Motivation

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Sports, Exercise and Health Science · SL

Scope and prerequisites

This handout covers selected SL topics for the course first assessed in 2026; it is not the whole syllabus.

Prerequisites: read the stated quantities and units, and use arithmetic and the model conditions below.

The examples are original and fictional: they are not real measurements or real student investigations.

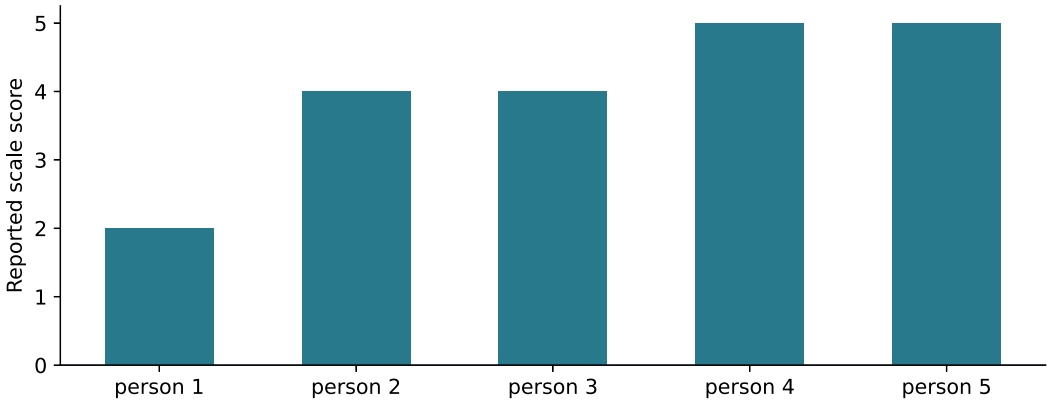
Motivation: initiation, persistence and measurement

■ What would explain this observation?

- Two players rate their motivation identically before training, yet one attends every week and one drifts away. **Motivation** covers the processes influencing initiation AND persistence, and a single rating measures only reported experience.

■ Build the model

- Motivation: the processes influencing the initiation and persistence of behaviour.
- A **self-report scale** measures reported experience under its design.
- It does not diagnose a disorder or establish a universal relationship between arousal and performance.
- Analyse within-person and between-person variation separately.
- self-report scale: A questionnaire measuring what respondents report about themselves.



■ Choose evidence that can test it

- Use anonymous voluntary questionnaires approved by the school.
- Avoid sensitive personal disclosure; allow withdrawal at any point.
- Compare the same task and the same time point; define the scale and explain its limits.

In the lab: Report the scale (items, range, what a high score means) with every result; an unexplained number is not evidence.

■ Work from known quantities

- Known: a five-point attendance-motivation scale given before each of six sessions.
- Player A: 4, 4, 3, 4, 4, 4 (within-person stable); player B: 4, 4, 3, 2, 2, 1 (within-person declining).
- The team mean at session one was 4.1; at session six, 3.2 (change in the group's mean across time).
- The interesting claim is A's stability and B's decline (within-person), not who is "more motivated".

Your turn: B's ratings decline while attendance holds. What within-person comparison would test the fatigue explanation?

■ Check the conclusion and its limits

- A scale designed for team mood does not measure individual motivation.
- Between-person differences at one time point cannot show change.

Not true: The player with the higher score is more motivated. The scores compare reported experience on one scale at one moment; persistence over weeks is a different measurement.

Key:

- Initiation and persistence are separate processes.
- Within-person and between-person variation analysed separately.
- Watch for: an unexplained scale reported as fact.