

Year One Teaching Sequence AQA A-Level Psychology

WEEK	Topic Title / Assessment	Content	Research Methods
1	Welcome	Introduction to course (Approaches)	
2		Introduction to course (Issues and Debates)	
3	Approaches and Research Methods (Paper 2)	The origins of psychology, including Wundt Introspection and emergence of psychology as a science	Features of science: objectivity and the empirical method; replicability and falsifiability; theory construction and hypothesis testing; paradigms and paradigm shifts.
4	SAQ Test	Psychodynamic approach The role of the unconscious The structure of personality Psychosexual stages	Case studies.
5	Essay test	Learning approaches Classical conditioning and Pavlov's research Operant conditioning and Skinner's research	Experimental method. Types of experiment, laboratory and field experiments; natural and quasi-experiments.
6	SAQ Test	Social learning theory and Bandura's research	Observational techniques. Types of observation: naturalistic and controlled observation; covert and overt observation; participant and non-participant observation.
7	Essay test	Humanistic approach Free will Self-actualisation The self, congruence and conditions of worth	Self-report techniques. Questionnaires; interviews, structured and unstructured.
8	SAQ Test	Cognitive approach Internal mental processes and theoretical and computer model The role of schemas The emergence of cognitive neuroscience	Correlations. Analysis of the relationship between co-variables. The difference between correlations and experiments. Analysis and interpretation of correlation, including correlation coefficients. Positive, negative and zero correlations. Scattergrams.
9	Essay test	Biological approach Genes, biological structures and neurochemistry Genes and phenotypes Evolution and behaviour	
10	Biopsychology Part 1 (Paper 2)	The divisions of the nervous system: central and peripheral (somatic and autonomic). The structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons. The process of synaptic transmission, including reference to neurotransmitters, excitation and inhibition.	
11	SAQ Test	The function of the endocrine system: glands and hormones. The fight or flight response including the role of adrenaline.	
12	Approaches (Paper 2)	Comparisons of approaches	
13	Memory (Paper 1) UNIT TEST: Approaches	The multi-store model of memory Sensory register: Coding, capacity, duration Short term memory: Coding, capacity, duration Long term memory: Coding, capacity, duration	Aims: stating aims, the difference between aims and hypotheses. Hypotheses: directional and non-directional.
14	SAQ Test	The working memory model Features of central executive, Features of phonological loop, Features of visuo-spatial sketchpad Features of episodic buffer.	Sampling: the difference between population and sample; sampling techniques including random, systematic, stratified, opportunity and volunteer; implications of sampling techniques, including bias and generalisation.
	Essay test	Content analysis and coding. Thematic analysis.	

15	SAQ Test	Types of long-term memory Episodic; Semantic; Procedural	Experimental designs: repeated measures, independent groups, matched pairs. Quantitative and qualitative data; the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.
16	SAQ Test	Explanations of forgetting Proactive and retroactive interference Retrieval failure due to absence of cues	Control: random allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation and standardisation. Ethics, including the role of the British Psychological Society's code of ethics; ethical issues in the design and conduct of psychological studies; dealing with ethical issues in research.
17	Essay test	Factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony Misleading information - leading questions and post event discussion Roll of anxiety	Reliability across all methods of investigation. Ways of assessing reliability: test-retest and inter-observer; improving reliability.
18	SAQ Test	Improving the accuracy of eyewitness testimony cognitive interview	Types of validity across all methods of investigation: face validity, concurrent validity, ecological validity and temporal validity. Assessment of validity. Improving validity. Pilot studies and the aims of piloting.
19		Data handling and analysis: Descriptive statistics: measures of central tendency – mean, median, mode; calculation of mean, median and mode; measures of dispersion; range and standard deviation; calculation of range; calculation of percentages; positive, negative and zero correlations. Presentation and display of quantitative data: graphs, tables, bar charts, histograms. Distributions: normal and skewed distributions; characteristics of normal and skewed distributions. Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval.	
20	Attachment (Paper 1) UNIT TEST: Memory and Research Methods	Caregiver-infant interactions in humans: reciprocity and interactional synchrony. Stages of attachment identified by Schaffer. Multiple attachments and the role of the father.	Experiments: Research Report
21	SAQ Test	Animal studies of attachment: Lorenz. Animal studies of attachment: Harlow.	Reporting psychological investigations. Sections of a scientific report: abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion and referencing.
22	Essay test	Explanations of attachment: learning theory. Explanations of attachment: Bowlby's monotropic theory. The concepts of a critical period and an internal working model.	
23	SAQ Test	Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'. Types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant and insecure-resistant. Cultural variations in attachment, including van Ijzendoorn.	
24	Essay test	Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. Romanian orphan studies: effects of institutionalisation.	
25		The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model.	Research Report Submission
26	Social Influence (Paper 1) UNIT TEST: Attachment and Research Methods	Types of conformity: internalisation, identification and compliance. Explanations for conformity: informational social influence and normative social influence, Variables affecting conformity including group size, unanimity and task difficulty as investigated by Asch	
27	SAQ Test	Conformity to social roles as investigated by Zimbardo.	
28	Essay test	Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority. Situational variables affecting obedience including proximity, location as investigated by Milgram and uniform. Dispositional explanation for obedience: the Authoritarian Personality.	

29		Explanations of resistance to social influence Social support Locus of control.
30		Minority influence. Consistency; Commitment; Flexibility The role of social influence processes in social change.
31	End Of Year Exams	Topics Tested: Approaches, Research methods, Memory, Attachment.
32		The role of social influence processes in social change.
33	Biopsychology Part 2 (Paper 2)	Review and Consolidation of Biopsychology part 1
34		Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation Motor, somatosensory, visual, auditory and language centres; Broca's and Wernick's areas, Split brain research.
35	UNIT TEST: Social Influence and Research Methods	Plasticity and functional recovery of the brain after trauma.
36	SAQ Test	Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques, including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI); electroencephalogram (EEGs) and event-related potentials (ERPs). Post-mortem examinations.
37	Essay test	Biological rhythms: circadian, infradian and ultradian and the difference between these rhythms.
38		The effect of endogenous pacemakers and exogenous zeitgebers on the sleep/wake cycle
39		Monkey World Trip for Observation Practical

Year Two Teaching Sequence AQA A-Level Psychology

WEEK	Topic Title	Content	Research Methods
1	Issues and Debates (Paper 3)	Gender and culture in Psychology– universality and bias. Gender bias including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias. Cultural bias, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. Determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism Biological, environmental and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations.	
2	SAQ Test	The nature-nurture debate The relative importance of heredity and environment in determining behaviour. The interactionist approach.	
3	Essay test	Holism and reductionism: levels of explanation in Psychology. Biological reductionism; environmental (stimulus-response) reductionism Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation.	
4	Psychopathology (Paper 1) UNIT TEST: Issues and Debates	Definitions of abnormality, including: deviation from social norms; failure to function adequately; statistical infrequency and deviation from ideal mental health The behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of: phobias, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).	Distributions: normal and skewed distributions; characteristics of normal and skewed distributions.
5	SAQ Test	The behavioural approach to explaining and treating phobias: the two-process model, including classical and operant conditioning; systematic desensitisation, including relaxation and use of hierarchy, flooding.	
6	Essay test	The cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression: Beck's negative triad; Ellis's ABC model and cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), including challenging irrational thoughts.	Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval. Probability and significance: use of statistical tables and critical values in interpretation of significance; Type I and Type II errors.

			Factors affecting the choice of statistical test, including level of measurement and experimental design. When to use the following tests: Spearman's rho, Pearson's r, Wilcoxon, Mann-Whitney, related t-test, unrelated t-test and Chi-Squared test.
7		The biological approach to explaining and treating OCD: genetic and neural explanations; drug therapy	Primary and secondary data, including meta-analysis. The implications of psychological research for the economy.
8	Schizophrenia (Paper 3)	Classification of schizophrenia. Positive symptoms of schizophrenia, including hallucinations and delusions. Negative symptoms of schizophrenia, including speech poverty and avolition.	
9		Reliability and validity in diagnosis and classification of schizophrenia Reference to co-morbidity Culture and gender bias and symptom overlap.	Correlation and Self Report (Practical)
10	Mocks	Mocks 1: Paper 2	
11			
12	SAQ Test	Biological explanations for schizophrenia Genetics and neural correlates The dopamine hypothesis.	
13	Essay test	Psychological explanations for schizophrenia Family dysfunction Cognitive explanations, including dysfunctional thought processing.	
14	SAQ Test	Drug therapy Typical antipsychotics. Atypical antipsychotics	
	Essay test	Cognitive behaviour therapy and family therapy as used in the treatment of schizophrenia. Token economies as used in the management of schizophrenia.	
15		The importance of an interactionist approach in explaining and treating schizophrenia The diathesis-stress model.	
16			Correlation and Self Report (Practical) Complete
17	Gender (Paper 3) UNIT TEST: Schizophrenia and Research Methods	Sex and gender. Sex-role stereotypes. Androgyny and measuring androgyny including the Bem Sex Role Inventory.	
18	SAQ Test	The role of chromosomes and hormones (testosterone, oestrogen and oxytocin) in sex and gender. Atypical sex chromosome patterns: Klinefelter's syndrome and Turner's syndrome.	
19	Essay test	Cognitive explanations of gender development. Kohlberg's theory Gender identity, gender stability and gender constancy Gender schema theory.	
20		Psychodynamic explanation of gender development Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Oedipus complex; Electra complex identification and internalisation.	
21		Social learning theory as applied to gender development. The influence of culture and media on gender roles.	
22	Mocks	Mocks 2 (Paper 1)	
23			
24		Atypical gender development: gender dysphoria. Biological and social explanations for gender dysphoria.	
25		Exam Review Papers One and Two	
26	Forensic (Paper 3) UNIT TEST: Gender	Offender profiling The top-down approach, including organised and disorganised types of offender The bottom-up approach, including investigative Psychology; geographical profiling	
27	SAQ Test	Biological explanations of offending behaviour An historical approach (atavistic form)	

		Genetics and neural explanations.
28	Essay test	Psychological explanations of offending behaviour Eysenck's theory of the criminal personality Cognitive explanations; level of moral reasoning and cognitive distortions, including hostile attribution bias and minimalization; Differential association theory Psychodynamic explanations.
29		Dealing with offending behaviour The aims of custodial sentencing and the psychological effects of custodial sentencing. Recidivism. Behaviour modification in custody. Anger management Restorative justice programmes
30	Mocks	Paper 3
31		REVISION
32		REVISION