

teachers' handbook

Version 2 April 2010



GCSE Psychology

J611 – Full Course

This handbook is designed to accompany the OCR GCSE Psychology specification for teaching from September 2009. This booklet contains the following support materials:

Subject specific guidance

Resource list

Publisher partner resources

Frequently asked questions

Other forms of support.

OCR GCSE
PSYCHOLOGY

Contents

Contents	2
Introduction	3
Subject Specific Guidance	4
Resources	9
Other forms of Support	10
Frequently Asked Questions	13

Introduction

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009.

We've taken this opportunity to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and students alike.

We've made improvements in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing student's personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so you can choose the best learning approach for the job.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment to be either a linear or unitised fashion.

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specification and to support you while teaching them.

It is important to make the point that this Teacher Handbook plays a secondary role to the Specifications themselves. The GCSE Psychology Specification is the document on which assessment is based: it specifies what content and skills need to be covered. At all times therefore, the Teacher Handbook should be read in conjunction with the Specification. If clarification on a particular point is sought, then that clarification must be found in the Specification itself.

Subject Specific Guidance

Units 1 and 2: Content

There are 10 main topics in this specification. These are assessed across Units 1 and 2, and represent five key approaches (two topics per approach). The approaches are Biological Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences. The 10 topics are: Sex & Gender, Memory, Attachment, Obedience and Atypical Behaviour (on Unit 1) and Criminal Behaviour, Perception, Cognitive Development, Non-Verbal Communication and The Self (on Unit 2).

Each topic has the same generic structure: key concepts, a core theory (and alternative theory), a core study and applications.

Key Concepts

Each topic has a number of key concepts that candidates need to have knowledge and understanding of. They may be asked to recognise, state, describe and explain the meaning of these key concepts in an examination and, where appropriate, illustrate with examples. It is also possible that candidates will have to apply their knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a source. For example, this may include identifying a masculine behaviour (Sex & Gender), a common phobia (Atypical Behaviour) or a stage of development (Cognitive Development).

Core Theory

The core theory in each topic is the main theory that candidates need to know in some detail. The specification also refers to specific concepts that relate to each theory. Candidates need to understand these concepts to be able to describe the core theory. Not only that, but candidates may be asked to recognise, identify, describe or explain specific concepts associated with theories (e.g. monotropy in Bowlby's theory of attachment, brain dysfunction in the biological theory of crime, or reinforcement in the social learning theory of non-verbal communication). Where appropriate, candidates should also be prepared to offer examples of these concepts. It is also possible that they will have to apply their knowledge and understanding of key concepts to a source. For example, this may include identifying the effect of consensus (Obedience) or the role of self-actualisation (The Self).

As well as answering questions on specific concepts, it is feasible that candidates could be asked to give an overall description of a theory – normally for 4 or more marks. Quite often it will require evaluation too – for up to 5 marks. Candidates may even be asked to evaluate a theory without having described it – this will normally be a question focusing on the criticism (or criticisms) of a theory. It is feasible that candidates can be asked for just one criticism of a theory which is worth 3 marks to them, so candidates should be able to elaborate on any criticisms they are aware of.

When describing a theory it is recommended, although not essential, that candidates detail the specific concepts listed in the specification. For example, if describing the multi-store model this

would include sensory store, short-term memory, long-term memory, capacity, duration, attention, rehearsal, decay and displacement.

When evaluating a theory, it is enough for candidates to offer criticisms although positive evaluation will receive credit too. When specifically asked for criticisms, candidates should only focus on the negative points of theories.

Alternative Theory

As part of the evaluation of core theories, the specification suggests an alternative theory. Candidates must know and understand these alternative theories and can use them as part of their criticism of a core theory (e.g. contrasting constructivist and nativist theories when considering perception).

Candidates do not need to know the alternative theories in as much detail as core theories. This is indicated by the fact that there are no more than two concepts per alternative theory on the specification. However, these specific concepts need to be understood as there may be questions on them (e.g. Oedipus and Electra complexes are specified in reference to psychoanalytic theory: the alternative theory in Sex & Gender).

Candidates may be asked to describe an alternative theory in the examination but a maximum of 6 marks will be attached to this and only then when there is sufficient detail for candidates to cover. It is much more likely to be a 3 or 4 mark question. There will be no requirement for candidates to evaluate an alternative theory, only describe it.

Occasionally there will be questions that ask about a theory generally (e.g. a theory of criminal behaviour) in which case candidates may offer the alternative theory (social learning theory of crime instead of the biological theory). In this particular instance, candidates may even offer (and receive full credit for) another theory they have studied even if it does not appear on the specification.

Core Study

Each topic has a core study which pertains to the core theory. This study is specified and is referenced at the end of the specification. Candidates need to know each study in some detail because specific questions can be asked about the study (e.g. multiple choice questions) so details of method, experimental design, sample, variables, controls, etc are important.

Candidates may also be asked to describe a study, and this will normally be worth 4 or 5 marks. Here, candidates must be careful to include a description of both procedure **and** findings otherwise full credit cannot be given. Sometimes, questions will specifically require candidates to describe just the procedure or just the findings. These more focused questions will usually carry 3 marks. On this basis, it is worth distinguishing between planning and carrying out a study (procedure) and results and conclusions (findings).

As with core theories, candidates can be asked to evaluate core studies as well as describe them. This can be worth up to 5 marks. Candidates may even be asked to evaluate a study without having described it – this will normally be a question focusing on a limitation (or limitations) of a study. It is feasible that candidates can be asked for just one limitation of a study which is worth 3 marks to them, so candidates should be able to elaborate on any limitations they are aware of.

When evaluating a study, it is enough for candidates to offer limitations although positive evaluation will receive credit too. When specifically asked for limitations, candidates should only focus on the negative points of theories. Limitations need not be strictly methodological and can focus on issues such as ethics, historical bias, and cultural bias.

Occasionally, a question will give candidates the opportunity to describe (and evaluate) any study in a particular topic e.g. 'describe one study into attachment'. In these circumstances, candidates can offer and receive full credit for another study they have learnt about. On this basis, Centres are encouraged to teach about other studies if they so wish. However, they must include the core study (as there are likely to be specific questions about that one).

Applications

There is a significant emphasis on applications in this specification – in other words, looking at how psychological research is made use of in real-life settings. These real-life settings are specified (e.g. memory aids in Memory, counselling in The Self) but beyond that the specification only gives examples of what Centres may wish to cover. If a Centre wants their students to learn about a different application (e.g. a memory aid not listed) this is acceptable as long as it falls within the specified field of application. This is because an exam question may be specific about the area of application (e.g. social skills training in Non-Verbal Communication). However, an examination question could be broader than this and ask generally about how research is applied. For example, a question could ask a candidate to 'Explain one application of research into obedience' rather than specifying keeping order in institutions (as per the specification).

The general idea is that the specification gives Centres more flexibility in how they deliver applications of a particular area of research. Before this point the specification is purposefully prescriptive in order to give Centres as much guidance as possible on what needs to be covered and also to give paper setters the opportunity to ask focused and direct questions of candidates.

Units 1 and 2: Assessment

Sections A, B and C on both units should not have questions with a tariff that is higher than 4 marks. Each section is worth 15 marks. Each section will cover a different topic from the five allocated to that unit.

Section D will cover a fourth topic. Again, questions should not be worth more than 4 marks apart from the final question which will always carry 6 marks. This question could require candidates to describe a theory or a study for 6 marks, or to describe and evaluate a theory or study – in which case there will be up to 4 marks for the description and up to 2 marks for the evaluation. The 6 mark question also assesses quality of written communication and uses band descriptors to do this. This section is worth 15 marks in total.

Section E will cover the fifth topic. Questions should not be worth more than 4 marks apart from the final question which will always carry 10 marks. This question could require candidates to describe and evaluate either a theory or a study. There will be 5 marks for the description and 5 marks for the evaluation. The 10 mark question also assesses quality of written communication and uses band descriptors to do this. This section is worth 20 marks in total.

Candidates are expected to answer all sections and questions.

Unit 3: Content

Unit 3 is about how research works in psychology. The content appears more detailed than the topics making up the other units, but this is because there a range of concepts that candidates need to know and understand. However, these concepts are very specific and so do not require a detailed knowledge. On this basis, candidates can expect many low tariff questions in the Unit 3 examination.

Research methods can be partly taught through the core studies on Units 1 and 2 as they cover many of the key methods, samples, designs, controls, etc listed on this part of the specification. However, Centres should be mindful that the core studies do not necessarily address all features of research methodology. On this basis, there at least needs to be some 'stand alone' teaching of research in psychology.

It is recommended that candidates learn about research by actually doing some research. Although there is no formal requirement that they do this, it should benefit them in an assessment where they need to apply their knowledge and understanding of research. Candidates could experience research within topics (e.g. carrying out an experiment in Memory or doing an observation in Non-Verbal Communication) or they can carry out investigations which are distinct from the main topic areas.

There are four main methods that candidates need to have a good understanding of: experiments, questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Unit 3: Assessment

Section A will present candidates with source material describing a piece of research.

Candidates will then answer a series of questions pertaining to the source. Some will require extracting or making interpretations from information in the source. Other questions will be more independent of the source but related to ideas within it. This section is worth 25 marks.

Section B will present candidates with a short brief telling them about an investigation they will need to design themselves. Candidates will be told what method of research needs to be used in their planning, and the choice will be from one of the four main methods listed in the previous sub-section. Candidates will **not** be simply asked to design an investigation but will be given a series of questions to help them focus their planning (e.g. asking about possible hypotheses, samples, controls, procedures, ethical issues, etc). This section is worth 15 marks.

Assessment Objectives

AO1 is only assessed on Units 1 and 2 (35 marks out of 80 on each paper).

AO1 is assessed when questions ask candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key concepts, core theories (and their concepts), alternative theories, or core studies. This can be done by asking candidates to state, describe or explain ideas, but can also be assessed through questions that require choosing between true or false, choosing from multiple choice items, matching of boxes, completion of tables, or completion of cloze passages.

AO2 is only assessed on Units 1 and 2 (35 marks out of 80 on each paper).

AO2 is assessed when questions ask candidates to evaluate or criticise a theory, or detail an application. It is also assessed when candidates are given source material and either asked to interpret it, or apply their knowledge and understanding to it.

AO3 is mainly assessed on Unit 3 (all 40 marks are AO3 marks) as this paper focuses exclusively on research in psychology. However, AO3 is also assessed on Units 1 and 2 (10 marks out of 80 on each paper). Here AO3 is assessed when questions ask about the limitations of studies, or more broadly ask candidates to evaluate a study.

Resources

The list below is by no means exhaustive. Inclusion does not necessarily mean complete suitability, unless the resource has been endorsed by OCR. The list is intended to act as a broad guide. It is also recognised that teachers may be familiar with other relevant resources that are not listed below.

Teachers will need to use their professional judgement in assessing the suitability of materials in the list below.

OCR recognises that the teaching of this qualification will vary greatly from school to school and from teacher to teacher. With that in mind, this Teacher Guide and the associated Scheme of Work are offered as guidance but will be subject to modifications by the individual teacher.

A resource list for teachers

Textbooks

Heinemann is producing the following resources for OCR GCSE Psychology for first teaching in September 2009, which will be available in Spring 2009.

OCR GCSE Psychology Student Book – Mark Billingham, David Groves
ISBN: 978 0 435807 69 6 (Available Spring 2009)

OCR GCSE Psychology Teachers Presentations – available free online
ISBN: 978 0 435807 69 6 (Available Spring 2009)

Woods, Oliver & Banyard, OCR Psychology for GCSE: Psychology First, Hodder Arnold.
ISBN: 978 0 340985 32 8

Piaget, J. (1952) The child's conception of number, London: Routledge

Websites

Internet sites such as You Tube (<http://uk.youtube.com/>) will allow quick access to a number of useful clips. Please remember that this site contains clips that may not be edited and its use should be regulated.

Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com) is a huge resource of information. Although, it is unedited and may not always contain correct information.

(www.bbc.co.uk) is an excellent source of information for some of the topics in the GCSE specification. It has a good data section and search facility.

<http://www.psypress.com>

<http://www.feralchildren.com>

<http://www.bps.org.uk>

Other forms of Support

In order to help you implement the new GCSE Psychology Specification effectively, OCR offers a comprehensive package of support. This includes:

Published Resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

Publisher partners

OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- Better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications
- Quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials
- More resources for specifications with lower candidate entries
- Materials that are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement

Heinemann is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE Psychology.



Heinemann is producing the following resources for OCR GCSE Psychology for first teaching in September 2009, which were available in Spring 2009.

OCR GCSE Psychology Evaluation Pack - Student Book
Mark Billingham, David Groves
ISBN: 978 0 435807 69 6
Published: May 2009

Approved publications

OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.



Endorsement

OCR endorses a range of publisher materials to provide quality support for centres delivering its qualifications. You can be confident that materials branded with OCR's "Official Publishing Partner" or "Approved publication" logos have undergone a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. All responsibility for the content of the publisher's materials rests with the publisher.

These endorsements do not mean that the materials are the only suitable resources available or necessary to achieve an OCR qualification. Any resource lists which are produced by OCR shall include a range of appropriate texts.

OCR Training

A full range of training events provide valuable support, for the delivery and assessment of OCR qualifications:

Get Ready...

An overview of new OCR specifications

Get Started...

For teachers preparing to deliver or already delivering OCR specifications

Get Ahead...

For teachers wanting to improve delivery and assessment of a current OCR specification

Lead the way...

To encourage creativity and innovation

View up-to-date event details and make online bookings at www.ocreventbooker.org.uk or view our new training e-books at www.ocr.org.uk/training. If you are unable to find what you are looking for contact us by e-mail training@ocr.org.uk or telephone 02476 496398.

e-Communities

Over 70 e-Communities offer you a fast, dynamic communication channel to make contact with other subject specialists. Our online mailing list covers a wide range of subjects and enables you to share knowledge and views via email.

Visit <https://community.ocr.org.uk>, choose your community and join the discussion!

Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate a free access to candidate information at you convenience. Sign up at <https://interchange.ocr.org.uk>

Frequently Asked Questions

Is it feasible to teach GCSE in a year?

Yes. The recommended number of guided learning hours for the qualification is between 120 and 140 hours, which is feasible if students have approximately 4 hours per week. Many centres successfully teach the legacy specification in one year and the new qualification is potentially less content-heavy with only 10 topics rather than 12 and no coursework to run.

Can I teach other studies besides the core studies listed in the specification?

Definitely. Many teachers have studies they like to teach and as long as they are related to the topic areas on the specification this would make sense. Not only will this enrich your students' learning, but there will be some opportunities for them to describe other studies in the examination and be assessed on this. Although most questions about studies will focus on core studies, on occasions, questions will allow candidates to describe any study into the area being assessed e.g. a study into attachment, a study into memory, etc.

Do my students have to be able to evaluate the alternative theories listed in the specification?

No. The alternative studies are there to help students to evaluate the core study. The most that candidates will have to do is to describe the alternative theory and this will be for a maximum of 6 marks (at the end of a Section D on Units 1 or 2).

How much detail do students need to know for each core study?

Relatively detailed knowledge is required. This is because your students can be asked to just describe the *procedure* or just the *findings* of a core study, and this can be for a maximum of 4 marks but is more likely to be for 3 marks. A well prepared student should know four features of the procedure and four aspects of the findings for each core study. However, we are aware that some studies are not that detailed when looking at the findings and this will be considered when setting the tariff for a question. If a candidate has to describe a study overall, this will be for a maximum of 6 marks – but is likely to only be worth 4 marks if a 'stand-alone' question or worth 5 marks as part of a 10 mark essay question. Your candidates should also be aware that when asked to describe a study they will need to detail both procedure *and* findings to have a chance of earning full marks.

Is there a text book to support the course?

OCR has a publishing partnership with Heinemann to produce a text book written exclusively for the new specification. This is due to be available to purchase in Spring 2009, and to be used as an active resource in the classroom.

Do students have to carry out their own research?

There is no explicit requirement for candidates to carry out research. However, we are hoping that many teachers will still want to do investigations with their students - not only because it is an important part of doing Psychology and engages many students, but also because it will be good preparation for the examinations. If your students have experienced research it should help them

to make better sense of the core studies that they have to learn about. More importantly, in the Unit 3 examination, candidates have to apply their knowledge of research, including having to design their own investigation 'on the spot'. We believe this will be a lot easier for them if they have actually gone through the process of designing (and executing) research outside of the examination room.

Why is there no longer any coursework in GCSE?

This decision was made by QCA (now OfQual) after consultation with a number of bodies including teacher representatives. Since all examination boards are obliged to adhere to QCA's codes and policies, none of them are offering a new GCSE in Psychology that has a coursework element.

When can I start teaching the new specification?

The first time it is possible to obtain a full award in the new GCSE is in 2011. This means that candidates following a two year course will need to be taught the new specification as from September 2009. However, students following a one year course will start in September 2010. The last time the legacy specification is to be examined is Summer 2010.

Can students sit examinations in both years if they are on a two year course?

This is a possibility. For example, candidates can do one of the 'Studies and Applications' units in Year 10 (worth 40%) and the two remaining units in Year 11. The rule is that at least 40% of the qualification needs to be sat terminally (at the end of the course in the series of award). This means, in theory, that 60% of the qualification may be sat in the first year of a two year course.

Will students be able to sit examinations in January as well as June?

Yes, there are two examination series each year, in January and June.

Is it possible for students to re-sit the examinations in this qualification?

The modular or unitised course has not only been designed to spread the 'burden of assessment', but to also allow opportunities for re-sits. Candidates may re-sit each unit once within the period of the qualification i.e. before being awarded a final grade.

Candidates can re-enter the full qualification as many times as they wish.

Does it matter what order I teach the topics in?

Not at all. However, if you want your students to follow a modular course and sit different units at different times then this will restrict the flexibility. For example, there are five topics that you must teach before students are able to successfully sit Unit 1. However, the order in which you teach these five topics does not matter as they are independent of each other.

Can I teach my students about different applications than those listed on the specification?

Yes. The 'Applications' part of each topic is less prescriptive than other parts, and this offers you some flexibility and choice in what you teach or what your students learn about. The specification offers some examples of applications for each area of research – but they are only examples. For

instance, in Memory, the specification suggests that cues, imagery and organisation might be examples of applications of research into memory aids. However, because they are just 'suggestions', this means that question setters will not assume that these specific examples have necessarily been covered. For instance, a teacher may decide to use chunking techniques or rehearsal as examples of memory aids. Teachers need to be careful they do not go beyond the specified area of application though. For example, when studying Perception students should consider applications to advertising – it would therefore not be appropriate to teach them about the role of perception in driving, nor the role of perception in sport.

What kind of things can we expect 10 mark questions to be based on?

It is worth pointing out that 10 marks is the highest tariff for any question in the new OCR GCSE Psychology qualification. There will only be 10 mark questions on Units 1 and 2, and this will always appear at the end of the paper. There will only ever be one 10 mark question per paper, and this could relate to any of the five topic areas on each unit. It is essentially the 'essay question' and will always start with the commands 'describe and evaluate'. On the basis that candidates will have to be able to evaluate something as well as describe it, the question is limited to theories and studies. The question can only specify the core theories as there is no requirement for candidates to be able to evaluate the alternative theory – however the candidates could get a general question, such as 'Describe and evaluate one theory of attachment' which would allow them to discuss other theories if they wished to and were equipped to. Similarly, with research, the essay question can only specify core studies as these are the only ones listed on the specification. However, the candidates could get a general question, such as 'Describe and evaluate one study into non-verbal communication'.

Are students assessed on their quality of written communication?

Yes they are. Unlike the legacy specification where a QWC mark is added at the end, it is now incorporated into the mark scheme on the new specification. However, there is only a requirement that candidates demonstrate satisfactory quality of written communication in their extended responses to questions – this would therefore apply to the one 6 mark question and the one 10 mark question on Units 1 and 2. The scores for these essays are banded into three levels – each level makes reference to quality of written communication as well as content. For example, a top band essay will need to show a good level of quality of written communication, as well as a high level of knowledge and understanding and some ability to evaluate.

Is there more to learn on this new specification?

One of the reasons for reviewing GCSE's was to reduce the burden of assessment. This included looking at the content. If we accept that Unit 3 on the new qualification is a direct comparison to the coursework unit of the legacy specification, then the remaining two Units on the new specification should be at least comparable to the two exam units on the legacy specification. In fact, whereas the legacy specification has six topics per unit, the new specification only has five per unit. In addition, each topic has been 'slimmed down' to key concepts, one core theory (and an alternative for comparison), one core study and one area of application. At first sight, the new specification appears to have more content but, on closer inspection, the detail comes from specification being more specific about what should be taught. For example, the legacy specification required candidates to learn about Bowlby's theory of attachment but did not specify what aspects. The new specification makes the same requirement, but now specifies the features that your students should learn: monotropy, critical period, etc. This hopefully reduces any ambiguity about what needs to be covered in a theory whilst also allowing the question setters to ask more targeted questions about specific features.

What is the new AO3 skill all about?

In formal terms, it requires candidates to 'interpret, analyse and evaluate psychological data and practice'. This amounts to your students knowing how Psychology works in line with the QCA's requirement that candidates should know about how any science works. It may be a newly identified skill but it is not a brand new requirement - GCSE Psychology students have always been assessed on what they understand about the research process and how to view it critically.

Is AO3 only tested on the Unit 3 paper?

Unit 3 is dedicated to assessing candidates' understanding of research methodology and, on this basis, contains only AO3 marks. However, the specification requires that 30% of the assessment focuses on AO3 skills yet Unit 3 only makes up 20% of the qualification. On this basis, the remaining 10% of AO3 marks are contained equally in Units 1 and 2. They are assessed here by asking candidates about the limitations of selected core studies.

Do students have to have studied the GCSE to do A-Level Psychology?

No – there is no formal requirement at all. However, the new GCSE Psychology specification and qualification was designed with the new OCR A-level specification in mind and is good preparation for any A-level in Psychology. We are confident that it will offer both continuity and progression for GCSE students moving onto A-level, as well as some variety in terms of many different topics and distinct core studies.

Is Psychology GCSE an alternative to other science GCSE's?

In theory, yes. QCA designated Psychology as a science from 2006. It sits alongside 'traditional' sciences such as biology and chemistry, and newer ones such as astronomy. Whether it is offered as an alternative to other sciences depends more on the organisation of your school or college.

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored.
© OCR 2008 Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England.
Registered office 1 Hills Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU. Registered company number 3484466. OCR is an exempt charity.



FS 27093