**Psychology**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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 |