

ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

Abnormal psychology focuses on the diagnosis, explanation and treatment of abnormal behavior. The three topics for this option are:

- Factors influencing diagnosis
- Etiology of abnormal behavior
- Treatment of disorders

Each of these topics should draw on what has been learned in the biological, cognitive and sociocultural approaches to behavior where appropriate. In addition, students should have the opportunity to explore the different approaches taken in research and should be made aware of the ethical considerations and the sensitivity required in a discussion of this subject.

There is no clear definition of what constitutes normal behavior and, by the same token, what constitutes abnormal behavior. Concepts of normal and abnormal change over time and are influenced by such factors as clinical biases, social norms, gender, culture and socio-economic status. An appreciation of this is fundamental to this option.

IB LEARNING OUTCOMES
(Factors Influencing Diagnosis)

1. **Discuss** the classification systems used to diagnose abnormal behavior.
2. **Discuss** the concepts of normality and abnormality.
3. **Discuss** the role of clinical biases in diagnosis.
4. **Discuss** the validity and reliability of diagnosis.