UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Assessment of Developmental Cognitive Skills and Disorders

2526-2-F5103P112

Learning area

Methodological competences and clinical techniques

Learning objectives

Knowledge and understanding

- Knowledge of the main tests for the assessment of cognitive processes in children and adolescents
- Knowledge of variables to take into consideration for the anamnesis
- Knowledge of the variables that can influence the children's performance on a test

Applying knowledge and understanding

- Ability to decide which test can be applied to assess a specific cognitive process
- Ability to prepare the setting for the administration of cognitive tests
- Ability to administer and score the tests presented, and to interpret their results
- Ability to write a report reporting test results and clinical observations

Making judgements

- Acquiring the ability to make autonomous and critical judgements when assessing situations involving individuals, groups and intervention plans, while also taking into account the professional ethics principles formulated by the Order of Psychologists
- Acquisition of the ability to independently select appropriate assessment tools and intervention procedures in collaboration with other professionals working in different developmental contexts

Communication skills

- Acquiring communication skills that enable one to interact effectively with the people, groups and institutions involved, directly or indirectly, in one's professional activities, in order to facilitate teamwork, intervene effectively within the service network, and clearly communicate one's specific psychological contribution
- Strengthening communication skills to enable effective interaction with parents, teachers, children and adolescents during counselling and psychological support activities, while taking into account individual differences and contexts

Learning skills

- Promoting the ability to update one's knowledge by learning autonomously and critically about the latest national and international scientific research in relevant disciplines, with regard to content, design and interventions. This also includes the ability to learn from the experience of practitioners, teachers and specialists in the sector or other disciplines

Contents

Standardized tests and methods for assessing memory, attention and executive functions will be presented. Furthermore, tasks for the assessment of learning processes (reading, writing, and mathematical skills) will be presented and experimented. The course will consider the assessment of cognitive processes in children with neurodevelopmental disorders such as Specific Learning Disorders and Attention-deficit/Hyperactivity disorder. Examples of assessment tools that will be presented are the NESPY and BIA batteries, and some Italian tools for the assessment of learning processes (e.g., MT-Group's).

Detailed program

1. Preparation of the setting for the administration of tests to children
2. Variables for children’s anamnesis
3. Scoring of standardized tests
4. Standardized tests for cognitive assessment (e.g. WISC-IV)
5. Standardized tests for the assessment of attention (e.g., BIA – Italian battery for ADHD)
6. andexecutive functions (e.g., London Tower)
7. Standardized tests for the assessment of reading and reading comprehesion (e.g, MT-3)
8. Standardized tests for the assessment of writing processes (BVSCO-Battery for the assessment of writing and orthographic skills)
9. Standardized tests for the assessment of mathematical abilities (BDE - Battery for developmental dyscalculia)
10. Criteria for writing a report of the cognitive tests’ administration

Prerequisites

Theoretical knowledge of the principal model of development of cognitive processes of memory, and attention. Knowledge of the main features of the Specific Learning Disorders and of the Attention deficit/Hyperactivity disorder. However, a brief review of the theoretical bases will be provided before the presentation of assessment instruments presented.

Teaching methods

During the lessons, the cognitive process to be assessed will be presented, together with the tests available to assess it. Then, students will have the possibility of practicing in the use of tests, with simulations with peers or filling in the tests' protocols while watching in a video a child doing the test. Finally, clinical cases will be presented. The teaching includes lecture hours (10 h frontal teaching) and laboratory activities (18 h interactive teaching).

Assessment methods

At least 70% of the total lesson time is required. Students must administrate some tests to a child, and write a report about this experience, reporting the tests' results and their interpretation.
The administration of tests to a child and the related report are mandatory for the laboratory approval.
During the last lesson, an individual feedback regarding the reports will be given.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

The bibliography and/or the slides about the lessons and useful for the test administration will be provided at the beginning of the course and published on line in the e-learning website.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION