

# COURSE SYLLABUS

## Developmental and Learning Disorders

**Degree in Psychology  
C.U. Cardenal Cisneros  
University of Alcalá**

**Academic Year 2024/25**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Year – 1<sup>st</sup> Term**

## COURSE SYLLABUS

Name of the subject:	<b>Developmental and Learning Disorders</b>
Code:	<b>562022</b>
Study:	<b>Degree in Psychology</b>
Department and Area of knowledge:	<b>Learning Sciences and Psychology</b>
Character:	<b>Compulsory</b>
ECTS credits:	<b>6</b>
Year and Term:	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Year, 1<sup>st</sup> Term</b>
Lecturers:	<b>María Cordero Cid Cristina Escribano Barreno</b>
Office hours:	<b>Request by email Mondays from 9:45 to 10:40 and Thursdays from 12:00 to 14:00 (Cristina Escribano) Mondays from 13.00 to 14.00 Thursdays from 9.45 to 11.40 (María Cordero) These will be confirmed at the beginning of the term</b>
Office number:	<b>22 (María Cordero) Guidance (Cristina Escribano)</b>
E-mail:	<b>maria.cordero@cardenalcisneros.es cristina.escribano@cardenalcisneros.es</b>
Language:	<b>Spanish</b>

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this subject is to train the future psychologist in the identification, assessment and intervention of problems that may arise in the development and in the teaching-learning process.

It is part of the group of subjects of the curriculum named Life Cycle Psychology and Psychology of Education, which includes the following subjects: *Life Cycle Psychology I* (basic training, 1<sup>st</sup> year), *Life Cycle Psychology II* (basic training, 2<sup>nd</sup> year), *Psychology of Education* (compulsory, 2<sup>nd</sup> year) and *Developmental and Learning Disorders* (compulsory, 3<sup>rd</sup> year).

The contents are distributed in two blocks dedicated to developmental disorders and different learning difficulties. The part dedicated to developmental disorders analyses the difficulties arising from sensory, motor and cognitive disorders, generalised developmental disorders (Autism Spectrum Disorder), as well as those related to communication and self-regulation.

In the block related to learning difficulties, the problems of reading, writing and mathematics are studied. The third block is focused on learning difficulties and problems related to reading, writing and mathematics are studied. In the last block it is made an approach to students with educational support needs, studying different concepts to understand educational support. The training in this subject is intended to facilitate the development of basic competences for professional practice in both formal (e.g. school) and informal (families, associations, etc.) learning contexts.

This subject is associated with the program "Desarrollo de Destrezas Académicas en los Títulos de Grado" of the CUCC. More specifically, in terms of reaching and academic works, consequently, it includes activities that will be assessed and they are explained below.

## Prerequisites y Recommendations

It is important that the student knows from the beginning the dynamic and functioning of the subject (described in this syllabus) and takes this into consideration during the term. To succeed in the subject, a good work ethic throughout the term is necessary.

For this reason, it is important that the student gets involved in and carries out the proposed activities and tasks regularly, as well as dedicates the necessary time to master the contents of the subject. Therefore, the student should remember that his/her personal work should take place outside of class time (see number of student working hours).

It is imperative that the student has basic computer skills and knows how to use Microsoft Teams.

## SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject *Developmental and Learning Disorders* is a compulsory subject consisting of 6 ECTS credits. It is taught in Spanish in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 1<sup>st</sup> term of the Degree in Psychology. This subject aims to teach the future psychologist how to identify, assess and intervene in problems that may arise in the developmental and learning process. Contents are distributed into two blocks: 1) Developmental disorders, and 2) Different learning difficulties: problems related to reading, writing and mathematics are included. This subject also aspires to help students develop the basic competences for practicing their profession in both formal (e.g. school) and informal learning (e.g. family, associations, etc.) contexts. This subject requires the reading and analysis of articles and texts in Spanish. Students who wish to take this subject must have at least a B2 level of Spanish.

This subject is included within the 'English Friendly' programme and international students will have a teaching guide, readings, exams, and tutorials available in English. In any case, this subject has an English practice.

## 2. COMPETENCES

### Generic competences:

GC1	To acquire the knowledge and understand the principles of Psychology as a scientific discipline, including theory, methods and application fields, with the support of advanced textbooks and documentation incorporating cutting-edge knowledge in this field of study.
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GC3	To be able to collect and interpret relevant data on human behaviour, at both individual and social levels and in different contexts, and to express reasoned opinions of social, scientific or ethical nature in the psychological field.
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### Scientific competences:

SC3	To know and understand the processes and main stages of psychological development throughout the life cycle in their aspects of normality and abnormality.
SC10	To be able to analyse and identify differences, problems, needs and demands of either individual, group, intergroup, organisational and interorganisational target populations in the different areas of application.

## 3. CONTENTS

Modules	Hours (total)
Block 1: Conceptual delimitation of developmental disturbances and learning difficulties.  Unit 1: Conceptual delimitation of developmental disturbances and learning difficulties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 hours</li> </ul>
Block 2: Developmental disorders and disturbances.  Unit 2. Disorders and disturbances of language, speech and voice. Unit 3. Intellectual disability. Unit 4. Sensory and motor disabilities. Unit 5. Autism spectrum disorder. Unit 6. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14 hours</li> </ul>
Block 3: Apprentices with learning difficulties. Detection, assessment and intervention.  Unit 7. Reading difficulties. Unit 8. Writing difficulties. Unit 9. Mathematic difficulties. Unit 10. Learning and performance problems related to psychological, sociocultural and behavioural aspects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 hours</li> </ul>
Block 4: Needs for educational support.  Unit 11. Students with Specific Need for Educational Support: historical approach and key concepts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14 hours</li> </ul>

## 4. TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGY. FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

### Organisation:

The classes, corresponding to one third of ECTS credits, will be structured throughout the term in three different modalities: theoretical classes, practical classes and seminars.

- ✓ **Theoretical classes.** Different methodologies will be employed. Part of the theoretical contents will be provided and/or explained by the teacher, and others will be sought out and elaborated by the students. When requested by the teacher, students must attend class with the lesson prepared and the content will be commented on, debated or clarified in class. Some lessons can follow the cooperative learning methodology. Theoretical self-learning activities are included in this modality.
- ✓ **Practical classes.** These will be done individually or in groups and guided by the teacher. Such activities can include case studies, problem solving, analysis and discussion of documentary and audio-visual information (articles, videos, scientific documents), as well as the presentation of research and academic work. In addition, the guidelines for the autonomous individual and group work will be provided in practical classes.
- ✓ **Seminars.** The aim is to study some specific aspects of the subject in depth. Learning will be active, as students will have to look for and prepare information in mutual collaboration, with the teacher serving as a guide. Monitoring will be carried out in class and in groups, which will be organized as office tutorials. A percentage of independent learning will be dedicated to this purpose.

Two thirds of the ECTS credits of the subject (102 hours) will be dedicated to **independent learning**. This includes the time needed to complete the tasks and activities that will be turned in or presented in class, to study and to prepare for exams. To pass, it is paramount that the student uses this time to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

The teacher will have office hours for personalised tutorials to supervise and guide the students in their training process.

### 4.1. Credit distribution

Total number of hours (6 ECTS): 150	
Number of hours of classroom attendance 50:	30 hours of whole-group lessons
	15 hours of practical lessons
	3 hours of seminars
	2 hours of assessment tasks
Number of hours of independent learning 100:	100 hours

## 4.2. Methodological strategies, materials and didactic resources

### Teaching-learning methodology:

In class, the student will be engaged in an active and participative methodology.

To learn the contents, the student will have, as starting point, materials provided by the teacher with their corresponding explanation and analysis. Activities will include the analysis of case-studies, research, academic articles, experiences in socio-educational intervention, as well as group work.

### Materials and resources:

Besides the handbook, for this subject students will use several complementary materials and resources to gain an understanding of different units and to do practical activities. These materials include documentation provided by the teacher, scientific articles, audio-visual material, and book chapters with theoretical and practical content, assessment instruments, scenarios and case studies.

The online platform of the virtual community of the university will give students fast and efficient access to the material needed for the subject.

Other resources that will be used are digital whiteboards, projectors, multimedia classrooms and, where appropriate, computers and other computer resources.

## 5. ASSESSMENT: assessment criteria, report criteria and assessment procedures

### Assessment criteria:

The following are indicators of the learning outcomes that the student must achieve to pass the subject. Therefore, it is important that the student focuses on the fundamental aspects established for the assessment of the subject.

The assessment criteria are:

### Relationship between specific competences and assessment criteria.

Competence	Assessment criteria
To know and understand the processes and main stages of psychological development throughout the life cycle in their aspects of normality and abnormality (SC3).	<p>The student understands the concept of developmental disorders and learning difficulties.</p> <p>The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from developmental disorders and is able to propose intervention guidelines.</p> <p>The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from learning difficulties and is able to propose intervention guidelines.</p>
To be able to analyse and identify differences, problems, needs and demands of either individual, group, intergroup, organisational and interorganisational target populations in the different areas of application (SC10).	<p>The student can describe, identify and evaluate the main developmental disorders.</p> <p>The student can describe, identify and evaluate learning difficulties.</p> <p>The student analyses articles and academic documents.</p>

### Report criteria:

Assessment criteria	Percentage
The student understands the concept of developmental disorders and learning difficulties.	20%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate the main developmental disorders.	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from developmental disorders and is able to propose intervention guidelines.	10%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate learning difficulties.	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from learning difficulties and is able to propose intervention guidelines.	10%
The student analyses articles and academic documents.	10%

### Assessment procedure:

The assessment procedure is based on the **Normativa reguladora de los procesos de evaluación de aprendizajes de la Universidad de Alcalá** (Regulatory policy of the learning assessment procedure of the University of Alcalá). This policy states, among others, the following rules:

1. This subject has **two assessment periods**: an **ordinary one** in **January** and an **extraordinary one** in **June**.
2. The **ordinary assessment period** employs **continuous assessment**.
3. If a student cannot commit to the continuous assessment within the ordinary assessment period, he/she should **formally request the final assessment** from the teacher of the subject. This request will be submitted no later than the second week of classes, and it can be accepted or rejected by university management. If is accepted, the student must contact with teacher during the first weeks of class to specify the activities to be carried out, which will be delivered before the exam, on the date previously agreed with the teacher.
4. The **extraordinary assessment period** is intended for students who failed the ordinary one and will use the same assessment criteria as the ordinary assessment period (continuous or final). The passing marks obtained in the different activities will be saved.
5. The characteristics of the continuous and final assessment for this subject are detailed in this course syllabus.
6. For more information about the assessment procedures, please see the following document: <https://www.uah.es/export/shared/es/conoce-la-uah/organizacion-y-gobierno/galleries/Secretaria-General/Normativa-Evaluacion-Aprendizajes.pdf>

Requirements for **continuous assessment** in the ordinary assessment period:

- To attend classes. Practical classes or seminars absences should be justified with official proof.
- To complete and turn in the requested activities and assignments on time.
- To actively participate in the teaching-learning process.

If the student does not fulfil these requirements, he/she cannot pass the subject at ordinary assessment period. The student could pass the subject at the extraordinary period in the final assessment mode, but he/she will have to contact the teacher of the subject.

Some considerations to take into account for continuous assessment:

- In **continuous assessment**, any absence should be justified in writing (for example, a doctor's note) and simply notifying the absence is not sufficient. The minimum percentage of class attendance required to pass the continuous assessment will be determined at the beginning of the term, depending on the practical sessions' distribution. In any case, absence is limited to 1 of the 3 hours of seminars.
- When the student does not attend the lesson and/or fails to turn in the requested activity, it should be for a justified reason (illness with a doctor's note, accident, serious family problem, etc.). In any case, the justification of the absence preserves the student's right to continuous assessment, but it does not mean that the teacher will accept the activity after the deadline or that the absence can be compensated with another activity; each individual case will be studied. When the absence is not excused, there will be no possibility to make up the work not done.



- Absence, even if justified, could be considered in the final mark or the evaluation of corresponding activities, taking into account when it happened (it is understood that missing a class that counts towards the mark is not equivalent to missing a class that does not).
- If the student exceeds the maximum percentage of absence allowed, even if justified, he/she cannot pass the subject at the ordinary assessment period. As already explained, he/she could pass the subject at the extraordinary period in the final assessment mode.
- Active participation in theoretical classes will also be taken into account. The completion of work and participation in class activities will be positively considered in the final mark of the subject.

To pass the subject, the student **must achieve all of the competences outlined in this course syllabus by at least 50%, by means of the different instruments established to measure them.**

As a requirement, the student must perform all the assessment tests described in the Table for both continuous, and final modalities, either in the ordinary or extraordinary sittings.

#### Continuous Assessment Table (Ordinary and extraordinary assessment periods):

Assessment criteria	Instruments				
	Seminars	Activities and tasks	Follow activities	Final exam	%
The student understands the concept of developmental disorders and learning difficulties.				X	20%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate the main developmental disorders.	X	X	X	X	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from developmental disorders and is able to propose intervention guidelines.				X	10%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate learning difficulties.	X	X	X	X	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from learning difficulties and is able to propose intervention guidelines.				X	10%
The student analyses articles and academic documents.	X	X	X		10%
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Final Assessment Table (Ordinary and extraordinary assessment periods):

Assessment criteria \ Instruments	Activities	Final Exam	%
The student understands the concept of developmental disorders and learning difficulties.		X	20%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate the main developmental disorders.	X	X	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from developmental disorders and is able to propose intervention guidelines.		X	10%
The student can describe, identify and evaluate learning difficulties.	X	X	25%
The student knows the main needs for educational support arising from learning difficulties and is able to propose intervention guidelines.		X	10%
The student analyses articles and academic documents.	X		10%
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Considerations on the **calculation of the final grade**:

In order to pass the subject, it is essential that the student demonstrates that they have achieved all the skills included in this guide through the different instruments established for their measurement, achieving a minimum of 5 in each of them. The student must take all the evaluation tests that are included in this guide as an essential requirement, both in the continuous evaluation process and in the final evaluation process, either in the ordinary or extraordinary call.

A maximum of one Whit Honor will be awarded for every 20 students. However, the teacher may not grant any if she considers it so.

### **Grade Review** Considerations:

The purpose of reviews is to provide feedback for learning, not to obtain a particular grade.

After review, the rating can remain the same, but the rating can also be raised or lowered if an error is detected.

In case of detecting plagiarism, the grade will be zero without possible recovery, in all the documents in which this situation is detected.

If the teacher suffers a lack of respect, the review will be terminated.

Once the notes on practices, activities and seminars have been published on the CUCC virtual campus, the student must review and report within approximately 2 weeks if there is any error or disagreement with the grade awarded. The student can attend tutorials during the course to individually review their activities and results.

The official final review of the course is reserved for reviewing the final exam and/or the final grade.

## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Basic Bibliography

Defior, S. Serrano, F. y Gutiérrez, N. (2015) *Dificultades específicas de aprendizaje: Síntesis*.

This book addresses specific learning difficulties from the perspective of the need for evidence-based psychoeducational action. Therefore, it provides an updated view of this field, based on the idea that, for a proper understanding of learning disorders, it is essential to use explanatory models of skill acquisition. It takes into account the complexity of neurobiological, cognitive, behavioural and environmental factors influencing each difficulty assessed. This work is intended for undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as professionals (speech therapists, guidance psychologists, pedagogues, psychopedagogues), and anyone who wants to update his/her knowledge about learning difficulties in general or about any particular one.

Fejerman, N. (2010) *Trastornos del Desarrollo en niños y adolescentes*. Paidós

A significant number of children have symptoms and/or signs related to behaviour, motility, learning, language and communication, which correspond to the well-defined clinical pictures of mental retardation, attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity, motor clumsiness, dyslexia and dyscalculia, language development disorders and autism spectrum disorders.

Fiuza, M.J. y Fernández, P. (2013) *Dificultades de aprendizaje y trastornos del desarrollo. Manual didáctico*. Pirámide

The handbook offers a pragmatic and highly applied vision of the different difficulties and disorders that can occur in classroom and that require special educational needs to which teachers must be able to satisfy from a multidisciplinary perspective of attention to diversity.

It not only provides an extensive conceptual overview of the topic, but also a series of very practical modules, which include activities, case studies and self-assessment questions, making this handbook useful for the teaching program of subjects included in the curriculum of university studies such as psychology, teaching, speech therapy and other educational professions.

García-Sánchez, J.N. (2014) *Prevención en dificultades del desarrollo y del aprendizaje*. Pirámide

This book provides keys for the optimization of development and advances produced in the last years in the field of the difficulties of development in early years and in specific learning later. The difficulties of development appear in the construction process of people and their world, where preventive assistance and action are therefore essential for achieving optimal and satisfactory levels of development.

Gómez, J.M., Royo, P. y Serrano, C. (2012). *Fundamentos psicopedagógicos de atención a la diversidad*. Escuela Universitaria Cardenal Cisneros.

This book addresses the psychopedagogical foundations of attention to diversity in order to help future teachers and educators to understand diversity, to make decisions about the most appropriate educational response in each case, and to design teaching-learning situations favouring the learning and integral development of all students.

López Justicia, M.D. y Polo Sánchez, M.T. (2014). *Trastornos del desarrollo infantil*. Pirámide

The contents of this book have been created with the aim of serving as a guide to students of degrees related to education, psychology and social education, that seek to find the guidelines of detection and action that could be used with boys and girls in early childhood education from an inclusive perspective.

The book presents the contributions of studies carried out in the psychological and educational fields, aiming to achieve a more functional development of children with visual, hearing, motor, intellectual or behavioural impairments. The authors highlight the importance of early detection and immediate action.

Martínez, C. y Hernández, L.A. (2019). *Guía para el éxito escolar del alumnado con dislexia*. Consejería de Educación, Juventud y Deportes de la Región de Murcia

This guide helps you understand what dyslexia is and the specific educational support needs associated with it. It also allows knowing the detection, identification and intervention protocol that teachers can follow to carry out the appropriate care, including, in addition, guidelines for families.

Priya, U. y William, B. (2020). Understanding Children with Learning Disabilities in The Classroom. IRE Journals (4) 55-58.

In this article the student will find a reflexion on how learning disabilities affect the ability of children to develop language, communication or maths. Attention is paid to how the teacher must adapt the class to guarantee learning in all students.

Vila Chaves, J.O. y Gutiérrez, F. (2013) *Manual básico de dificultades aprendizaje*. Sanz y Torres

The authors have tried to make a clear and simple drafting of the concept, evaluation and intervention of learning difficulties. The text is designed for students taking the subject *Learning Difficulties* of the Degree in psychology at the UNED, although it will also be useful to any reader

interested in the field of specific learning difficulties, particularly those professionals who carry out their work in educational contexts.

APA (2013). DSM-5. *Manual Diagnóstico y Estadístico de los Trastornos Mentales*.

### Electronical resources:

AQUARI SOFT: Offers computer programs for special education students, speech therap, etc., with special attention given to people with motor disabilities. <http://www.aquari-soft.com>

CEAPAT: It is a service centre specifically dedicated to promoting the personal autonomy of disabled people in Spain. <http://www.ceapat.es>

CIDAT: It is a centre for research, development and tiftotechnical application. Projects, prototype evaluation, equipment and programs, designs and equipment development, and in-house products can be found here. <http://www.cidat.once.es>

DISCAPNET: Disability website: legislation, accessibility, books, and news. <http://www.dis-capnet.es>