auditory disturbances Deafness 	Chapter 4 (pages 232 - 281)	
Other senses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taste Smell Touch Pain Proprioception 		

Vacation Week - 13 Apr 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Week 6 - Thinking, emotion and behaviour - 20 Apr 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Thinking, emotion and behaviour

- Origins of cognitive behavioural therapy
- Neuroscience of psychotherapy
- Cognitive-behavioural model and CBT practice
- Your brain and you

No assigned reading this week

Quiz 1 - opens 1200 Thursday and closes 1145 pm Friday of Week 6**Online Quizzes** Due: Week 6 Friday (24 Apr 2020) 11:45 pm AEST**Week 7 - Learning about learning - 27 Apr 2020**

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Learning about learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The brain as an association machine • Classical conditioning • Operant conditioning • Latent learning • Social-cognitive theory 	Chapter 6 (pages 356 - 399)	

Week 8 - Memories are made of this - 04 May 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Memories are made of this		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salience • Association • Working memory • Long term memory • Memory strategies (chunking, associations) • Retrospective memory • Prospective memory 	Chapter 7 (pages 414 - 468)	Short essay Due: Week 8 Monday (4 May 2020) 9:00 am AEST

Week 9 - Considerations of consciousness - 11 May 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Contradictions of consciousness		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functions of consciousness • Attention and multi-tasking • Sleep • Altered states 	Chapter 5 (pages 292 - 342)	

Week 10 - Integrating intelligence - 18 May 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Intelligence		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions • Development • Deterioration • Measurement • Ethical considerations 	Chapter 9 (pages 558 - 600)	

Week 11 - Neurological disorders - 25 May 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Neurological disorders		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental versus neurological • Approaches to mental / neurological illness • Diagnosing mental / neurological illness • Treatment of mental / neurological illness 	Chapter 15 (pages 1030 - 1097)	

Week 12 - Summary and future of biological psychology - 01 Jun 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Summary and conclusion	No reading this week	Quiz 2 - opens 1200 Thursday and closes 1145 pm Friday of Week 12

Review/Exam Week - 08 Jun 2020

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Assessment Tasks

1 Journal Summary

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description**Assessment 1 introduction:**

It is hypothesised that psychotherapy has the capacity to modify neural networks and brain activity which results in benefits for the individual. Your task is to read and critically review a journal article that discusses the evidence for this type of change.

Assessment 1 instructions:

Download the following journal article written by Taren et al. (2015)

Mindfulness meditation training alters stress-related amygdala resting state functional connectivity: a randomized controlled trial

- Go the CQUniversity Library webpage, cut and paste the title above into the Library search bar and click Search.
- At some point you will be prompted to log into your CQUniversity library account.
- Click on Full text available.
- On the next page, click on the links at Pubmed Central or EBSCOhost.
- On the next page download the PDF of the article and save it to your computer.

Write a critical summary of between 270 - 330 words.

- This does not include your reference page or the title page.
- Include a title page.
- Use appropriate APA formatting in-text.
- Include a reference page with correct APA formatting.
- An abstract is not required.

Submit the assessment via the Moodle as a Word doc or docx file with your last name and initial, i.e. crawfordc.doc

- It is good practice to upload and check the assessment a couple of days before the due date to allow Turnitin to review your work.
- Make sure you click the submit button to completely submit the assessment for grading.

Follow the assessment structure below: (The total for this assessment task is 10 marks.)

Introduction/Literature Review (2 marks)

- In ONE or TWO sentences outline the issue being investigated.
- In ONE sentence explain why this issue was important enough to research.

Method (2 marks)

- In ONE or TWO sentences describe how were participants recruited? How many participants were in the final sample?
- In ONE or TWO sentences describe the dependent variable(s).

Results/Discussion (4 marks)

- Pick ONE of the main findings discussed in this section and in TWO sentences describe the finding AND what it means.
- In ONE sentence describe a methodological issue that may have impacted on the findings.
- In ONE sentence describe the future direction for research noted by the authors.
- In ONE sentence summarise the overall conclusion of the article.

Correct use of APA formatting (1.5 marks)**Remain within word limit of 270-330 words (0.5 marks)**

Assessment Due Date

Week 4 Monday (30 Mar 2020) 9:00 am AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 6 Monday (20 Apr 2020)

Weighting

10%

Assessment Criteria**Assessment Criteria****Total possible of 10 marks****Introduction and literature review (2 marks)**

0 Introduction not present or was not relevant to the journal article.

1 Introduction present, literature summarised, only loosely applied to the journal article.

1.5 Introduction present, literature summarised, related clearly and effectively to the journal article.

2 Introduction and literature concisely summarised, related clearly and effectively to the journal article using original language and interpretation.

Method (2 marks)

0 Discussion on methodology not present or was not relevant to the journal article.

1 Methodology discussed but only loosely applied to the journal article.

1.5 Methodology discussed. Related clearly and effectively to the journal article.

2 Methodology discussed. Related clearly and effectively to the journal article using original language and interpretation.

Results / discussion (4 marks)

0 Results / discussion not present or were not relevant to the journal article.

2 Results and discussion have been loosely summarised and relate to the journal article.

3 Results and discussion are summarised and relate well to the journal article.

4 Results and discussion are clearly and effectively summarised, related clearly and effectively to the journal article using original language and interpretation.

APA formatting (1.5 marks)

0 APA formatting not present.

1 Attempt made with APA formatting but contained many errors.

1.5 APA formatting contained few errors.

Word limit 270 - 330 words (0.5 marks)

0 Assessment is not within the word limit

0.5 Assessment is within the word limit

Late submission

Late submissions will be subject to a 5% penalty per day.

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

Online

Submission Instructions

Submit via the PSYC11008 Moodle site.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Conduct a basic literature search on a topic in biological psychology and compose a brief written submission which summarises current research

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Information Technology Competence

2 Online Quizzes

Assessment Type

Online Quiz(zes)

Task Description**There are two quizzes**

- Quiz 1 is in week 6 and will open at 12 noon Thursday and close at 1145 pm Friday
- Quiz 2 is in week 12 and will open at 12 noon Thursday and close at 1145 pm Friday

Conditions of each quiz:

- You must take the two quizzes in the time slots detailed above
- You will have 60 minutes to complete quiz
- The quiz contains 60 multiple choice questions
- At the end of 60 minutes all completed questions will be submitted automatically
- If you do not know the answer to a question, it is best to move onto the next question
- If you have time, come back to the items you have not answered
- Feedback will be provided on the Moodle site one week after the quiz closes

Number of Quizzes

1

Frequency of Quizzes

Other

Assessment Due Date

Week 6 Friday (24 Apr 2020) 11:45 pm AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 7 Friday (1 May 2020)

Weighting

60%

Assessment Criteria

There are 60 multiple choice questions in each quiz.

You will have 60 minutes to complete each quiz.

Each quiz is worth 30 marks each.

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

No submission method provided.

Submission Instructions

Complete the quiz via the Assessments link in the PSYC11008 Moodle site

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Explain the major theories and principles underpinning biological psychology
- Develop the capacity to link principles of biological psychology to perception, cognition, emotion and behaviour.

Graduate Attributes

- Critical Thinking
- Information Technology Competence

3 Short essay

Assessment Type

Essay

Task Description**Introduction**

- One definition of intelligence is: "... the application of cognitive skills and knowledge to learn, solve problems and obtain ends that are valued by an individual or culture." (Burton, Westen & Kowalski, 2019, p. 558). Historically there have been two perspectives on what contributes to intelligence. The first is heredity - the organism's inherited genetic code which provides an innate advantage or disadvantage over other organisms. The second is environment - the circumstances in which the organism finds itself including social setting and available learning opportunities. It is currently accepted that these two factors interact and both contribute to intelligence. However, your task is to use current research and **argue that one is more important than the other** (even if this is 51% to 49%).

Short Essay - Instructions:

- Write a brief essay which takes a stand on whether intelligence is determined primarily by heredity or environment.

- Search the CQU library database or Google Scholar for the terms “heredity,” “environment” and “intelligence”
- To widen the search, you may want to include terms such as: nature, nurture, genetics, twin studies, etc.
- Select and download the full-text version of **two journal articles** which both support your stance.
- The essay is to be 900 - 1100 words. This does not include your references or title page
- Include a title page.
- Use appropriate APA style. Use appropriate APA in-text referencing.
- Include a references list for the two articles in APA formatting.
- An abstract is not required.
- Submit the assessment via the Moodle as a Word doc or docx file with your last name and initial i.e: crawfordc.doc
- It is good practice to upload the assessment a couple of days before the due date to allow Turnitin to review your work.
- Ensure you click the final **Submit** button so your submission can be assessed.

Assessment Due Date

Week 8 Monday (4 May 2020) 9:00 am AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 10 Monday (18 May 2020)

Weighting

30%

Assessment Criteria

Total possible of 30 marks

Introduction and literature review (4 marks)

0 Introduction not present or was not relevant to the journal articles. The student did not take a clear stance on the topic.

2 Introduction present, literature summarised only loosely. The student took a stance, but not well supported by the literature.

3 Introduction present, literature summarised well. The student took a stance which was adequately supported by the literature.

4 Introduction and literature concisely and effectively summarised. The student took a clear stance which was very well supported by the literature using original language and interpretation.

Utilisation of journal article one (8 marks)

0 The journal article did not relate to the topic, was not summarised effectively or correctly. Summary was not linked to the stance taken by the student.

4 The journal loosely related to the topic and was summarised but missed key points. The summary was only loosely linked to the stance taken by the student.

6 The journal article related to the topic, was summarised correctly. The summary covered most key points. The summary was linked well to the stance taken by the student.

8 The journal related clearly to the topic and was effectively summarised. The summary was effectively covering all key points. The summary was creatively linked to the stance taken by the student using original language and interpretation.

Utilisation of journal article two (8 marks)

0 The journal article did not relate to the topic, was not summarised effectively or correctly. Summary was not linked to the stance taken by the student.

4 The journal loosely related to the topic and was summarised but missed key points. The summary was only loosely linked to the stance taken by the student.

6 The journal article related to the topic, was summarised correctly. The summary covered most key points. The summary was linked well to the stance taken by the student

8 The journal related clearly to the topic and was effectively summarised. The summary was effectively covering all key points. The summary was creatively linked to the stance taken by the student using original language and interpretation.

Conclusion (5 marks)

0 Conclusion not present or not related to the stance taken by the student and / or not supported by the journal articles.

2.5 Conclusion related loosely to the stance taken by the student. Not well supported by the journal articles.

4 Conclusion related well to the stance taken by the student and is supported by the journal articles.

5 Conclusion related clearly and effectively to the stance taken by the student, very well supported by the journal articles and uses original language and interpretation.

APA formatting (4 marks)

0 APA formatting not present.

2.5 Attempt made with APA formatting but contained many errors.

4 APA formatting contained few errors.

Word limit of 900 - 1100 words (1 mark)

0 Assessment is not within word limit

1 Assessment is within word limit

Late submission

Late submissions will be subject to a 5% penalty per day.

Referencing Style

- [American Psychological Association 6th Edition \(APA 6th edition\)](#)

Submission

Online

Submission Instructions

Submit via the PSYC11008 Moodle site.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- Explain the major theories and principles underpinning biological psychology
- Conduct a basic literature search on a topic in biological psychology and compose a brief written submission which summarises current research
- Develop the capacity to link principles of biological psychology to perception, cognition, emotion and behaviour.

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Information Technology Competence

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#). This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the [Academic Learning Centre \(ALC\)](#) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?



Be Honest

If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own



Seek Help

If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)



Produce Original Work

Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem