

## **THEORIES OF LEARNING AND LEARNING/TEACHING STYLES: SOME LINKS BETWEEN THEM**

Each of the main groups of theories of learning can be “translated” into a learning style, or a set of learning styles. Learning styles are how you learn what you learn (be it facts, figures or skills).

This “translation” is not an exact science, but you can pick out the main ideas from the theories and look at how they influence your tutor’s teaching style and own learning style. Remember that teaching and learning styles all interconnect and overlap; no one theory applies to all teaching and learning styles.

### **BEHAVIOURAL**

- Information is told to learners, who must remember facts and information. Lectures are an example of this teaching and learning style.
- Learners should understand or be comfortable with each stage of their learning (repeating it as many times as necessary), before they go onto the next stage.
- There must be goals (things to aim for) for each subject (or at each stage) in the course.
- This type of learning can be effective at an introductory level, but it does not encourage independent learning. At higher education level, therefore, this learning/teaching style is often used in conjunction with the styles outlined below

### **COGNITIVE**

- Learners should have a structured plan of learning, such as a programme of lectures for a course.
- Learners can set their own targets within the study programme delivered by their tutor, to give themselves something to aim for (an action plan).
- Learners devise their own ways of achieving their targets.
- The tutor and the learners assess the achievement of targets; for example, through discussion or assessed work.

### **SOCIAL AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL**

- Learners take responsibility for their own learning in the same way as they do in the cognitive style of learning, by setting their own targets, devising ways of achieving them, and monitoring their progress towards them. However, this is not done within a framework delivered by a tutor, as it is in the cognitive style.
- Discussion is an important way of learning; for example in class or in a study buddy group.
- Emotions and feelings have a part to play in learning.