**Psychology**

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| TYPE OF QUALIFICATION | AQA A Level Psychology |
| LEVEL OF ENTRY | 5+ 9-4 passes at GCSE, preferably with a grade 6 in Biology/Combined Science and grade 6 in Mathematics |
| METHOD OF ASSESSMENT | 100% written examination  |
| LENGTH OF COURSE & NUMBER OF LESSONS PER CYCLE | 2 year A Level, with 5 lessons per week |

**COURSE STRUCTURE:**

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| Level | Unit | Title | Grade Weighting |
| A Level | Paper 1 | Paper 1 Introductory Topics in Psychology | 33.3% |
| A Level | Paper 2 | Paper 2 Psychology in Context | 33.3% |
| A Level | Paper 3 | Paper 3 Issues and Debates | 33.3% |

**Paper 1 Section A: SOCIAL INFLUENCE**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 1A.1  | I can explain and evaluate Asch’s (1951) research into conformity  |
| 1A.2  | I can discuss variables affecting conformity including group size, unanimity and task difficulty  |
| 1A.3  | I can explain and evaluate different types of conformity and why conformity may occur (internalisation, identification, compliance)  |
| 1A.4  | I can explain why conformity occurs: informational social influence and normative social influence and evaluate the dual-process model  |
| 1A.5  | I can discuss Zimbardo’s research into conformity to social roles  |
| 1A.6  | I can explain and evaluate Agency Theory  |
| 1A.7  | I can explain and evaluate the concept of an authoritarian personality  |
|   | I can explain and evaluate situational variables affecting obedience including proximity, location and uniform  |
| 1A.8  | I can explain and evaluate theories about resistance to social influence (social support and locus of control)  |
| 1A.9  | I can explain and evaluate theories about minority influence, with reference to consistency, commitment and flexibility  |
| 1A.10  | I can explain and evaluate the role of social influence processes in social change  |

**Paper 1 Section B: MEMORY**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 1B.1  | I can explain the difference between short- and long-term memory, including the features of each store: coding, capacity and duration  |
| 1B.2  | I can explain and evaluate the multi-store model of memory: STM, LTM & sensory register  |
| 1B.3  | I can explain and evaluate the working memory model: central executive, phonological loop, visuo-spatial sketchpad & episodic buffer  |
| 1B.4  | I can explain and evaluate types of long-term memory: episodic, semantic, procedural  |
| 1B.5  | I can explain and evaluate theories of interference; retroactive & proactive   |
| 1B.6  | I can explain and evaluate theories of retrieval failure & cue dependent forgetting  |
| 1B.7  | I can explain and evaluate theories about eyewitness testimony  |
| 1B.8  | I can explain and evaluate theories about improving the accuracy of eyewitness testimony, including the use of the cognitive interview  |

**Paper 1 Section C: ATTACHMENT**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 1C.1  | I can explain caregiver-infant interactions including reciprocity and interactional synchrony, and discuss research  |
| 1C.2  | I can discuss Schaffer and Emerson’s research and their stages of attachment  |
| 1C.3  | I can discuss multiple attachments and the role of the father  |
| 1C.4  | I can explain and evaluate animal studies on attachment  |
| 1C.5  | I can explain and evaluate the learning theory of attachment  |
| 1C.6  | I can explain and evaluate Bowlby’s monotropic theory of attachment including the critical period and internal working model  |
| 1C.7  | I can explain and evaluate Ainsworth’s Strange Situation and the different types of attachment  |
| 1C.8  | I can explain and evaluate cultural variations in attachment, including the work of van Ijzendoorn  |
| 1C.9  | I can explain and evaluate Bowlby’s theory of maternal deprivation  |
| 1C.10  | I can explain and evaluate the effects of institutionalisation and the Romanian orphan studies  |
| 1C.11  | I can explain and evaluate the influence of early attachment on adult relationships, including the internal working model  |

**Paper 1 Section D: PSYCHOPATHOLOGY**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 2B.1  | I can explain and evaluate different definitions of abnormality: deviation from social norms, failure to function, statistical infrequency and deviation from ideal mental health  |
| 2B.2  | I can explain the behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of phobias, depression and OCD  |
| 2B.3  | I can explain and evaluate the behavioural approach to explaining and treating phobias (two process model, systematic desensitisation & flooding)  |
| 2B.4  | I can explain and evaluate the cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression (Beck’s negative triad, Ellis’ ABC model and CBT)  |
| 2B.5  | I can explain and evaluate the biological approach to explaining and treating OCD (genetic and neural explanations, drug therapy)  |

**Paper 2 Section A: APPROACHES IN PSYCHOLOGY**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 2A.1  | I can explain and evaluate Wundt; introspection and the emergence of psychology as a science  |
| 2A.2  | I can explain and evaluate the behaviourist approach to psychology (classical & operant conditioning)   |
| 2A.3  | I can explain and evaluate social learning theory (imitation, identification, modelling, vicarious reinforcement, the role of mediational processes and Bandura’s research.  |
| 2A.4  | I can explain and evaluate the cognitive approach to psychology (internal mental processes, schema, theoretical and computer models, emergence of cognitive neuroscience)   |
| 2A.6  | I can explain and evaluate the biological approach to psychology  |
| 2A.7  | I can explain the divisions of the nervous system (central and peripheral; somatic and autonomic)  |
| 2A.8  | I can explain the structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons  |
| 2A.9  | I can explain the process of synaptic transmission with reference to neurotransmitters, excitation and inhibition  |
| 2A.10  | I can explain the function of the endocrine system (glands and hormones)  |
| 2A.11  | I can explain and evaluate theories about fight or flight responses, including the role of adrenaline  |

**Paper 2 Section B: BIOPSYCHOLOGY**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 2B.1  | I can explain localisation of brain function: motor, somatosensory, visual, auditory, Broca and Wernicke areas, and the different areas of the brain  |
| 2B.2  | I can explain and evaluate split-brain research  |
| 2B.3  | I can explain and evaluate theories of plasticity and localisation, including functional recovery of the brain after trauma  |
| 2B.4  | I can explain different ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques, including fMRI, EEGs and ERPs, as well as post-mortem examinations  |
| 2B.5  | I can explain the divisions of the nervous system (central and peripheral; somatic and autonomic)  |
| 2B.6  | I can explain the structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons as well as the process of synaptic transmission (neurotransmitters, excitation, inhibition)  |
| 2B.7  | I can explain the endocrine system (glands and hormones)  |
| 2B.8  | I can explain the fight or flight response including the role of adrenaline  |
| 2B.9  | I can explain and evaluate research into biological rhythms and the effects of endogenous pacemakers and exogenous zeitgebers  |

**Paper 2 Section C: RESEARCH METHODS**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 2C.1  | I can explain the experimental method: laboratory and field experiments; natural and quasi-experiments  |
| 2C.2  | I can explain how to control variables in experiments and what hypotheses are (e.g. directional or non-directional)  |
| 2C.3  | I can explain different experimental designs: repeated measures, independent groups, matched pairs  |
| 2C.4  | I can explain correlations and the difference between these and experiments  |
| 2C.5  | I can explain different self-report techniques: questionnaires, interviews, structured and unstructured  |
| 2C.6  | I can explain different observational techniques: naturalistic, controlled, covert, overt, participant and non-participant  |
| 2C.7  | I can explain and evaluate different sampling methods  |
| 2C.8  | I can explain why pilot studies are used  |
| 2C.9  | I can explain questionnaire construction, including open and closed questions  |
| 2C.10  | I can explain the difference between variables and how they are manipulated  |
| 2C.11  | I can explain issues of control: allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation and standardisation  |
| 2C.12  | I can explain demand characteristics and investigator effects  |
| 2C.13  | I can explain BPS guidelines on ethics  |
| 2C.14  | I can explain the role of peer review in the scientific process  |
| 2C.15  | I can explain the implications of psychological research for the economy  |
| 2C.16  | I can explain the difference between quantitative and qualitative data  |
| 2C.17  | I can explain the difference between primary and secondary data  |
| 2C.18  | I can explain how descriptive statistics are used: measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, calculation of range; calculation of percentages; different correlations  |
| 2C.19  | I can present quantitative data in the form of graphs, tables, scattergrams and bar charts  |
| 2C.20  | I can explain different types of distribution  |
| 2C.21  | I can explain the sign test  |
| 2C.22  | I can explain how a content analysis is conducted  |
| 2C.23  | I can explain and evaluate the use of case studies  |
| 2C.24  | I can explain features of science: objectivity, replicability, theory construction, falsifiability and hypothesis testing  |
| 2C.25  | I can explain how psychological investigations are reported  |
| 2C.26  | I can explain how to use different statistical tests, including the use of statistical tables, critical values and Type I and Type II errors  |

**Paper 3 Section A: Issues and debates**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 3A.1  | I can explain issues of gender bias in psychology, including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias  |
|   | I can explain issues of cultural bias in psychology, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism  |
| 3A.2  | I can explain issues relating to free will and determinism, including hard, soft, biological, psychic and environmental determinism, and the scientific emphasis on causal explanations  |
| 3A.3  | I can explain issues with the nature-nurture debate, including the relative importance of heredity and environment, and the interactionist approach  |
| 3A.4  | I can explain issues of holism and reductionism, including levels of explanation, biological reductionism and environmental reductionism  |
| 3A.5  | I can explain idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation  |
| 3A.6  | I can explain the ethical implications of research studies and theories including reference to social sensitivity  |

**Paper 3 Section B: Gender**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 3B.1  | I can explain the difference between sex and gender, including androgny  |
| 3B.2  | I can explain the role of chromosomes and hormones in sex and gender  |
| 3B.3  | I can explain different types of atypical gender development (Klinefelter’s syndrome & Turner’s syndrome  |
| 3B.4  | I can explain and evaluate psychodynamic explanations of gender; Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, Oedipus complex; electra complex  |
| 3B.5  | I can explain and evaluate social learning explanations of gender  |
| 3B.6  | I can explain and evaluate cognitive explanations of gender (Kohlberg’s theory & gender schema theory)  |
| 3B.7  | I can explain the influence of culture and the media  |
| 3B.8  | I can explain Atypical gender development: gender dysphoria; biological and social explanations of gender dysphoria   |

**Paper 3 Section C: Schizophrenia**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 3C.1  | I can explain the classification of schizophrenia, including the difference between positive and negative symptoms in schizophrenia  |
| 3C.2  | I can explain and evaluate biological explanations of schizophrenia (genetics, neural correlates & the dopamine hypothesis)  |
| 3C.3  | I can explain and evaluate psychological explanations of schizophrenia (family dysfunction & cognitive explanations)  |
| 3C.4  | I can explain and evaluate the use of drug treatments (typical & atypical antipsychotics)  |
| 3C.5  | I can explain and evaluate the use of CBT and family therapy  |
| 3C.6  | I can explain the importance of an interactionist approach in explaining schizophrenia  |

**Paper 3 Section D: Forensic Psychology**

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|   | **Content**  |
| 3C.1  | I can explain problems in defining crime, including ways of measuring crime (statistics, victim and offender surveys)   |
| 3C.2  | I can explain and evaluate models of offender profiling: top-down approach (organised and disorganised) and the bottom-up approach (geographical profiling and investigative psychology)  |
| 3C.3  | I can explain biological explanations of offending behaviour, including the historical atavistic approach, genetics and neural explanations  |
| 3C.4  | I can explain psychological explanations of offending behaviour: Eysenck’s theory, cognitive explanations (moral reasoning and cognitive distortions), differential association theory and psychodynamic theories  |
| 3C.5  | I can explain ways of dealing with offending behaviour: the aims of custodial sentencing, recidivism, behaviour modification, anger management and restorative justice programmes  |