



# Psychodiagnostic and Neuropsychological Assessment of School- Age Children

## Continuing Education Certificate



**Department of Psychology**  
Initiative for Mental health,  
Psychology, and Advanced  
Clinical Training | IMPACT

**Regional External  
Programs**  
Continuing Education  
Center | CEC

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## Description

The certificate in Psychodiagnostic and Neuropsychological Assessment of School-Age Children, is competency-based, post-graduate specialization in the diagnostic assessment of children aged 4 to 18 with a range of cognitive, emotional and behavioral concerns, using neuropsychological principles. Upon successful completion of the certificate, the participants receive an AUB Certificate that is recognized by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Successful graduates of the program, will be qualified in the latest evidence-based practices of neuropsychological /psychodiagnostic assessment of school-aged children with a range of developmental, attention, memory, cognitive, language, visual perceptual, affect, and behavioral concerns. They will learn how to integrate process-oriented assessment into the identification of children with learning problems, and link evidence-based interventions to a child's cognitive strengths and weaknesses in line with US-based and Lebanese legislation (e.g., IDEA, Law 220/2000). The trainee is expected to demonstrate a level of competence at the end of the training that is commensurate with professional independence.

## Context and Rationale

The practice of assessing children for school-related issues is gaining much popularity in Lebanon and the Arab region. While the fair practice of psychological assessment faces many systematic challenges such as the lack of regulations for professional competencies in assessments, lack of legislation regarding the rights of peoples with disabilities, and the fitment between available Western tests, and multilingual children in the region, the major setback continues to be lack of post-graduate training and education. For example, only the American University of Beirut offers a graduate course on clinical psychodiagnostic assessment using neuropsychological principles (Psychology Department PSYC 354) and this course is exclusive to AUB students in clinical psychology, although many request to take it. Other courses and programs in the region are also limited to Master's students and often focus on research in neuropsychology, or educational testing. Additionally, various workshops in the community are focused on test-administration and do not provide professionals with the overall knowledge needed to become independent clinicians.

All of these challenges have led local professionals to follow practices that may not be aligned with evidence-based practice. For instance, the use of "IQ" testing to determine Intellectual Disability continues to be, despite evidence against its use as a sole criterion of determination. Similarly, methods for diagnoses of learning disabilities have often relied on intelligence and achievement discrepancy, while in the past two decades; countries such as the USA posited that a diagnosis of learning disability requires an assessment of processes and neuropsychological functions.

## Context and Rationale

In view of this critical gaps, professionals in Lebanon and the region are seeking to further their training in this field. This certificate provides them with the opportunity to update their skills and experience, and provide excellence in psychodiagnostic assessment and treatment to school-age children. AUB is leading the way in internationally recognized practice and psychology education, and is at a unique position to respond to the increasing demand within the healthcare and educational community in Lebanon and the region.

## Courses and Certificate Structure

The program is made of 4 courses, which totals about 160 teaching hours. Two courses are designed to be didactic and two are practicum courses, of 40 contact hours each. Courses are structured in modules, whereby every module covers a range of topics. Modules are delivered on Fridays as 4-hour session or 8-hour session.

### **Course 1**

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Introduction to neuropsychology and major theories of cognitive functioning.  
Review of child psychopathology (vulnerable populations, depression, anxiety, trauma, family issues etc). Ethical issues in child psychology and assessment  
Review of child developmental psychopathology - LDs, ADHD, DCD, ASD, ID, Giftedness, and twice exceptional.  
Neuropsychology of LD in reading, writing, math, and ADHD.  
Procedures of history taking, and behavioral observations

### **Course 2**

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Procedures of testing/scoring Attention/EF; Sensory motor; Memory/Learning; Visuo-perceptual; Language/speech, and Academics.  
Case conceptualization  
Linking results to evidence-based behavioral and academic interventions  
Documentation and report writing

### **On-Site Practicum**

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Observation and direct supervision of 3 to 5 cases.  
Observation and direct supervision of 3 to 5 cases.

## Course Learning Outcomes

**By the successful completion of this course, participants will be able to demonstrate knowledge and competence in the below areas.**

1. Demonstrate understanding of major neuropsychological theories with an emphasis on CHC and the process approach to assessment.
2. Demonstrate understanding of neurodevelopmental disorders that effect school-age children, and their co-morbidities.
3. Understand basic neurocognitive markers of disorders and how they are manifested in assessments.
4. Demonstrate basic knowledge of functional neuroanatomy and its relationship to neurodevelopmental disorders in children/youth.
5. Know how to choose procedures/batteries for different types of assessment, including the right clinical interview, behavioral assessment, testing, and rating scales.
6. Demonstrate competency in technical aspects of an assessment, such as scoring, test-administration, and behavioral notes.
7. Conduct a process-oriented method for identifying children with learning disabilities
8. Synthesize results of assessment procedures into case conceptualization, diagnosis, and evidence-based recommendations.
9. Demonstrate an understanding of the limits of competence for school-based psychologist
10. Assess threats to valid assessment and appropriately minimize or avoid such threats when they arise (e.g., clinician biases, tests with poor psychometric properties, behavioral obstacles during assessment).
11. Evaluate the psychometric properties of psychological assessment measures
12. Demonstrate an appreciation of cultural and linguistic factors in the selection, use, interpretation of psychological tests and procedures.
13. Demonstrate appropriate writing skills in documenting findings of psychological assessments.
14. Demonstrate appropriate oral and clinical skills in communicating findings to patients/clients, teachers, physicians, other psychologists.
15. Demonstrate competency in case study conceptualization and integration from referral questions to intervention
16. Conduct a neuropsychological assessment and intervention model for up to three integrated case studies.

## Instructors

All instructors are experts in their subject matter, with experience in teaching and clinical supervision.



**Dr. Pia Zeinoun** is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the American University of Beirut's Department of Psychology. Clinically, Dr. Zeinoun specializes in the evaluation and treatment of children and adolescents with neurodevelopmental disorders that impact cognition, behavior and learning. She is a Clinical Associate at the Department of Psychiatry, AUBMC where she co-founded the Psychological Assessment Center and successfully directed it from 2013 to 2019. Her clinical background includes graduate training in neuropsychological assessment of children at the Johns Hopkins/Kennedy Krieger Institute in Maryland, USA, and licensure as a clinical counselor in the state of Illinois. Her research centers on the development of tests for Arabic populations to produce testing practices that are culturally-relevant and valid, especially in the measurement of personality, psychopathology in children/adolescents, and neuropsychological functions such as memory. Dr. Zeinoun has a PhD in Psychology from Tilburg University in the Netherlands, while prior to that she had a Fulbright sojourn at Illinois State University, where she obtained a master's degree in Clinical & Counseling Psychology.



**Dr. Tania Bosqui** is a Clinical Psychologist, holding a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Queens University Belfast in Northern Ireland, an MSc in Poverty Reduction and Development Management and a BSc in Psychology. She has clinical experience with children, adolescents, adults and older adults in Northern Ireland, India, the occupied Palestinian territories, the Pacific island of Guam, and Lebanon. She has taught at Queen's University Belfast and the University of Guam, and completed postdoctoral research on ethnicity, migration and childhood trauma at the Centre for Public Health and the Institute of Child Care Research at Queen's University Belfast.



**Dr. Sabine Saade** is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at AUB. Dr. Saade is a behavioral psychologist with experience in both assessment and intervention offered to individuals with developmental delays and disorders; most notably autism spectrum disorder and intellectual disability. Her research projects promote the social and educational participation of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Dr. Sabine worked on the development of an app designed to teach receptive language to children with ASD, while her postdoctoral work, for which she was awarded an excellent scholarship, evaluates the effectiveness of a training targeting teachers in order to help them integrate children with ASD in their regular classrooms.



## Instructors



Dr. Anies Al-Hroub is an Associate Professor of Education Psychology and Special Education and the former Chairperson of the Department of Education at the American University of Beirut (AUB) between 2015-2018. Currently, he is a Visiting Scholar at Renzulli Center for Creativity, Talented Development and Gifted Education at Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut. Al-Hroub completed his Ph.D. and MPhil in Special Education (Giftedness and Learning Disabilities) from the University of Cambridge and his MA (Special Education) and BA (Psychology) from the University of Jordan. He was selected as the British Academy Visiting Scholar to the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge in 2010, and a Visiting Scholar to the School of Advanced Social Studies (SASS) in Slovenia in 2017. His publications appeared in leading international gifted and special education journals in addition to three published books entitled, 'Theories and programs of education for the gifted and talented' (Shorouk, 1999), "ADHD in Lebanese schools: Diagnosis, assessment and treatment" [Springer, 2016], and "Giftedness in Lebanese Schools" [Springer, 2018]. He led a number of educational projects sponsored by UNICEF, UNRWA, UNESCO, the British Academy, USAID, World Bank, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI), and Welfare Association and served as advisor for the Asfari Foundation, the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS) at AUB, and the professional education program at Harvard Graduate School of Education.



**Ms. Rama Kanj** is an Educational Psychologist and Special Educator specialized in the assessment and intervention of children with neurodevelopmental disorders including learning disabilities. She holds a BA in Psychology, a Teaching Diploma in Special Education, and a Masters in Educational Psychology with an Emphasis in Tests and Measurements from the American University of Beirut. In 2019, she also became a Diplomate of the American Board of School Neuropsychology. Mrs. Kanj provides school neuropsychological evaluations and educational interventions at the AUBMC Psychological Assessment Center and Learning Center. Her research interests center on cross-cultural neuropsychological assessments.

## Instruction, Material, and Learning Assessment

### Teaching Methodology

Didactic courses will mainly be presented in the form of an in-class lecture and seminar, in addition to online/blended interaction. Readings will be assigned in advance, and students are expected come prepared with points of discussion. The lecture is facilitated by the instructor, but also relies on student input, and is interactive and hands-on.

Blended **learning** will be used for practicum courses, whereby students are observed and supervised in their sites, but also conduct part of their supervision and training online.

English is the language used for all instruction and assignments, and will be used to evaluate learning outcomes.

### Study Material

Students will be assigned books, articles, hand-outs, and test-manuals, by their instructors. Although most material will be available for free in electronic format or at the AUB library, some material may need to be purchased. Additionally, students will be able to see tests on campus, and access the Jafet library with their ID card.

### Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Students will be assessed based on their written assignments, class participation, case study formulation, technical testing skills, and performance in the practicum.

## Pre-requisites

This certificate is intended for those who are *already practicing* clinical psychology, educational/school psychology, neuropsychology or related disciplines, and have experience evaluating and testing school-age children, and wish to expand their clinical skills. It is *not* intended for recent graduates. To fully benefit from this program, participants must have sufficient educational and professional background, as explained below.

Have completed a Masters or PhD in educational/school psychology, clinical psychology, or equivalent from an accredited university in Lebanon or abroad. They must have completed graduate courses in the below courses.

1. Child/Adolescent Development (child & adolescent)
2. Child/Adolescent psychopathology
3. Statistics/research methods
4. Assessment of intelligence, or achievement or psychopathology
5. Clinical interventions or equivalent
6. Cognitive psychology/neuropsychology/behavioral neuroscience or equivalent

AND have at least one year of post-graduate experience directly working with “testing” school-aged children. Other candidates, may be considered on a case by case basis.

Additionally, students need to have a minimum score of 400 on the AUB EEE exam, (TOEFL: CBT 163 or IBT 57) or have graduated from an English speaking university. Those with lower scores (EEE score of 350-399, TOEFL: CBT 155 or IBT 50) can take a two courses provided that they take the EEE/TOEFL at the end of the first course and meet the minimum requirements.

## Application and admissions

The application is a two-step process. Candidates are first screened, based on their CV and cover letter, to assess whether they fit the certificate's pre-requisites. A possible interview may be required. Those that are tentatively accepted to the program, can then apply to the AUB CEC, meet English requirements, and pay registration fees.

Step 1: Send a recent CV, cover-letter, university degrees, and graduate transcript (unofficial) to [impact@aub.edu.lb](mailto:impact@aub.edu.lb). The CV or transcript should clearly show the relevant courses. In the cover-letter, the candidate should explain why this course is relevant to them, how they fit the course requirements, and how they intent to use the knowledge gained from the certificate. **Deadline to submit is January 30, 2020.**

Step 2: Applicants that are screened positively might be asked for an interview. Tentatively accepted applicants will be contacted by early February, 2020.

Step 3: Those that are tentatively accepted in the program will be asked to apply for the course with the CEC. The application can be downloaded from <https://www.aub.edu.lb/rep/cec/Documents/CECAApplication.pdf>, and emailed to [cec@aub.edu.lb](mailto:cec@aub.edu.lb), along with the following:

1. One passport-sized photograph
2. A photocopy of the identity card or passport or residence permit.
3. Copy of all university degrees.
4. A non-refundable application fee of US \$35 (50,000 LL)
5. Evidence that student meets English requirements\*, either by a) having studied at an English university or b) submitting scores on the TOEFL (CBT 163/IBT 57), or c) taking the AUB EEE\* exam and obtaining a grade of 400

## Application and admissions

Step 4: Applicants will receive an email confirming their acceptance, and will be given an AUB ID, and registered for the course. They will then proceed to pay the fees. The total cost of the certificate is 3,200 USD (or LBP equivalent)

It is important to note that submitting the application in Step 1 or Step 2, does not ensure acceptance. Admission is contingent on qualifications and availability of resources. Upon presenting the completed application with all required documentation and being admitted to your desired program of study you will receive additional instructions regarding registration procedures.

\*Applicants who need to sit for the AUB EEE should register for the test two days prior to the examination day, pay an exam fee of L.L. 50,000, and submit two passport photos and an identity card. Registration and test administration are done in Nicely Hall, Room 500.



## Integrity, Accessibility and Other Information

### **Academic Integrity**

Psychology relies on a solid code of professional conduct that stresses beneficence, nonmalificence, fidelity, responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect (APA, 2003). Students are encouraged to behave in a manner that promotes these values in the classroom. Students are expected to be honest and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity in their academic work and assignments. Students cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero for that assignment, and may be asked to drop the course. Student code of conduct in the AUB handbook will be followed.

### **Students with Disabilities**

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If students anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform the instructor during the first week of class so that options can be discussed. In order to establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodations process, students are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: [accessibility@aub.edu.lb](mailto:accessibility@aub.edu.lb); +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

### **Absenteeism Policies and Procedures**

There are no make-ups for missed classes, exams, assignments or other deliverables. A student may be excused in exceptional cases and upon the discretion of the instructor, and only if the student presents a valid documented excuse to the instructor within 72 hours of being absent.

## Integrity, Accessibility and Other Information

### **Library access**

Students enrolled in CEC courses are entitled to use the reading facilities at Jafet Library but not to check out books.

### **Graduation Requirements (Certificate and Diploma Programs)**

A certificate or a diploma is offered upon the successful completion of all the required courses with a minimum grade of 60/100 in each course, and a cumulative average of 70/100. If the academic requirements change before the student finishes a specified program of study, the student may follow the new requirements upon the approval of the program coordinator.

### **Student IDs**

CEC students are provided with AUB identification cards which they should carry while on AUB campus. In case the student loses his/her ID card that he/she gets upon registration, s/he can get a new one by paying a replacement fee.

### **AUB Rules and Regulations**

All students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations of the University.



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For more info, please send an email to [impact@aub.edu.lb](mailto:impact@aub.edu.lb) Or [cec@aub.edu.lb](mailto:cec@aub.edu.lb)



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