



ASSESSMENT and  
QUALIFICATIONS  
ALLIANCE

# General Certificate of Education

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## Psychology 5181/6181 *Specification A* 2009

Material accompanying this Specification

- Specimen and Past Papers and Mark Schemes
- Reports on the Examination
- Specification Support Document

# SPECIFICATION

This specification will be published annually on the AQA Website ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)). If there are any changes to the specification centres will be notified in print as well as on the Website. The version on the Website is the definitive version of the specification.

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## Background Information

### 1

## Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Specifications

### 1.1 Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

Advanced Subsidiary courses were introduced in September 2000 for the award of the first qualification in August 2001. They may be used in one of two ways:

- as a final qualification, allowing candidates to broaden their studies and to defer decisions about specialism;
- as the first half (50%) of an Advanced Level qualification, which must be completed before an Advanced Level award can be made.

Advanced Subsidiary is designed to provide an appropriate assessment of knowledge, understanding and skills expected of candidates who have completed the first half of a full Advanced Level qualification. The level of demand of the AS examination is that expected of candidates half-way through a full A Level course of study.

### 1.2 Advanced Level (AS+A2)

The Advanced Level examination is in two parts:

- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) – 50% of the total award;
- a second examination, called A2 – 50% of the total award.

Most Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level courses will be modular. The AS will comprise three teaching and learning modules and the A2 will comprise a further three teaching and learning modules. Each teaching and learning module will normally be assessed through an associated assessment unit. The specification gives details of the relationship between the modules and assessment units.

With the two-part design of Advanced Level courses, centres may devise an assessment schedule to meet their own and candidates' needs. For example:

- assessment units may be taken at stages throughout the course, at the end of each year or at the end of the total course;
- AS may be completed at the end of one year and A2 by the end of the second year;
- AS and A2 may be completed at the end of the same year.

Details of the availability of the assessment units for each specification are provided in Section 3.

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# Specification at a Glance

## Psychology

at Advanced Level

<b>Advanced Subsidiary Award</b>
5181



AS Examination 5181	
<b>Unit 1</b>	
1 hour	33.33% of the total AS marks 16.67% of the total A Level marks
2 structured questions chosen from 4: Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology (candidates must answer one from each section).	
<b>Unit 2</b>	
1 hour	33.33% of the total AS marks 16.67% of the total A Level marks
2 structured questions chosen from 4: Physiological Psychology, Individual Differences (candidates must answer one from each section).	
<b>Unit 3</b>	
1 hour	33.33% of the total AS marks 16.67% of the total A Level marks
1 structured question chosen from 2: Social Psychology. 1 short answer question: Research Methods.	



<b>Advanced Award</b>
6181



A2 Examination 6181	
<b>Unit 4</b>	
1½ hours	15% of the total A Level marks
3 essays: 1 essay chosen from 3 in each of: Social Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Comparative Psychology (no more than two questions from each section).	
<b>Unit 5</b>	
2 hours	20% of the total A Level marks (20% synoptic)
Individual Differences: 1 essay chosen from 3. Plus Perspectives: Issues & debates 1 essay chosen from 4; Approaches: 1 structured question chosen from 2.	
<b>Unit 6</b>	
Coursework	15% of the total A Level marks
1 report of an investigation, 2000 words maximum, centre-assessed and AQA-moderated.	

## 3

## Availability of Assessment Units and Entry Details

### 3.1 Availability of Assessment Units/Papers

Examinations based on this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of Units		Availability of Qualification	
	AS	A2	AS	A Level
January	1, 2, 3	4, 5, 6	✓	✓
June	1, 2, 3	4, 5, 6	✓	✓

Resit opportunities for externally assessed A2 units will be available in January 2010. Details of the arrangements have been provided to centres through the JCQ notice [Withdrawal of Curriculum 2000 Specifications](#).

### 3.2 Sequencing of Units

In Psychology, Units 1, 2 and 3 may be taken in any order but must be taken prior to or at the same time as Units 4, 5 and 6. Unit 5 includes the synoptic assessment of the whole A Level course testing candidates' understanding and critical appreciation of the breadth of theoretical and methodological approaches in Psychology.

### 3.3 Entry Codes

Normal entry requirements apply, but the following information should be noted.

The following unit entry codes should be used:

AS	A2
Unit 1 - PYA1	Unit 4 - PYA4
Unit 2 - PYA2	Unit 5 - PYA5
Unit 3 - PYA3	Unit 6 - PYA6

The **Subject Code** for entry to the AS only award is 5181.

The **Subject Code** for entry to the Advanced Level is 6181.

Subject entries for Advanced Level will be accepted only if a previous or concurrent entry has been made for AS 5181.

### 3.4 Classification Codes

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this specification is 4850.

### 3.5 Private Candidates

For Specification A, the AS specification only is available to private candidates. The A2 specification is not available to private candidates, except in the following situations:

- where candidates have already received a result for the coursework unit, entry for the coursework option may be made;
- where an AS/A2 award has already been made within 12 months, the coursework unit result may be carried forward for one year if the rest of the qualification is being taken.

Private candidates should write to AQA for a copy of “Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates”.

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### 3.6 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

AQA pays due regard to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in its administration of this specification.

Arrangements may be made to enable candidates with disabilities or other difficulties to access the assessment. An example of an access arrangement is the production of a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment. Special consideration may be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances.

Further details can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document:

*Access Arrangements and Special Consideration*

*Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examination*

*GCE, AEA, VCE, GCSE, GNVQ, Entry Level & Key Skills.*

This document can be viewed via the AQA website site ([www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk))

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

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### 3.7 Language of Examinations

All Assessment Units in this subject are provided in English only.

# Scheme of Assessment

## 4

### Introduction

This GCE Psychology specification complies with:

- the GCSE, GCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice April 2007
- the Subject Criteria for Psychology
- the GCE Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Qualification – Specific Criteria
- the arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Common Criteria.

This specification has been designed to develop breadth of knowledge, critical thinking skills and an appreciation of the relationships between different aspects of the subject. It encourages candidates to take a broad view of Psychology by covering all core areas within AS whilst allowing for the study of some of the core areas in greater depth in A2.

AQA is offering two Psychology specifications. Specification A is developed from the previous AEB syllabus and Specification B from the previous NEAB syllabus, in order to ensure as much continuity as possible. The two specifications are similar in that they cover the five broad areas of Psychology as required but a distinctiveness has been developed in the breadth and depth of treatment in similar subject content, and in the context of, and approach to, certain topics.

Different applications have been used to exemplify core areas, there are differences in the choice of material covered in A2 and the style of assessment also varies across the two specifications.

Specification A adopts a more traditional approach to the five core areas specified by the subject criteria; Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences. Consistency in these core areas has been maintained with the AEB syllabus as far as possible. Specification B maintains much of the content from the NEAB syllabus and approaches Psychology from a much more applied perspective, using contemporary areas such as Sport Psychology and Cognition and Law. Although there are many overlaps between the two specifications in terms of the content covered in the main core areas, research methods and perspectives in Psychology, distinctiveness is marked in terms of the topic areas selected and the studies used to illustrate them.

**Rationale**

This specification lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Psychology or related subjects in higher education. In addition, it provides a worthwhile course for candidates of various ages and from diverse backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning. Equally, material studied would be useful for candidates intending to pursue business careers.

**Prior level of attainment and recommended prior learning**

This specification is suitable for the diverse range of candidates who wish to develop their interest and enjoyment in Psychology, fostering its value in lifelong learning.

It is not necessary for candidates to have studied GCSE Psychology before commencing work on this specification and no prior knowledge of Psychology is necessary. It is desirable for candidates to have achieved Grades A-C in GCSE, or the equivalent, in English and Mathematics before commencing this specification, though no formal qualification is required.

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**5**

## Aims

*At AS and A Level* This specification in Psychology encourages candidates to:

- a. study psychological theories, research, terminology, concepts, studies and methods.
- b. develop skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation.
- c. develop an understanding of different areas of Psychology, including the core areas of Cognitive, Social, Developmental, Physiological Psychology and Individual Differences and Research Methods.
- d. design and report psychological investigations, and analyse and interpret data.
- e. develop an understanding of ethical issues in Psychology, including the ethical implications of psychological research.

*At A Level* In addition, this A level specification in Psychology:

- a. includes the study of psychological principles, perspectives and applications.
- b. enables candidates to explore and understand the relationship between psychological knowledge, theories and methodology and their relationship to social, cultural, scientific and contemporary issues.
- c. enables the development of critical and evaluative skills in relation to theory, empirical studies and methods of research in Psychology.
- d. enables candidates to have an understanding and critical appreciation of the breadth of theoretical and methodological approaches in Psychology.

## 6

## Assessment Objectives

All candidates are required to meet the following assessment objectives. The assessment objectives are to be weighted as indicated in Sections 7.2 and 8.4.

At A level candidates are required to demonstrate both their knowledge and understanding and their ability to analyse in greater depth and to a wider range of content than at AS.

Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. This specification requires candidates to demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed.

<p><b>6.1</b> Knowledge and Understanding (A01) in AS</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of psychological theories, terminology, concepts, studies and methods in the core areas of Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Individual Differences, Physiological Psychology, Research Methods, and communicate their knowledge and understanding of Psychology in a clear and effective manner.</p>
<p><b>6.2</b> Analyse and Evaluate (A02) in AS</p>	<p>Analyse and evaluate psychological theories, concepts, studies and methods in the core areas of Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Individual Differences, Physiological Psychology and Research Methods, and communicate knowledge and understanding of Psychology in a clear and effective manner.</p>
<p><b>6.3</b> Design, Conduct and Report (A03) in AS and A2</p>	<p>Design, conduct and report psychological investigation(s) choosing from a range of methods, and taking into account the issues of reliability, validity and ethics, and collect and draw conclusions from data.</p>
<p><b>6.4</b> Knowledge and Understanding (A01) in A2</p>	<p>Knowledge and understanding of psychological principles, perspectives and applications in knowledge and understanding of some of the core areas (from Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Comparative Psychology and Individual Differences), and communicative knowledge and understanding of Psychology in a clear and effective manner.</p>
<p><b>6.5</b> Analyse and Evaluate (A02) in A2</p>	<p>Analyse and evaluate psychological principles, perspectives and applications in some of the core areas (from Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Comparative Psychology and Individual Differences), and communicative knowledge and understanding of Psychology in a clear and effective manner.</p>

## 6.6 Quality of Written Communication

The quality of written communication is assessed in all AS and A2 assessment units where candidates are required to produce extended written material. Candidates will be assessed according to their ability to:

- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and complex subject matter;
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate;
- ensure text is legible, and spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

Quality of written communication is assessed by assessment objectives one and two in every unit throughout AS and A2 in the form of discrete marks, except in coursework (Unit 6) where it is incorporated into the assessment criteria for Report Style (H).

## 7

## Scheme of Assessment – Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

The Scheme of Assessment has a modular structure. The Advanced Subsidiary (AS) award comprises three compulsory assessment units which assess the teaching and learning modules described in the subject content as shown below.

### 7.1 Assessment

Unit 1 <i>33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% of the total AS marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
<p>This unit will be divided into two, equally weighted sections.</p> <p><u>Section A</u> Cognitive Psychology: Memory.</p> <p><u>Section B</u> Developmental Psychology: Attachments in development.</p> <p>There will be <b>two</b> structured questions in each section, of which candidates must answer <b>one from each section</b>.</p>		
Unit 2 <i>33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% of the total AS marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
<p><u>Section A</u> Physiological Psychology: Stress.</p> <p><u>Section B</u> Individual Differences: Abnormality.</p> <p>There will be <b>two</b> structured questions in each section, of which candidates must answer <b>one from each section</b>.</p>		
Unit 3 <i>33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% of the total AS marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
<p><u>Section A</u> Social Psychology: Social influence.</p> <p>There will be <b>two</b> structured questions, of which candidates must answer <b>one</b>.</p> <p><u>Section B</u> Research Methods</p> <p>There will be <b>one</b> short-answer question. Stimulus material may be included in this question. The questions will focus upon issues related to designing, conducting and reporting psychological investigations (assessing AO1, AO2 and AO3, see sections 6.1 to 6.3).</p>		

**7.3 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for AS**

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AO's) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)			Overall Weighting of AO's (%)
	1	2	3	
Knowledge and Understanding (AO1)	20.4	20.4	12.4	53.2
Analysis and Evaluation (AO2)	12.9	12.9	10.2	36.0
Designing, Conducting and Reporting (AO3)	0.0	0.0	10.7	10.7
<b>Overall Weighting of Units (%)</b>	33.3	33.3	33.3	100.0

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

## 8

## Scheme of Assessment – Advanced Level (AS+A2)

The Scheme of Assessment has a modular structure. The A Level award comprises three compulsory assessment units from the AS Scheme of Assessment and three compulsory assessment units from the A2 Scheme of Assessment. These assessment units assess the teaching and learning modules described in the subject content as shown below.

The details of the AS Assessment Units are given in Section 7 above and comprise the following three units:

8.1 AS Assessment Units	Unit 1 <i>16<math>\frac{2}{3}</math>% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
	Unit 2 <i>16<math>\frac{2}{3}</math>% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
	Unit 3 <i>16<math>\frac{2}{3}</math>% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Unit 62 marks	1 hour
8.2 Assessment	Unit 4 <i>15% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Unit 76 marks	1½ hours
	<p><u>Section A</u> Social Psychology  <u>Section B</u> Physiological Psychology  <u>Section C</u> Cognitive Psychology  <u>Section D</u> Developmental Psychology  <u>Section E</u> Comparative Psychology</p> <p>Each section will contain <b>three</b> essay questions, one on each sub-section of the subject content. Candidates must answer <b>three</b> questions, from at least <b>two</b> different sections.</p>		
	Unit 5 <i>20% of the total A Level marks</i>	Written Unit 94 marks	2 hours
<p>The synoptic element will be assessed in both assessment objectives one and two on all of the questions on this paper of these subject areas.</p> <p><u>Section A</u> will comprise <b>three</b> essay questions, one from each sub-section of the subject content. Candidates must answer <b>one</b>.</p> <p><u>Section B</u> – Perspectives – will comprise a choice of <b>one</b> essay from four. There will be <b>two</b> essay questions from the Issues section and <b>two</b> essay questions from the Debates section.</p> <p><u>Section C</u> – Perspectives – will comprise <b>two</b> structured questions concerning approaches in Psychology, of which the candidate must answer <b>one</b>. The questions will focus on a novel situation presented in the stimulus material included.</p>			

**Unit 6**

**15% of the total A Level marks**

**Coursework**

**60 marks**

This coursework component will be based upon assessment of the *Project Brief* and report of **one** psychological investigation. A report should not exceed **2000** words in length excluding the *Project Brief*, tables, figures and appendices. The assessment will be carried out by the centre and will be subject to moderation by the Board. The assessment criteria will provide an additional 6% synoptic assessment within the initial *Project Brief*.

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### 8.3 Synoptic Assessment

The Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level Criteria state that A Level specifications must include synoptic assessment (representing at least 20% of the total A Level marks).

In Psychology, synoptic assessment is taken to mean candidates having an understanding and critical appreciation of the breadth of theoretical and methodological approaches in Psychology.

In particular this means:

- linkages between different approaches and perspectives in Psychology and/or psychological applications;
- appreciation of the appropriateness of different methodologies in Psychology to the investigation of issues and problems.

The synoptic element will be assessed through assessment objectives one and two in each of the sections in Unit 5.

In, Unit 6 Coursework, 6% of synoptic assessment will be available within the *Project Brief* proposal form.

In summary:

**Unit 5 (PYA5):** 20% of the total A Level.

**Unit 6, Coursework (PYA6):** 6% of the total A Level.

#### 8.4 Weighting of Assessment Objectives for A Level

The approximate relationship between the relative percentage weighting of the Assessment Objectives (AO's) and the overall Scheme of Assessment is shown in the following table.

##### A Level Assessment Units (AS + A2)

Assessment Objectives	Unit Weightings (%)						Overall Weighting of AO's (%)
	1	2	3	4	5	6 <sup>†</sup>	
Knowledge and Understanding (AO1)	10.2	10.2	6.2	7.8	9.6	2.25	46.2
Analysis and Evaluation (AO2)	6.5	6.5	5.1	7.2	10.4	6.75	42.4
Designing, Conducting and Reporting (AO3)	0.0	0.0	5.4	0.0	0.0	6.0	11.4
<b>Overall Weighting of Units (%)</b>	16.67	16.67	16.67	15.0	20.0	15.0	100.0

Candidates' marks for each assessment unit are scaled to achieve the correct weightings.

<sup>†</sup>Centre-assessed

# Subject Content

## 9 Summary of Subject Content

### 9.1 Introduction

This specification in Psychology is designed to develop candidates' basic understanding of the breadth of different approaches in Psychology. Through the study of psychological theories, concepts and research, candidates will develop an understanding of the principles and perspectives governing the subject. Candidates will develop the ability to identify ethical issues, apply Psychology to cultural, social and contemporary issues and use a range of research methods to investigate psychological issues.

The subject content in AS is divided into the five core areas of Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Individual Differences and Social Psychology plus Research Methods, intended to give candidates a broad base of understanding of Psychology. In A2 there is the opportunity for candidates to further develop their knowledge and understanding, as well as their evaluative and analytical skills (of some of the core areas). In addition to these core areas Comparative Psychology is offered as an optional content area in A2 Unit 4.

The importance of the practical aspects of Psychology is reflected in the application of knowledge to critical issues in each of the five AS core areas, the study of a range of research methods (AS) and their application within a coursework investigation (A2). The synoptic assessment in the Perspectives section in A2 tests the ability of the candidate to use different explanations to analyse psychological issues or debates, or a novel situation, or psychological phenomena.

Where 'e.g.' appears in the subject content examples of material are given as *guidance only* to teachers. Specific questions will *not* be asked on this material.

Where 'including' appears in the subject content specific questions may be asked on the material which follows.

Other instances of information in parentheses indicate the author of a particular theory/model or an alternative name/phrase for the phenomenon described.

### 9.2 AS Modules

#### MODULE 1 – Cognitive and Developmental Psychology

##### **Cognitive Psychology**

Human Memory: short-term memory and long-term memory; remembering and forgetting; Critical issue – eyewitness testimony.

##### **Developmental Psychology**

Attachments in Development: the development and variety of attachments; deprivation and privation; Critical issue - day care.

**MODULE 2 – Physiological Psychology and Individual Differences****Physiological Psychology**

Stress: stress as a bodily response; sources of stress; Critical issue – stress management.

**Individual Differences**

Abnormality: defining psychological abnormality; biological and psychological models of abnormality; Critical issue – eating disorders.

**MODULE 3 – Social Psychology and Research Methods****Social Psychology**

Social influence: majority and minority influence; obedience to authority; Critical issue - ethical issues in psychological research.

**Research Methods**

Quantitative and qualitative research methods; research design and implementation; data analysis.

**9.3 A2 Modules****MODULE 4 – Social Psychology, Physiological Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Comparative Psychology**

*A choice from*

**Social Psychology**

Social cognition; Relationships; Pro- and anti-social behaviour.

**Physiological Psychology**

Brain and behaviour; Biological rhythms, sleep and dreaming; Motivation and emotion.

**Cognitive Psychology**

Attention and pattern recognition; Perceptual processes and development; Language and thought.

**Developmental Psychology**

Cognitive development; Social and personality development; Adulthood.

**Comparative Psychology**

Determinants of animal behaviour; Animal cognition; Evolutionary explanations of human behaviour.

**MODULE 5 – Individual Differences and Perspectives****Individual Differences**

Issues in the classification and diagnosis of psychological abnormality; Psychopathology; Treating mental disorders.

*Plus*

**Perspectives**

Issues/debates in Psychology; Approaches in Psychology to a novel situation or psychological phenomenon presented in stimulus material.

**MODULE 6 – Coursework**

Planning an investigation (*Project Brief*), reporting the investigation (**Report**).

# AS Module 1

## Cognitive and Developmental Psychology

Candidates will be expected to have a general awareness of research findings in the areas covered by the specification. They will be expected to know *specific* details of studies (i.e. basic aims, procedures, findings, conclusions and at least one point of evaluation) only where the term ‘research’ occurs in the specification content. The list of such studies for Unit 1 is as follows:

### Cognitive

- A study into the nature of STM (e.g. Peterson & Peterson, 1959)
- A study into the nature of LTM (e.g. Bahrick *et al*, 1975)
- A study of reconstructive memory (e.g. Bartlett, 1932)
- A study into the role of leading questions in EWT (e.g. Loftus & Palmer, 1974)

### Developmental

- A study of individual differences in attachments (e.g. Ainsworth & Bell, 1971)
- A study of cross-cultural variations in attachments (e.g. Van Ijzendoorn & Kroonenberg, 1988)
- A study into the effects of privation (e.g. Hodges & Tizard, 1989)

## 10.1 Cognitive Psychology

### Human memory

#### a. Short-term memory and long-term memory

Research into the nature of short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory (LTM) (e.g. encoding, capacity and duration). The multi-store model of memory (Atkinson & Shiffrin) and at least one alternative to this (e.g. working memory: Baddeley & Hitch; levels of processing: Craik & Lockhart).

#### b. Remembering and Forgetting

Explanations of forgetting in short-term memory (e.g. decay and displacement). Explanations of forgetting in long-term memory (e.g. retrieval failure and interference). The role of emotional factors in memory, including flashbulb memories and repression (e.g. Freud).

### Critical issue: eyewitness testimony

Research into reconstructive memory (e.g. Bartlett). Memory research into eyewitness testimony (e.g. Loftus), including the role of leading questions.

**10.2 Developmental Psychology****Attachments in development****a.** The development and variety of attachments

Stages in the formation of attachments (e.g. Schaffer). Research into individual differences in attachment, including secure and insecure attachments (e.g. Ainsworth) and cross-cultural variations. Explanations of attachment (e.g. learning theory, Bowlby's theory).

**b.** Deprivation and privation

Bowlby's maternal deprivation hypothesis, including evidence which supports the hypothesis. Research into the effects of privation (e.g. studies of extreme privation and institutionalisation), including the extent to which the effects of privation can be reversed.

**Critical issue: day care**

The effects of day care on children's cognitive and social development.

**11****AS Module 2****Physiological Psychology and Individual Differences**

Candidates will be expected to have a general awareness of research findings in the areas covered by the specification. They will be expected to know specific details of studies (i.e. basic aims, procedures, findings, conclusions and at least one point of evaluation) only where the term 'research' occurs in the specification content. The list of such studies for Unit 2 is as follows:

**Physiological**

- A study into the relationship between stress and cardiovascular disorders (e.g. Friedman & Rosenman, 1974)
- A study into the relationship between stress and the immune system (e.g. Kiecolt-Glaser *et al*, 1995)
- A study into life changes as a source of stress (e.g. Rahe *et al*, 1970)
- A study into workplace stressors (e.g. Marmot *et al*, 1997)

**Individual Differences**

- A study into biological explanations of eating disorders (e.g. Holland *et al*, 1988)
- A study into psychological explanations of eating disorders (e.g. Field *et al*, 1999)

## 11.1 Physiological Psychology

### Stress

#### a. Stress as a bodily response

The body's response to stressors (e.g. pituitary-adrenal system); the General Adaptation Syndrome (Selye). Research into the relationship between stress and cardiovascular disorders and the effects of stress on the immune system.

#### b. Sources of stress

Research into sources of stress, including life changes (e.g. Holmes & Rahe), and workplace stressors (e.g. Johansson, Marmot). Individual differences in modifying the effects of stressors, including the roles played by personality (e.g. Type A behaviour, hardy personality) and gender (e.g. physiological reactivity, social support).

### Critical issue: stress management

Approaches to managing the negative effects of stress, including physiological (e.g. drugs, biofeedback) and psychological methods (e.g. stress-inoculation, increasing hardiness). The strengths and weaknesses of methods of stress management.

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## 11.2 Individual Differences

### Abnormality

#### a. Defining psychological abnormality

Definitions of abnormality: Statistical infrequency, deviation from social norms, failure to function adequately, and deviation from ideal mental health. Limitations associated with these definitions of psychological abnormality (e.g. cultural relativism).

#### b. Biological and psychological models of abnormality

Assumptions made by biological (medical) and psychological (including psychodynamic, behavioural and cognitive) models of abnormality in relation to the causes of abnormality.

### Critical issue: eating disorders

The clinical characteristics of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. Explanations of these eating disorders in terms of biological and psychological models of abnormality, including research studies on which these explanations are based.

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## AS Module 3

# Social Psychology and Research Methods

Candidates will be expected to have a general awareness of research findings in the areas covered by the specification. They will be expected to know specific details of studies (i.e. basic aims, procedures, findings, conclusions and at least one point of evaluation) only where the term ‘research’ occurs in the specification content. The list of such studies for Unit 3 is as follows:

### Social

- A study into conformity (e.g. Asch, 1951 and Perrin & Spencer, 1980)
- A study into minority influence (e.g. Moscovici *et al*, 1969 & Nemeth *et al*, 1974)
- A study into obedience to authority (e.g. Milgram, 1963 and Meeus & Raaijmakers, 1995)

### 12.1 Social Psychology

#### Social influence

#### a. Majority and minority influence

Research studies into majority (conformity) and minority influence. Explanations of why people yield to majority and minority influence.

#### b. Obedience to authority

Research studies into obedience to authority. Issues of internal and external validity associated with such research. Explanations of why people obey and how people might resist obedience.

#### Critical issue: Ethical issues in psychological research

Ethical issues surrounding the use of deception, informed consent and the protection of participants from psychological harm, including the relevance of these issues in the context of social influence research. Ways in which psychologists deal with these issues (e.g. through the use of ethical guidelines, ethical committees).

## 12.2 Research Methods

### Quantitative and qualitative research methods

It is anticipated that some of the material for this section will be taught in association with other specification sections.

The nature and usage of the following research methods and their advantages and weaknesses and how they relate to the scientific nature of Psychology. The nature and usage of ethical guidelines in Psychology.

- a. Experiments (including laboratory, field and natural experiments).
- b. Investigations using correlational analysis.
- c. Naturalistic observations.

Questionnaires.

- e. Interviews.

### Research design and implementation

- a. Aims and hypotheses (including the generation of appropriate aims; the formulation of different types of the experimental/alternative hypothesis (directional/non-directional)).

- b. Experimental design: independent groups, repeated measures and matched participants. The design of naturalistic observations, questionnaires and interviews.

- c. Factors associated with research design, including the operationalisation of the IV/DV; conducting pilot studies; control of extraneous variables; ways of assessing and improving reliability and internal and external validity. Ethical issues associated with research design and ways of dealing with them.

- d. The selection of participants including random, opportunity and volunteer sampling.

- e. The relationship between researchers and participants (including demand characteristics and investigator effects).

### Data analysis

- a. The nature of qualitative data including strengths and weaknesses.

- b. Measures of central tendency and dispersion (including the appropriate use and interpretation of medians, means, modes, ranges and standard deviations).

- c. The nature of positive and negative correlations and the interpretation of correlation coefficients.

- d. Graphs and charts, including the appropriate use and interpretation of histograms, bar charts and scattergraphs.

**13**

## A2 Module 4

# Social, Physiological, Cognitive, Developmental and Comparative Psychology

### 13.1 Social Psychology

#### Social cognition

**a.** Attribution of causality

Theories (e.g. Kelley, Jones and Davis, Weiner) and research studies relating to the attribution of causality. Explanations and research studies relating to errors and biases in the attribution process (e.g. self-serving bias, fundamental attribution error).

**b.** Social perception

Social and cultural influences on the perception of the social world, including social representations theory (Moscovici) and social/cultural stereotyping.

**c.** Prejudice

Theories of the origins of prejudice (e.g. realistic conflict theory, social identity theory). Explanations and research studies relating to the reduction of prejudice (e.g. contact hypothesis, pursuit of common goals).

#### Relationships

**a.** Attraction and the formation of relationships

Explanations and research studies relating to interpersonal attraction (e.g. evolutionary explanations, matching hypothesis). Theories relating to the formation/maintenance of relationships (e.g. reward/need satisfaction, social exchange theory).

**b.** Love and the breakdown of relationships

Psychological explanations of love (e.g. triangular theory, love as attachment). Explanations (e.g. Lee, Duck) and research studies relating to the breakdown of relationships.

c. Cultural and sub-cultural differences in relationships.

Explanations and research studies relating to the nature of relationships in different cultures (e.g. voluntary/involuntary, permanent/impermanent types of relationships). ‘Understudied’ relationships such as gay and lesbian and mediated relationships (e.g. relationships formed on the Internet and text [SMS] relationships).

**Pro- and anti-social behaviour**

a. Nature and causes of aggression

Social psychological theories of aggression (e.g. social learning theory, deindividuation). Research into the effects of environmental stressors on aggressive behaviour (e.g. heat, noise, crowding).

b. Altruism and bystander behaviour

Explanations (e.g. empathy-altruism, Latané and Darley’s decision model) and research studies relating to human altruism/bystander behaviour. Cultural differences in pro-social behaviour.

c. Media influences on pro- and anti-social behaviour

Explanations and research studies relating to media influences on pro-social behaviour. Explanations and research studies relating to media influences on anti-social behaviour.

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**13.2 Physiological Psychology**

**Brain and Behaviour**

a. Methods of investigating the brain

Nature of methods used to investigate the brain, including invasive (e.g. electrical/chemical stimulation, ablation, and lesioning) and non-invasive (e.g. electrical recording, scanning and imaging) methods. Strengths and limitations of these methods.

b. Localisation of function in the cerebral cortex

The functional organisation of the cerebral cortex, including the primary motor, sensory and association areas (e.g. Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas). ‘Distributed functions’ as an alternative to localisation of function.

c. Lateralisation of function in the cerebral cortex

Lateralisation of function in the cerebral cortex, including the organisation of language in the brain and other hemisphere asymmetries of function (e.g. Sperry’s research on the ‘split-brain’).

**Biological rhythms,  
sleep and dreaming****a. Biological rhythms**

Research into circadian, infradian, and ultradian rhythms, including the role of endogenous pacemakers and of exogenous zeitgebers. The consequences of disrupting biological rhythms (e.g. shift work, jet lag).

**b. Sleep**

Theories and research studies relating to the functions of sleep, including ecological (e.g. Webb, Meddis) and restoration (e.g. Oswald, Horne) accounts. The implications of findings from studies of sleep deprivation for such theories.

**c. Dreaming**

Research relating to the nature of dreams (e.g. content, duration, type of dream). Theories of the functions of dreaming, including neurobiological (e.g. Hobson and McCarley, Crick and Mitchison) and psychological (e.g. Freud, Webb and Cartwright) accounts.

**Motivation and emotion****a. Brain mechanisms of motivation**

Theories and research studies relating to the role of brain structures (e.g. hypothalamus) in motivational states (e.g. hunger and thirst).

**b. Theories of motivation**

Physiological (e.g. homeostatic drive theory), psychological (e.g. expectancy theory), and combined physiological/psychological (e.g. drive-reduction theory) approaches to explaining motivation.

**c. Emotion**

The role of brain structures (e.g. hypothalamus, limbic system, cerebral cortex) in emotion. Physiological (e.g. James-Lange theory) and combined physiological/psychological (e.g. Schachter's cognitive labelling theory) approaches to explaining emotional behaviour and experience.

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**13.3 Cognitive Psychology****Attention and pattern  
recognition****a. Selective attention**

Studies of selective (focused) attention (e.g. Cherry, Broadbent). Explanations of selective attention, including early-selection (e.g. Broadbent, Treisman) and late-selection models (e.g. Deutsch and Deutsch).

- b. Divided attention**
- Explanations of divided attention (e.g. Kahneman’s capacity/resource allocation model). Research into controlled and automatic processing, including slips associated with automatic processing (performance deficits).
- c. Pattern recognition**
- Explanations of pattern recognition (e.g. template and feature detection theories), including the role of biological mechanisms (e.g. Hubel & Wiesel) and of context (e.g. top-down vs. bottom-up processing). Theories of face recognition (e.g. Bruce & Young, Valentine).
- Perceptual processes and development**
- a. The visual system**
- Structure and functions of the visual system: the eye, retina and visual pathways. Research into the nature of visual information processing (e.g. sensory adaptation and the processing of contrast, colour and features).
- b. Perceptual organisation**
- Theories of visual perception, including constructivist theories (e.g. Gregory) and direct theories (e.g. Gibson). Explanations of perceptual organisation (e.g. depth, movement, constancies and illusions).
- c. Perceptual development**
- Explanations of perceptual development, including the nature-nurture debate in perception. Studies of the development of perceptual abilities (e.g. depth/distance, visual constancies), including infant and cross-cultural studies.
- Language and thought**
- a. Language and culture**
- Research into the relationship between language and thought, including the linguistic relativity hypothesis. Investigations into the social/cultural aspects of language use (e.g. Bernstein, Labov).
- b. Language acquisition**
- Research into the process of language acquisition. Explanations of language development, including environmental (e.g. learning) and nativist theories (e.g. Chomsky).

c. Problem-solving and decision-making

Research into problem-solving, including problem solving strategies (e.g. Gestalt approaches, means-ends analysis). Research into decision-making, including risk taking behaviour and errors in thinking about probability (e.g. role of availability and similarity).

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**13.4 Developmental Psychology**

**Cognitive development**

a. Development of thinking

Theories of cognitive development, including Piaget and Vygotsky. Applications of these theories (e.g. to education).

b. Development of measured intelligence

Research into factors associated with the development of measured intelligence, including the role of genetics and environmental factors (e.g. cultural differences).

c. Development of moral understanding

Theories of moral understanding/pro-social reasoning (e.g. Kohlberg, Eisenberg), including the influence of gender (e.g. Gilligan) and cultural variations in moral understanding/pro-social reasoning.

**Social and personality development**

a. Personality development

Psychodynamic (e.g. Freud, Erikson) and social learning (e.g. Bandura, Mischel) explanations of personality development.

b. Gender development

Explanations of the development of gender identity/gender roles (e.g. social learning theories, cognitive-developmental theories).

c. Adolescence

Research into social development in adolescence, including the formation of identity (e.g. Marcia). Research into relationships with parents and peers during adolescence and cultural differences in adolescent behaviour.

**Adulthood**

a. Early and middle adulthood

Theories of development in early/middle adulthood (e.g. Levinson, Gould), including evidence for the existence of crises and transitions.

**b. Family and relationships in adulthood**

Research into the effects of marriage, divorce and parenthood on the individual, including gender and/or cultural differences.

**c. Late adulthood**

Explanations of adjustment to old age (e.g. social disengagement theory), including the effects of retirement on the individual in late adulthood. Coping with bereavement (e.g. Kübler-Ross), including cultural differences.

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### 13.5 Comparative Psychology

**Determinants of animal behaviour**

**a. Evolutionary explanations of animal behaviour**

Evolutionary explanations of the behaviour of non-human animals. Biological explanations of apparent altruism in non-human animals (e.g. kin selection, reciprocal altruism).

**b. Classical and operant conditioning**

The nature of classical and operant conditioning and their role in the behaviour of non-human animals.

**c. Social learning in non-human animals**

Explanations and research studies relating to the role of social learning in the behaviour of non-human animals (e.g. foraging, hunting in groups, imitation). Evidence for intelligence in non-human animals (e.g. self-recognition, Machiavellian intelligence).

**Animal cognition**

**a. Animal navigation**

Explanations and research studies into animal navigation, including homing and migration.

**b. Animal communication and language**

Explanations of the use of different signalling systems in non-human animals (e.g. visual, auditory and olfactory communication). Research studies of language in non-human animals (e.g. attempts to teach language to animals and studies of natural animal language).

**c. Memory**

Explanations and research studies of memory in non-human animals including the role of memory in navigation (eg spatial memory) and foraging (eg food caching) behaviour.

**Evolutionary explanations  
of human behaviour**

- a.** Human reproductive behaviour  
The relationship between sexual selection and human reproductive behaviour including evolutionary explanations of parental investment (eg sex differences, parent-offspring conflict).
  
- b.** Evolutionary explanations of mental disorders  
Evolutionary explanations of human mental disorders including depression (e.g. unipolar and bipolar depression) and anxiety disorders (e.g. phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder).
  
- c.** Evolution of intelligence  
Evolutionary factors in the development of human intelligence (e.g. ecological demands, social complexity). The relationship between brain size and intelligence (e.g. the adaptive value of large brains, comparative studies across species).

## A2 Module 5

# Individual Differences and Perspectives

### 14.1 Definitions of synoptic assessment

In this psychology specification, synoptic assessment is taken to mean candidates having an understanding and critical appreciation of the breadth of theoretical and methodological *approaches, issues and debates* in psychology. By the end of the A2 course, candidates will have acquired an overview of these approaches, issues and debates, on which this part of the specification will be assessed.

The Unit 5 question paper is made up of three sections

Section A: Individual differences.

Section B: Perspectives: Issues and debates in psychology.

Section C: Perspectives: Approaches in psychology.

Candidates will have to answer **three** questions, one from each section. Each question is worded such that effective responses will evidence synopticity.

### 14.2 Individual Differences Issues in the classification and diagnosis of psychological abnormality

Classificatory systems

- a. ICD and DSM as alternative approaches to the classification of psychological abnormality. Research into the reliability and validity of classification and diagnosis (e.g. Rosenhan).
- b. Dissociative Identity Disorder (Multiple Personality Disorder)  
Case studies of dissociative identity disorder (e.g. Thigpen & Cleckley.) Research into dissociative identity disorder as a spontaneous or iatrogenic (manufactured by the therapist) phenomenon.
- c. Culture-bound syndromes  
Syndromes apparently bound by culture (e.g. Koro, Dhat). Arguments for and against the existence of these culture-bound syndromes.

**Psychopathology****a. Schizophrenia**

Clinical characteristics of schizophrenia. Biological (e.g. genetics, biochemistry) and psychological (e.g. social and family relationships) explanations of schizophrenia, including the evidence on which they are based.

**b. Depression**

Clinical characteristics of depression (e.g. bipolar disorder, unipolar disorder). Biological (e.g. genetics, biochemistry) and psychological (e.g. learned helplessness) explanations of depression, including the evidence on which they are based.

**c. Anxiety disorders**

Clinical characteristics of any **one** anxiety disorder (e.g. post-traumatic stress disorder, phobic disorder(s), obsessive-compulsive disorder). Biological (e.g. genetics, biochemistry) and psychological (e.g. conditioning) explanations of the chosen disorder, including the evidence on which they are based.

**Treating mental disorders****a. Biological (somatic) therapies**

Biological therapies including chemotherapy, ECT, and psychosurgery. Issues surrounding the use of such therapies (e.g. appropriateness and effectiveness).

**b. Behavioural therapies**

Behavioural therapies, including those based on classical (e.g. flooding) and operant (e.g. token economies) conditioning. Issues surrounding the use of such therapies (e.g. appropriateness and effectiveness).

**c. Alternatives to biological and behavioural therapies**

Therapies derived from *either* the psychodynamic (e.g. psychoanalysis, psychodrama) *or* cognitive-behavioural (e.g. rational-emotive therapy, stress inoculation therapy) models of abnormality. Issues surrounding the use of such therapies (e.g. appropriateness and effectiveness).

### 14.3 Perspectives

#### Issues and debates

There will be **four** *questions* of which candidates must answer **one**, **two** relating to (a) issues and **two** relating to (b) debates.

Candidates should be able to use knowledge and information derived from across the specification to discuss the following issues and debates:

#### a. Issues

*Gender bias* in psychological theories and studies (e.g. alpha/beta bias, androcentrism).

*Cultural bias* in psychological theories and studies (e.g. ethnocentrism, historical bias, the imposed etc).

*Ethical issues* involved in psychological investigations using human participants, including the ethics of socially sensitive research.

*The use of non-human animals* in psychological investigations, including constraints on their use and arguments (both ethical and scientific) for and against their use.

#### b. Debates

*Free will and determinism*, including definitions of these terms and arguments for and against their existence. The debate in relation to psychological theories and studies (e.g. Freud's and Skinner's theories).

*Reductionism*, including reductionism as a form of explanation, examples of reductionism in psychological theories and studies (e.g. physiological, machine, experimental), and arguments for and against reductionist explanations.

*Psychology as science*, including definitions/varieties of science, arguments for and against the claim that Psychology is a science (e.g. Kuhn's concept of a paradigm, objectivity, and the use of the experimental method).

*Nature-Nurture*, including definitions of the terms, assumptions made about nature and nurture in psychological theories and studies (e.g. Piaget's theory and sociobiology), and different views regarding their relationship (e.g. gene-environment interaction).

#### Approaches

Candidates will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of any **two** theoretical/methodological approaches to a novel situation or psychological phenomenon presented in the stimulus material given in the examination questions. These approaches might be selected from:

- (a) biological/medical, behavioural, psychodynamic and cognitive (as specified in AS/A2 Individual Differences);

- (b) other psychological approaches, not named in the specification, such as social constructionism, Humanistic Psychology, Evolutionary Psychology etc;
- (c) those deriving from other, related disciplines, such as Sociology, Biology and Philosophy (for example, symbolic interactionism and functionalism). [These may overlap with examples from (b)]

This part of Perspectives will be assessed through a *stimulus material* question. While the stimulus material will change from examination to examination, the basic form of the questions will remain the same. This will be as follows:

- (a) Describe how the subject presented in the stimulus material might be explained by **two** different approaches. *(6 marks + 6 marks)*

**AO1**

- (b) Assess **one** of these explanations of the subject presented in the stimulus material in terms of its strengths and limitations.

*(6 marks)*

**AO2**

- (c) How might the subject presented in the stimulus material be investigated by **one** of these approaches? *(6 marks)*

**AO2**

- (d) Evaluate the use of this method of investigating the subject presented in the stimulus material. *(6 marks)*

**AO2**

There will be **two** stimulus material questions, of which candidates must answer **one**.

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## A2 Module 6

### Coursework

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#### 15.1 Introduction

Candidates must complete a *Project Brief*, to demonstrate the planning, and a report of **one** psychological investigation. The content of the investigation *must* be drawn, subject to ethical and practical constraints, from any area of the specification (including AS). Candidates should select from the following methods: laboratory, field and natural experiments, surveys, observational studies and correlational research. Candidates must ensure that they take into account the ethical guidelines laid down by the British Psychological Society (**BPS**) when conducting research (see the Specification Support Document, page 74, on our website for information on how to contact the BPS).

The use of inferential statistics is required in the analysis of the data collected. Tests might be chosen from Chi-square, the Binomial Sign test, the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs test, the Mann-Whitney U test or Spearman's Rho but alternative tests are acceptable where appropriate.

It is permissible for candidates to work in small groups and pool and analyse their data, but each candidate must write the *Project Brief* and their own report independently. A small group is considered to be **four candidates or fewer**.

If candidates submit a group (larger than 4) or class project they must be awarded **zero** marks for the assessment criteria **A1 and A2**.

If, however, candidates, are given a design by the teacher or are working from a published design, they must be awarded **zero** marks for **A1** and can be awarded **up to 3** marks for **A2**.

Equal weighting is given to each of units 4 and 6 and therefore equal time should be devoted to the amount of study and assessment of the centre-assessed component.

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#### 15.2 The Project Brief

The purpose of the *Project Brief* is to encourage candidates to think through the design and analysis of their investigation before data collection, thus encouraging good practice. The *Project Brief* also requires the inclusion of some information such as justification of the direction of the hypothesis, discussion of strengths and limitations of research designs, etc. which are important for students to consider and understand but which are not commonly included in a psychological report. It is therefore hoped that students will be encouraged to write reports more in-keeping with the style that might be expected in higher education.

After students have submitted a *Project Brief* to their teacher it is permissible for teachers to comment on this with the mark in **A2** being adjusted accordingly.

Before commencing the coursework candidates must complete a *Project Brief* for their study. The *Project Brief* must relate to the **Report**.

Candidates must use the form provided and thus demonstrate their ability to plan a piece of psychological coursework by including:

- a clear statement of the research question and experimental/alternative hypothesis and the null hypothesis (*credited in the report*);
- an explanation of why a directional or non-directional hypothesis has been selected;
- identification of the choice of research method and/or research design;
- identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen research method and/or design;
- identification of potential sources of bias in the investigation (e.g. order effect, researcher bias) and confounding variables;
- an explanation of any procedures adopted to control the problems identified above;
- a statement of the minimum level of significance to be reached in the investigation;
- identification of any relevant ethical issues arising from the study and an explanation of the steps taken to deal with these.

The *Project Brief* Proposal Form can be found on our website: [http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/crf\\_pdf/AQA-PYA6-W-PBF-05.pdf](http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/crf_pdf/AQA-PYA6-W-PBF-05.pdf)

### 15.3 The Report

Candidates should present the report in a clear and concise way using a conventional framework. The actual report should not exceed 2000 words in length excluding the *Project Brief*, tables, figures, references and appendices.

The report should demonstrate skills specified by the following objectives:

#### **Abstract**

- Candidates should demonstrate their ability to write a clear, concise summary of the main aims, methods, results and conclusions drawn from the investigation.

#### **Introduction**

- Candidates should demonstrate their ability to write a concise account of the background literature leading into the research question being studied.

#### **Aims and hypothesis**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to produce:

- a clear statement of the aim(s) and research question;
- a clear statement of the experimental/alternative hypothesis;
- a clear statement of the null hypothesis.

#### **Method**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to write a clear account of the method used such that replication would be possible.

#### **Results**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to produce or carry out:

- an accurate recording of the raw data and workings of a statistical test in an Appendix;
- a clear presentation of the results of the study using appropriate descriptive statistics where relevant;
- an appropriate analysis of the results using inferential statistics (or a clear explanation of why the calculation of inferential statistics was not felt to be appropriate given the nature of the data collected e.g. if a directional hypothesis was selected and means/medians or a scattergram indicate results which lie in the contrary direction).

NB: Centres should note the requirement in 15.1 that, unless there are exceptional circumstances such as the example above, the use of inferential statistics is required;

- a clear presentation of the results of inferential statistics;
- interpretation of the results of the inferential statistics in relation to an appropriate level of significance.

### **Discussion**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to produce:

- a clear explanation of the findings of the study;
- a clear explanation of how the results fit into the wider theoretical framework and background to the study;
- the main problems which arose when conducting the study;
- suggestions for appropriate modifications to deal with these problems;
- the implications of the findings;
- appropriate ideas for further extensions of the study.

### **References**

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to produce conventional references.

## Key Skills and Other Issues

16

### Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

#### 16.1 Introduction

The Key Skills qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of *Application of Number*, *Communication* and *Information Technology*.

The units for the ‘wider’ Key Skills of *Improving own Learning and Performance*, *Working with Others* and *Problem Solving* are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these ‘wider’ Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates, but they do not form part of the Key Skills qualification.

Copies of the Key Skills Units may be downloaded from the QCA web site ([www.qca.org.uk/keyskills](http://www.qca.org.uk/keyskills)).

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- A What you need to know.
- B What you must do.
- C Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Psychology can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Application of Number*, *Information Technology* (‘main’ Key Skills) and *Working with Others*, *Improving own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* (‘wider’ Key Skills). Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of the units, are signposted below. More specific guidance on integrating the delivery of Key Skills in courses based upon this specification is given in the AQA specification support material.

#### 16.2 Key Skills opportunities in Psychology

The broad and multi-disciplinary nature of Psychology, that calls upon candidates’ abilities to demonstrate the transferability of their knowledge, understanding and skills, make it an ideal vehicle to assist candidates to develop their knowledge and understanding of Key Skills and to produce evidence of their application. The matrices below signpost the opportunities for the acquisition, development and production of evidence for Part B of the Key Skills units at *Level 3*, in the teaching and learning modules of this specification. The degree of opportunity in any one module will depend upon a number of centre-specific factors, including teaching strategies and level of resources

**Communication**

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
C3.1a Contribute to discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.1b Make a presentation						✓
C3.2 Read and synthesise information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.3 Write different types of documents	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Application of Number**

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
N3.1 Plan and interpret information from different sources			✓			✓
N3.2 Carry out multi-stage calculations			✓			✓
N3.3 Present findings, explain results and justify choice of methods			✓			✓

**Information Technology**

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
IT3.1 Plan and use different sources to search for and select information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT3.2 Explore, develop and exchange information and derive new information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IT3.3 Present information including text, numbers and images	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Working with Others

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
WO3.1 Plan the activity						✓
WO3.2 Work towards agreed objectives						✓
WO3.3 Review the activity						✓

Improving own Learning and Performance

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
LP3.1 Agree and plan targets						✓
LP3.2 Seek feedback and support						✓
LP3.3 Review progress						✓

Problem solving

What you must do:	Signposting of Opportunities for Generating Evidence in Modules					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
PS3.1 Recognise, explain and describe the problem			✓			✓
PS3.2 Generate and compare different ways of solving problems			✓			✓
PS3.3 Plan and implement options			✓			✓
PS3.4 Agree and review approaches to tackling problems			✓			✓

NB The signposting in the six tables above represent opportunities to acquire, and produce evidence of the Key Skills which are possible through this specification. There may be other opportunities to achieve these and other aspects of Key Skills via this specification, but such opportunities are dependent on the detailed course of study delivered within centres.

16.3 Further Guidance

More specific guidance and examples of tasks that can provide evidence of one or more Key Skills are given in the AQA specification support material.

## 17

## Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and Other Issues

### 17.1 Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues

The study of Psychology contributes to a candidate's understanding of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. Through the study of psychological issues and research candidates learn of the responsibilities we have towards each other as social animals and of the social and scientific integrity that must be demonstrated (e.g. Social Psychology AS ethical issues, coursework).

The cultural perspectives featuring in the specification allow candidates to appreciate Psychology's global perspective (e.g. in relationships, psychopathology, perceptual development).

The relevance of the mind and body linking together as demonstrated throughout the specification (e.g. in stress and illness, motivation and emotion) will enable candidates to develop an awareness of Psychology made personally relevant to them and to others. When psychological theories and methodology are applied to practical situations, candidates will have the opportunity to appreciate how the subject Psychology relates to everyday life.

### 17.2 European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers.

The specification is designed to improve candidates' knowledge and understanding of personal and social development. In this it addresses the cross-curricular themes of; health education (e.g. in the treatment of mental disorders); citizenship (e.g. in Social Psychology; relationships, prejudice and discrimination, pro- and anti-social behaviour); careers and education (e.g. in diagnosis of mental disorders, day care, research).

### 17.3 Environmental Education

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report "*Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education*" 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen papers.

The specification allows candidates to develop understanding and knowledge in various areas of Psychology, for example in intelligence, perception and attachment, wherein the relationship between psychological phenomena/issues/concepts/areas and the environment is explored.

### 17.4 Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and associated specimen papers to avoid bias of any kind.

## Centre-Assessed Component

18

### Nature of the Centre-Assessed Component

The *Project Brief* and the **Report** will be assessed in accordance with the requirements in Section 15 – Coursework. The assessment of the coursework unit is given in Section 20.

19

### Guidance for Setting Centre-Assessed Component

#### 19.1 Selection of area of study

The investigation **must** be related to the subject content of the specification (including AS). Examples of investigations are given in the Specification Support Material but candidates should be encouraged to devise a suitable title of their own. Whatever title is selected, it is essential that teachers check and approve proposals before candidates start work on the investigation. A network of Coursework Advisers is available to assist centres with this or any other matter relating to coursework. Details are available from AQA.

A candidate will naturally look to her or his teacher, parents and others for assistance with the development of the individual investigation, and within reasonable bounds this is to be encouraged. However, the writing of the *Project Brief* Proposal Form and report must be the candidate's own work and should acknowledge explicitly all sources of assistance received during the investigation. Under no circumstances can plagiarism be condoned and teachers should advise candidates on how to take notes in a manner likely to protect them from later verbatim use of material.

#### 19.2 Ethical considerations

Investigations must be carried out in an ethical way which respects the rights and feelings of participants and of others who might come into contact with the investigation. Supervision of investigations by teachers includes the responsibility for these ethical considerations.

## Assessment Criteria

### 20.1 Introduction

All reports of investigations are marked internally in the centre using the assessment criteria set out in this document. In making assessments, teachers should select the mark description which best matches the candidate's performance in that area.

### 20.2 Criteria for Project Brief and Report

#### Project Brief

#### **PB1 Statement of hypothesis**

The statement of aims/hypothesis demonstrate clarity and ease of testability (credited in Report markscheme in C3).

Maximum mark: 12 marks [AO1 = 2; AO2 = 10; AO3 = 0]

#### **PB2 Explanation of direction of hypothesis (1 mark) AO2**

- 1 There is an appropriate explanation of why a directional or non-directional hypothesis has been selected.
- 0 There is no explanation of why a directional or non-directional hypothesis has been selected or the explanation given is inappropriate.

#### **PB3 Identification of research method/design (1 mark) AO1**

- 1 The research method and research design (if appropriate) are correctly identified.
- 0 The research method and research design (if appropriate) are not identified or are wrongly identified.

#### **PB4 Identification of the strength(s) and weakness(es) of the chosen research method and/or design (2 marks) AO2**

- 2 The potential strengths and weaknesses of the chosen research method and/or design are identified.
- 1 The potential strengths and weaknesses of the chosen research method and/or design are partially identified.
- 0 The potential strengths and weaknesses of the chosen research method and/or design are not identified or are incorrectly identified.

- PB5 Identification of bias/confounding variables (2 marks) AO2**
- 2 Relevant potential sources of bias and/or confounding variables are identified.
  - 1 An attempt was made to identify some relevant potential sources of bias and/or confounding variables are partially identified.
  - 0 Relevant potential sources of bias and/or confounding variables are not identified or the sources of bias identified are inappropriate or incorrect.
- PB6 Explanation of plans for the control of bias/confounding variables (2 marks) AO2**
- 2 There is a full explanation of the plans to be adopted to control the problems identified in PB5.
  - 1 There is a partial explanation of the plans to be adopted to control the problems identified in PB5.
  - 0 Plans to be adopted to control the problems identified in PB5 are ineffective or missing.
- PB7 Statistical significance (1 mark) AO1**
- 1 A suitable level of statistical significance is selected.
  - 0 An unsuitable level of statistical significance is selected.
- PB8 Identification of ethical considerations (3 marks) AO2**
- 3 Possible ethical considerations are fully identified and suitable steps to deal with these issues are identified.
  - 2 Some possible ethical considerations are identified and suitable steps to deal with these issues are identified.
  - 1 Possible ethical issues are identified but the steps to deal with these are inadequate.
  - 0 Possible ethical issues are not identified or are inappropriate or incorrect.

## Report

Maximum mark: 48 marks [AO1 = 8; AO2 = 17; AO3 = 23]

- A1 Implementation: candidate's contribution to design (3 marks)**
- 3 The design of the investigation was entirely the work of an individual candidate. It was an original design or adaptation of previously published work.
  - 2 The design of the investigation was entirely the work of a small group of candidates. It was an original design or adaptation of previously published work.

- 1 The investigation was designed by an individual candidate or small group of candidates (a small group is considered to be four candidates or fewer) with support from a teacher.
- 0 The candidate did not contribute to the design of the investigation.

**A2 Implementation: design decisions (3 marks)****AO3**

- 3 Given the aims of the investigation, design decisions were applied appropriately and competently.
- 2 Given the aims of the investigation, design decisions were applied appropriately with minor exceptions.
- 1 Given the aims of the investigation, design decisions were applied weakly.
- 0 Given the aims of the investigation, design decisions were applied inappropriately.

**B Abstract****AO2 (1 mark) AO3 (2 marks)**

- 3 The abstract gave clear and concise information on the main aims, methods, results and conclusions drawn from the investigation.
- 2 The abstract gave information on either all or some of the points required for 3 marks, but which lacked an element of clarity or conciseness in its reporting style.
- 1 The abstract lacked clarity or drew attention to minimal information provided by the investigation.
- 0 An abstract was not provided or was inappropriate.

**C1 Introduction: support from psychological literature (5 marks)****AO1**

- 5 The investigation was supported by relevant, concisely reported and carefully selected psychological literature which was coherently and logically organised.
- 4 The investigation was supported by relevant and concisely reported psychological literature. There was a minor omission **or** the literature lacked an element of careful selection **or** an element of coherence and logical organisation.
- 3 The investigation was supported by relevant psychological literature. There were some omissions **or** the literature lacked selectivity or coherence.
- 2 The investigation was supported by some relevant psychological literature, although there were important omissions.
- 1 The investigation received minimal support from relevant psychological literature.
- 0 The investigation received no support from relevant psychological literature.

**C2 Aim(s)/Hypothesis(es): formulation (3 marks) AO2**

- 3 The reporting clearly and explicitly demonstrated a logical progression from the background literature reviewed to a statement of the aims and/or hypothesis(es).
- 2 The reporting clearly and explicitly demonstrated, with minor exceptions, a logical progression from the background literature reviewed to a statement of the aims and/or hypothesis(es).
- 1 The reporting partially or inadequately demonstrated a logical progression from the background literature reviewed to a statement of the aims and/or hypothesis(es).
- 0 The reporting failed to demonstrate a logical progression from the background literature reviewed to a statement of the aims and/or hypothesis(es).

**C3 Aim(s)/Hypothesis(es): statement (2 marks) AO3**

- 2 The statement of the aim(s) and hypothesis(es) demonstrated clarity and ease of testability.
- 1 The statement of the aim(s) and hypothesis(es) lacked clarity or would be difficult to test precisely.
- 0 The aim(s) and hypothesis(es) were incorrect or missing.

**D Reporting of method (4 marks) AO3**

- 4 All aspects of the method used were precisely and clearly reported in detail. Full replication would be possible.
- 3 Reporting of the method was described in sufficient detail for reasonable replication of the investigation to be possible.
- 2 Reporting of the method lacked detail and replication of the investigation would be difficult
- 1 Fundamental omissions in reporting the method mean that replication of the investigation would be very difficult.
- 0 Replication of the investigation would be impossible because of the lack of information.

In E1 and E2 if there is a difference in the mark appropriate for the descriptive and inferential techniques they should be marked separately and the marks should then be averaged.

**E1 Results: selection and application of techniques used for analysis (4 marks) AO2**

- 4 The selection and application of descriptive techniques and an inferential statistical test were appropriate.

The use of an inferential test was justified with full reference to the data collected.

An appropriate level of statistical significance was applied and a full explanation of the actual level of significance reached was provided.

- 3 The selection and application of descriptive techniques and an inferential statistical test were substantially appropriate.

An appropriate attempt was made to justify the use of an inferential test but without full reference to the data collected.

An appropriate level of statistical significance was applied.

- 2 The selection and application of descriptive techniques and an inferential statistical test were partially appropriate.

A partially correct attempt was made to justify the use of an inferential test. An appropriate level of statistical significance was applied.

- 1 Minimal opportunities were taken to select and apply appropriate descriptive techniques and/or an inferential statistical test.

The justification of the inferential statistical test used was incorrect. An inappropriate level of statistical significance was applied.

- 0 Even though the use of descriptive techniques and an inferential statistical test would have been appropriate no attempt was made to use them.

OR inappropriate techniques were selected.

OR appropriate techniques were applied incorrectly.

Justification of the use of any inferential statistical test was absent.

**E2 Results and Appendices: presentation of data (4 marks) AO3**

- 4 Descriptive and inferential statistics were presented precisely and clearly. Presentation of raw data and calculations in an Appendix was clear.

- 3 Descriptive and inferential statistics were presented in ways which, with only minor exceptions, were precise and clear. Presentation of raw data and calculations in an Appendix was clear with only minor exceptions.

- 2 Descriptive and inferential statistics were presented in ways which showed some deficiencies in precision and/or clarity. Raw data and calculations were included in an Appendix but presentation lacked clarity.

- 1 Descriptive and inferential statistics were presented in ways which showed serious deficiencies in precision and/or clarity. Raw data and calculations were included in an Appendix but there were serious deficiencies in their presentation.

- 0 Even though they would have been relevant, opportunities for presenting descriptive and/or inferential statistics were not employed. **OR** the attempts made were irrelevant or incorrect. Raw data and calculations were not included in the Appendix.

**NB: If circumstances arise in which it is inappropriate to calculate inferential tests (e.g. a directional hypothesis was selected but the descriptive statistics clearly indicate that the hypothesis should be rejected) then candidates should explain which statistical test would have been used and why the use was considered inappropriate.**

- F1 Discussion: explanation of findings (3 marks) AO3**
- 3 The outcome of the investigation in terms of the hypothesis(es) and/or aim(s) was explained in ways which were appropriate and coherent.
  - 2 The outcome of the investigation in terms of the hypothesis(es) and/or aim(s) was explained in ways which, with only minor exceptions, were appropriate and coherent.
  - 1 An attempt was made to explain the outcome of the investigation in terms of the hypothesis(es) and/or aim(s) although this lacked appropriateness and/or coherence.
  - 0 No attempt was made to explain the outcome of the investigation in terms of the hypothesis(es) and/or aim(s), or the attempt was irrelevant.
- F2 Discussion: relationship to background research (3 marks) AO2**
- 3 There was thorough discussion of the outcome of the investigation in terms of relevant background research.
  - 2 There was reasonably coherent discussion of the outcome of the investigation in terms of relevant background research.
  - 1 There was limited discussion of the outcome of the investigation in terms of relevant background research.
  - 0 There was no discussion of the outcome of the investigation in terms of relevant background research, or the attempt made to discuss the outcome was irrelevant or incorrect.
- F3 Discussion: limitations and modifications (3 marks) AO2**
- 3 Most limitations of the investigation were reported, and appropriate modifications suggested.
  - 2 Some limitations of the investigation were reported, and some modifications suggested.
  - 1 There was a partial awareness of limitations of the investigation, and/or occasional modifications were suggested.
  - 0 Limitations of the investigation were not reported or were reported inappropriately. Appropriate modifications were not suggested.
- F4 Discussion: implications and suggestions for further research (3 marks) AO2**
- 3 Appropriate suggestions for further research were mentioned, and implications of the findings were discussed thoroughly.
  - 2 Some appropriate suggestions for further research were mentioned, and implications of the findings were discussed reasonably coherently.
  - 1 An appropriate suggestion for further research was mentioned and/or there was a limited discussion of the implications of the findings.
-

- 0 Suggestions for further research were not mentioned or were irrelevant, and implications of the findings were not discussed.

**G References (2 marks)**

**AO3**

- 2 All references were provided in a conventional way for all studies quoted in the text.
- 1 References were provided in a conventional way but there were omissions.
- 0 No references were provided or the references included, did not meet the conventions.

**H Report style (3 marks)**

**AO1**

- 3 The report was concisely written in an appropriate scientific style (using a broad range of specialist terms), logically organised into sections and characterised by the adequate expression of ideas. There were only minor errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 2 The scientific style and logical structure of the report were substantially evident with the use of a good range of specialist terms. There was an adequate expression of ideas and adequate grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 1 The report lacked structure and was written in a style that was inappropriate for a scientific report with the use of a limited range of specialist terms and a poor expression of ideas. There was poor grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- 0 It was extremely difficult to tell if the report was based on a psychological investigation and the criteria for ideas, specialist terms and grammar, punctuation and spelling for 1 mark were not met.

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**20.3 Evidence to Support the Award of Marks**

Teachers should keep records of their assessments during the course in a form which facilitates the complete and accurate submission of the final assessments at the end of the course.

The report should be annotated in cases where it is not obvious from the sections of the report where the relevant criteria have been satisfied and to flag key pieces of evidence for the award of marks.

Teachers may find it useful to use the mark description lettering for this purpose, e.g. F1, if an explanation of findings happens to appear in the results section rather than in the Discussion section.

When the assessments are complete, the final marks awarded under each of the assessment criteria must be entered on the Candidate Record Form, with supporting information given in the spaces provided. A specimen Candidate Record Form appears as Appendix B: the exact design may be modified before the operational version is issued.

The Candidate Record Form must be attached to the candidate's work.

## 21

# Supervision and Authentication

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- 21.1**    **Supervision of Candidates' Work**                      Candidates' work for assessment must be undertaken under conditions which allow the teacher to supervise the work and enable the work to be authenticated. If it is necessary for some assessed work to be done outside the centre, sufficient work must take place under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each candidate's whole work with confidence.
- 
- 21.2**    **Guidance by the Teacher**                      The work assessed must be solely that of the candidate concerned. Any assistance given to an individual candidate which is beyond that given to the group as a whole must be recorded on the Candidate Record Form.
- 
- 21.3**    **Unfair Practice**                                      At the start of the course, the supervising teacher is responsible for informing candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice. Candidates must not take part in any unfair practice in the preparation of coursework to be submitted for assessment, and must understand that to present material copied directly from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception. Centres must report suspected malpractice to AQA. The penalties for malpractice are set out in the AQA Regulations.
- 
- 21.4**    **Authentication of Candidates' Work**                      Both the candidate and the teacher are required to sign declarations confirming that all of the work submitted for assessment is the candidate's own. The teacher is required to declare that the work was conducted under the specified conditions, and to record details of any additional assistance.

**22**

## Standardisation

### 22.1 Standardising Meetings

Annual standardising meetings will usually be held in the autumn term. Centres entering candidates for the first time must send a representative to the meetings. Attendance is also mandatory in the following cases:

- where there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specification requirements;
- where the nature of coursework tasks set by a centre has been inappropriate;
- where a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's marks in the previous year's examination.

Otherwise attendance is at the discretion of centres. At these meetings support will be provided for centres in the development of appropriate coursework tasks and assessment procedures.

### 22.2 Internal Standardisation of Marking

The centre is required to standardise the assessments across different teachers and teaching groups to ensure that all candidates at the centre have been judged against the same standards. If two or more teachers are involved in marking a component, one teacher must be designated as responsible for internal standardisation. Common pieces of work must be marked on a trial basis and differences between assessments discussed at a training session in which all teachers involved must participate. The teacher responsible for standardising the marking must ensure that the training includes the use of reference and archive materials such as work from a previous year or examples provided by AQA. The centre is required to send to the moderator the Centre Declaration Sheet, duly signed, to confirm that the marking of centre-assessed work at the centre has been standardised. If only one teacher has undertaken the marking, that person must sign this form.

### 22.3 Annotation

Paragraph 72 of the GCSE and GCE A/AS Code of Practice states that “the awarding body must require teachers to show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in the specification. The awarding body must specify how this is to be done”.

This annotation will enable the moderator to see as precisely as possible where the teacher considers that the candidates have met the criteria in the specification. Annotation for F1, F2, F3, F4 & C2 needs to be provided as a minimum requirement.

Work could be annotated by either of the following methods:

- Key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation either in the margin or in the text;
- Summative comments on the work, referencing precise sections in the work.

## 23

# Administrative Procedures

### 23.1 Recording Assessments

The candidates' work must be marked according to the assessment criteria set out in Section 20.2. The marks and supporting information must be recorded in accordance with the instructions in Section 20.3.

The completed Candidate Record Form for each candidate must be attached to the work and made available to AQA on request.

### 23.2 Submitting Marks and Sample Work for Moderation

The total component mark for each candidate must be submitted to AQA on the mark sheets provided or by Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) by the specified date. Centres will be informed which candidates' work is required in the samples to be submitted to the moderator.

### 23.3 Factors Affecting Individual Candidates

Teachers should be able to accommodate the occasional absence of candidates by ensuring that the opportunity is given for them to make up missed assessments.

Special consideration should be requested for candidates whose work has been affected by illness or other exceptional circumstances. Information about the procedure is issued separately.

If work is lost, AQA should be notified immediately of the date of the loss, how it occurred, and who was responsible for the loss. AQA will advise on the procedures to be followed in such cases.

Where special help which goes beyond normal learning support is given, AQA must be informed so that such help can be taken into account when assessment and moderation take place.

Candidates who move from one centre to another during the course sometimes present a problem for a scheme of internal assessment. Possible courses of action depend on the stage at which the move takes place. If the move occurs early in the course the new centre should take responsibility for assessment. If it occurs late in the course it may be possible to accept the assessments made at the previous centre. Centres should contact AQA at the earliest possible stage for advice about appropriate arrangements in individual cases.

### 23.4 Retaining Evidence and Re-using Marks

The centre must retain the work of all candidates, with Candidate Record Forms attached, under secure conditions, from the time it is assessed, to allow for the possibility of an enquiry upon result. The work may be returned to candidates after the issue of results provided that no enquiry upon result is to be made which will include re-moderation of the coursework component. If an enquiry upon result is to be made, the work must remain under secure conditions until requested by AQA.

**24****Moderation****24.1 Moderation Procedures**

Moderation of the coursework is by inspection of a sample of candidates' work, sent by post from the centre to a moderator appointed by AQA. The centre marks must be submitted to AQA and the sample of work must reach the moderator by the specified date in the year in which the qualification is to be awarded.

The sample consists of a minimum of 10 candidates' work (all candidates' work if the entry is 20 or fewer). It is specified by AQA and notified to the centre.

Following the re-marking of the sample work, the moderator's marks are compared with the centre marks to determine whether any adjustment is needed in order to bring the centre's assessments into line with standards generally. In some cases it may be necessary for the moderator to call for the work of other candidates. In order to meet this possible request, centres must have available the coursework and the Candidate Record Form of every candidate entered for the examination and be prepared to submit it on demand. Mark adjustments will normally preserve the centre's order of merit, but where major discrepancies are found, AQA reserves the right to alter the order of merit.

**24.2 Post-Moderation Procedures**

On publication of the GCE results, the centre is supplied with details of the final marks for the coursework component.

The candidates' work is returned to the centre after the examination. The centre receives a report giving feedback to the centre on the appropriateness of the tasks set, the accuracy of the assessments made, and the reasons for any adjustments to the marks.

Some candidates' work may be retained by AQA for archive purposes.

## Awarding and Reporting

### 25

## Grading, Shelf-Life and Re-Sits

25.1	Qualification Titles	<p>The qualifications based on these specifications have the following titles:</p> <p>AQA Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Psychology A</p> <p>AQA Advanced Level GCE in Psychology A</p>
25.2	Grading System	<p>Both the AS and the full A Level qualifications will be graded on a five-grade scale: A, B, C, D and E. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade E will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.</p> <p>Individual assessment unit results will be certificated.</p>
25.3	Shelf-Life of Unit Results	<p>The shelf-life of individual unit results, prior to the award of the qualification, is limited only by the shelf-life of the specification.</p>
25.4	Assessment Unit Re-Sits	<p>Each assessment unit may be re-taken an unlimited number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. The best result will count towards the final award.</p> <p>Candidates who wish to repeat an award must enter for at least one of the contributing units and also enter for certification (cash-in). There is no facility to decline an award once it has been issued.</p>
25.5	Minimum Requirements	<p>Candidates will be graded on the basis of work submitted for the award of the qualification.</p>
25.6	Awarding and Reporting	<p>This specification complies with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the current GCSE, GCE, VCE, GNVQ and AEA Code of Practice, and will be revised in the light of any subsequent changes for future years.</p>

# Appendices

## A

### Grade Descriptions

The following grade descriptions indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at A Level. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at each specific grade. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives (as in Section 6) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

- Grade A** Candidates demonstrate and communicate clearly relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge and critical understanding of a range of psychological concepts, theories, studies, research and applications and the links between them. They show effective analysis and evaluation when considering psychological concepts, theories, studies, research and applications. If required, they demonstrate that they are able to use these attributes by applying them appropriately to unfamiliar situations. Candidates demonstrate an ability to design and report on psychological investigations using and explaining the methodology selected in an effective manner and come to balanced conclusions as a result of well constructed discussion.
- Grade C** Candidates demonstrate and communicate clearly relevant knowledge and understanding of a limited range of psychological concepts, theories, studies, research and applications and links between them. They analyse and attempt to evaluate when considering a range of psychological concepts, theories, studies, research and applications. They make appropriate use of psychological terminology. Candidates demonstrate an ability to design and report on psychological investigations using an appropriate methodology and come to some conclusions as a result of their discussions.
- Grade E** Candidates demonstrate and communicate some knowledge and understanding of appropriate psychological concepts, theories, studies, research and applications and may identify links between them or they may demonstrate a limited combination of the above knowledge and understanding and analysis or evaluation. They make some appropriate use of psychological terminology. Candidates demonstrate that they have designed psychological investigations and have come to simple conclusions.

## B

# Coursework Record Forms

Candidate Record Forms, Project Brief Proposal Forms and Centre Declaration Sheets are available on the AQA website in the Administration area. They can be accessed via the following link [http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p\\_course.php](http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_course.php)

## C

## Overlaps with other Qualifications

### GCE Psychology

The Psychology content of the AQA AS/A GCE Specification A has overlaps with other GCE qualifications in Psychology. Within the five core areas specified by common criteria, there are similarities in the topics covered, however the specifications differ in their *treatment* of the content, in terms of the *structure* of the content and the *style of assessment*. With respect to perspectives, research methods and coursework components, the approach adopted by each of the specifications varies in how the candidate is assessed on their ability to demonstrate the necessary skills.

### GCE Sociology

The specification shows clear overlaps with AQA GCE Sociology. In AS there is much familiarity with the Psychology specification in terms of the research methods employed by both disciplines. The skills required in the research methods sections rely on the understanding of and analysing the nature of scientific method, objectivity and the relative values of quantitative and qualitative methods. The overlap in subject content is limited with links only between mental health and illness, life events and the cultural role of the media in relationships.

### GCE Philosophy

There are overlaps in content with AQA GCE Philosophy in relation to ethics and the nature of science (AS Research Methods), behaviourism and the nature of mind (AS/A2 Individual Differences), perception and scepticism (A2 Cognitive Psychology), cultural differences in mentality (A2 Developmental Psychology and Individual Differences), social perception (A2 Social Psychology), and biases in theory and research and the objectivity of method (A2 Perspectives).

### GCE Media Studies

There is no significant overlap between AQA GCE Media Studies and the Psychology AS specification, except that of similar skills required in the Research Methods sections in both of the specifications. There is more significant overlap in the A2 specification with the content in GCE Media Studies in terms of the social and cultural aspects of language use (in A2 Cognitive Psychology) and media influences on behaviour, social perception and stereotyping (in A2 Social Psychology).

### GCE Biology

AQA GCE Biology Specification A shows limited overlap with the specification. This is mostly in terms of Physiological Psychology, with content covering disease causation (ethical and moral issues), heart disease and drug control, which links in with some of the key issues discussed in stress and illness (AS Physiological Psychology). Notable similarities between the two specifications include brain structure and function, and the brain and behaviour.

**Other Level 3 qualifications** There is also a degree of overlap with selected GNVQ and BTEC qualifications.

**GNVQ**

GNVQ Health and Social Care allows overlap in the context of AS Developmental Psychology (within GNVQ Unit 17; Psychology in the context of health and social care), AS Social Psychology (within the same unit). In the A2 there are noted overlaps in Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology (within GNVQ Unit 4; Psychosocial aspects of health and wellbeing), and A2 Individual Differences (within GNVQ Unit 17). Both AS Research Methods and A2 Coursework are reflected in Unit M8 of the GNVQ of Health and Social Care.

**BTEC**

BTEC National Science provides limited overlap with A2 Physiological Psychology in terms of Mammalian physiology, however there is no explicit overlap with the rest of the specification. BTEC National Childhood studies provides the opportunity for more overlap in both AS and A2. In AS, Cognitive Psychology content lends itself to Psychological aspects of development (BTEC Module 10481), Developmental Psychology and Research Methods (in terms of data analysis) to Human Growth and Development (BTEC Module 3503). In A2, overlaps exist between Cognitive Psychology and Human Growth and Development (Modules 10391 and 10481), and Perspectives and Psychological aspects of development (Module 10481). The BTEC National pre-services content links with AS Individual Differences and Social Psychology (and BTEC Core Unit 5; Human Behaviour). In A2 there are overlaps between Social Psychology, Individual Differences and Perspectives (and this unit).