

Edexcel GCE Psychology (GCE 2008)

Information about the specification for AQA-A centres:

Edexcel content (GCE 2008 specification)	Edexcel new specification reference	AQA-A content (GCE 2008 specification)
STRUCTURE AND GENERAL		
2 AS units and 4 A2 units (same)	N/A	Two AS units and 4 A2 units (same).
Five core topic areas - social, cognitive, biological, individual differences and developmental (same).	Overall	Five core topic areas - social, cognitive, biological, individual differences and developmental (same).
How science works and mathematical requirements (same).	Spread through the 4 units	How science works and mathematical requirements (same).
Three assessment objectives: AO1, AO2 and AO3 with specific weightings (same).	N/A	Three assessment objectives: AO1, AO2 and AO3 with specific weightings (same).
All externally marked exams (same).		All externally marked exams (same).
Units 1 and 3 Winter and Summer series (same).	N/A	Units 1 and 3 Winter and Summer series (same).
Units 2 and 4 Summer series only. Note Units 2 and 4 are not available in the Winter series (different).	N/A	Units 2 and 4 Winter and Summer series (different).
Units 1 and 2 structure - structured compulsory questions. Use of stimulus material. 12-mark question at the end covering QWC (same).	N/A	Units 1 and 2 structure - structured compulsory questions. Use of stimulus material. 12-mark question at end covering QWC (same).
Unit 1 and Unit 2 have multiple choice questions at start (about 18%) (different).	N/A	No multiple-choice (different).
Unit 1 is 40% of the AS (20% of the A level) and Unit 3 is 40% of the A2 (20% of the A level). Units 1 and 3 are written so that a candidate has a good chance of covering the material and doing well in the January series (different).	N/A	Unit 1 is 50% of the AS (25% of the A level) and Unit 3 is 50% of the A2 (25% of the A level) (different).
Unit 2 is 60% of the AS (30% of the A level) and Unit 4 is 60% of the A2 (30% of the A level) (different).	N/A	Unit 2 is 50% of the AS (25% of the A level) and Unit 4 is 50% of the A2 (25% of the A level) (different).
Unit 3 has compulsory structured questions; one on four applications, and the candidate chooses 2 applications. So	Unit 3 material and structure (pp 42-55)	Unit 3 has three essay-style questions to choose from eight topics:

Unit 3 involves studying two applications of psychology from Criminological, Child, Health and Sport (different).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhythms/sleep • relationships • eating behaviour • intelligence and learning • perception • aggression • gender • cognition and development. <p>The candidate answers questions on three of these (different).</p>
Unit 4 has a compulsory application (Clinical) and a section on Issues and Debates (different).	Unit 4 material and structure (pp57-64)	Unit 4 includes a structured method question as well as issues and some Clinical Psychology - Psychopathology (different).

CONTENT		
<i>Edexcel Unit 1 - three sections</i>		<i>AQA-A Unit 1 - three sections</i>
1 Cognitive psychology: Memory (LOP and one other), Forgetting (cue dependent and one other, key issue, could be ewt), experiment as a practical and two studies in detail. The Edexcel spec specifically sets practicals and examines them directly.	Unit 1 (pp 19-23)	1 Cognitive psychology: Memory (multi store and working memory) and eyewitness testimony/improving memory (ewt is in Criminological Psychology. Unit 3 for the Edexcel specification). Practical are encouraged but not specified and examined directly.
2 Social psychology: Obedience and prejudice (SIT only), key issue, survey as a practical and two studies in detail.	Unit 1 (pp 14-18)	2 Developmental psychology: Attachments etc (this is in Child Psychology, Unit 3 for the Edexcel specification).
3 Research methods (<i>not additional or separate material</i>): In the Edexcel specification research methods are embedded (experiment in cognitive, survey in social for Unit 1, correlations, testing and observations for Unit 2).	Units 1 and 2 overall	3 Research methods: Experiments (Edexcel Unit 1), Correlations (Edexcel Unit 2), Surveys (Edexcel Unit 1), Observations (Edexcel Unit 2) and case studies (Edexcel Unit 2).

<p>4 Specific methodology (<i>not additional or separate material</i>): Throughout the AS and includes the same as the AQA-A, but without content analysis which is in Unit 3 (where a content analysis is carried out), and Unit 4 issues and debates.</p>	<p>Units 1 and 2 overall</p>	<p>4 Specific methodology: List of terms e.g. hypothesis - same as the Edexcel but AQA-A has content analysis in the AS not the A2 and Edexcel has inferential stats (three tests only) in the AS where AQA-A has them in the A2.</p>
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<i>Edexcel Unit 2 - three sections</i>		<i>AQA-A Unit 2 - three sections</i>
<p>1 Biological psychology: Genes, hormones, neurotransmitters, brain lateralisation and focus on gender. Key issue; practical that is a test using independent groups and the Mann Whitney, and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 31-35)</p>	<p>1 Biological psychology: Stress and factors to do with stress including psychological and physiological factors in stress management. Edexcel specification does not cover stress at all.</p>
<p>2 Psychodynamic approach: Oedipus complex, two defence mechanisms, psychosexual stages of development, id/ego/superego and focus on gender. Key issue; practical that is a correlational analysis using self-report data (Spearman test) and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 26-30)</p>	<p>2 Social psychology: Conformity, obedience, independent behaviour, locus of control and social influence/social change. Edexcel has obedience (and prejudice) in Unit 1.</p>
<p>3 Learning approach: Classical and operant conditioning and social learning theory - and a focus on gender. Key issue; practical that is an observation (chi squared test) and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 36-40)</p>	<p>3 Individual differences: Abnormality, psychopathology, treating abnormality. There is some focus on drug therapy (Edexcel has this in Unit 4 where Clinical Psychology is covered, and drug therapy is also in Unit 3 in Health Psychology).</p>
<p>4 Individual differences (<i>not additional or separate material</i>): For Edexcel individual differences and developmental psychology are covered using the psychodynamic, biological and learning approaches and focusing on gender for all three.</p>	<p>Unit 2 throughout</p>	

<i>Edexcel Unit 3 - four applications, choose two</i>		<i>AQA-A Unit 3 - eight areas, choose three</i>
<p>1 Criminological psychology: Two explanations for crime, eyewitness testimony and two ways of treating offenders. Key issue; practical and two studies in detail (AQA-A has ewt in Unit 1, cognitive psychology). Includes how experiments are used in criminological psychology.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 42-44)</p>	<p>The eight topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhythms/sleep • relationships • eating behaviour • intelligence and learning • perception • aggression • gender • cognition and development. <p>The candidate answers questions on three of these. Edexcel has eating behaviour as a choice in Unit 4, Clinical Psychology, gender throughout Unit 2 and learning theory in Unit 2 as well. The other topics are not covered in the Edexcel specification.</p>
<p>2 Child psychology: Attachments, deprivation, privation, daycare, one developmental issue e.g. ADHD, Autism, practical, key issue, and two studies in detail. Includes how observations and case studies are used in child psychology. AQA-A has a lot of the content material in developmental psychology in Unit 1 of the AS.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 45-47)</p>	<p>Four major approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cognitive • biological • behavioural and psychodynamic. <p>Covered through the above topics. Edexcel has these four approaches as a major part of the AS (with social also covered).</p>
<p>3 Health psychology: Two explanations for substance misuse, two drugs (heroin and one other) and how they work, two treatments for substance misuse, one campaign against drug use, key issue, practical and two studies in detail. Includes how drugs are researched in psychology including animal studies AQA-A has some detail on substance misuse in Unit 3 and the psychology of addictive behaviour as an option in Unit 4, psychology in action.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 48-51)</p>	<p>Issues and debates: Including gender, culture, animals in research, ethics, nature-nurture, free will, determinism /reductionism. Edexcel has these issues except for free will and determinism /reductionism (not on specification) in Unit 4 the issues and debates section as well as throughout (e.g. ethics in first part of Unit 1, gender is throughout Unit 2...).</p>



<p>4 Sport psychology: Two explanations for sporting performance and participation, two theories of motivation, two theories that between them cover arousal, anxiety and audience effect, two techniques for improving performance, two studies in detail, key issue and practical. Includes how questionnaires and correlational analyses are used in sport psychology.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 52-55)</p>	
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<i>Edexcel Unit 4 - two sections</i>		<i>AQA-A Unit 4 - three sections</i>
<p>1 Clinical psychology: Two definitions of abnormality, the DSM (reliability etc), explanations for, features of and treatments for schizophrenia, explanations for, features of and treatments for one other mental disorder (e.g. unipolar depression, anorexia nervosa...), three studies in detail, key issue and practical. Includes how schizophrenia is studied. Some of the content material is covered in Unit 3 of the AQA-A specification.</p>	<p>Unit 4 (pp 58-61)</p>	<p>1 Psychopathology: Schizophrenia or depression or anxiety disorders, including diagnosis, explanations and therapies. Similar to the Edexcel Clinical Psychology section.</p>
<p>2 Issues and debates: Contributions to society, ethical issues, research methods, key issues, debates (science, nature-nurture, ethnocentrism and social control). These five areas are covered drawing on the AS and A2 material - this is a synoptic element of the Edexcel specification with relatively little new learning (e.g. ethnocentrism is new). Quite a bit of this is covered in the AQA-A Unit 3.</p>	<p>Unit 4 (pp 62-64)</p>	<p>2 Psychology in Action: Media psychology or the psychology of addictive behaviour or anomalistic psychology. Edexcel has the psychology of addictive behaviour as Health Psychology in Unit 3. Edexcel does not have media psychology or anomalistic psychology in the specification (the effects of media are covered to a limited extent).</p>
		<p>3 Psychological research and scientific method: Research design, analysis, interpretation of data and science. Edexcel has the analysis element mainly in Unit 2 (3 inferential tests). Edexcel has methodology throughout the specification and summarised broadly in Issues and Debates in Unit 4.</p>

Edexcel GCE Psychology (GCE2008)

Information about the specification for OCR centres:

Edexcel content (GCE 2008 specification)	Edexcel new specification reference	OCR content (GCE 2008 specification)
STRUCTURE AND GENERAL		
2 AS units and 4 A2 units (same).	N/A	2 AS units and 4 A2 units (same).
Five core topic areas - social, cognitive, biological, individual differences and developmental (same).	Overall	Five core topic areas - social, cognitive, biological, individual differences and developmental (same).
How science work and mathematical requirements (same).	Spread through the 4 units	How science work and mathematical requirements (same).
Three assessment objectives AO1, AO2 and AO3 with specific weightings (same).	N/A	Three assessment objectives AO1, AO2 and AO3 with specific weightings (same).
All externally marked exams (same).		All externally marked exams (same).
Units 1 and 3 Winter and Summer series (same).	N/A	Units 1 and 3 Winter and Summer series (same).
Units 2 and 4 Summer series only. Note: Units 2 and 4 are not available in the Winter series (different).	N/A	Units 2 and 4 Winter and Summer series (different).
Units 1 and 2 structure - structured, compulsory questions. Use of stimulus material. 12-mark question at end covering QWC	N/A	Unit 1 has three compulsory sections. Unit 2 has three sections, with some choice in Sections B and C .
Unit 1 and Unit 2 have multiple-choice questions at start (about 18%) (different).	N/A	No multiple-choice (different).
Unit 1 is 40% of the AS (20% of the A level) and Unit 3 is 40% of the A2 (20% of the A level). Units 1 and 3 are written so that a candidate has a good chance of covering the material and doing well in the January series.	N/A	Unit 1 is 30% of the AS (15% of the A level). Unit 2 is 70% of the AS (35% of the A level). Unit 1 has less to focus on so could be done in January, however, as it is about research methods Unit 2 material could inform Unit 1.
Unit 2 is 60% of the AS (30% of the A level) and Unit 4 is 60% of the A2 (30% of the A level) (different).	N/A	Unit 3 and Unit 4 are both 50% of the A2 (25% of the A level) (different).
Unit 3 has compulsory structured questions: one on four applications, and the candidate chooses 2 applications. So Unit	Unit 3 material and structure (pp	Unit 3 has four topics to choose from, as with the Edexcel specification.

<p>3 involves studying two applications of psychology from Criminological, Child, Health and Sport (different).</p>	<p>42-55)</p>	<p>The topics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensic Psychology • Health and Clinical Psychology • Sport and Exercise Psychology • Psychology of Education (different but still four topics and a choice of two).
<p>Unit 4 has a compulsory application (Clinical) and a section on Issues and Debates (different).</p>	<p>Unit 4 material and structure (pp57-64)</p>	<p>Unit 4 includes planning a study and also issues and debates. The issues and debates section has a choice of essay questions.</p>



CONTENT		
<i>Edexcel Unit 1 - two sections</i>		<i>OCR Unit 1 -one main section on methodology</i>
1 Cognitive psychology: Memory (LOP and one other), Forgetting (cue dependent and one other), key issue (could be ewt), experiment as a practical and two studies in detail. The Edexcel specification specifically sets practicals and examines them directly.	Unit 1 (pp 19-23)	1 Psychological investigations: Unit 1 is 30% of the AS and focuses on practical investigations. Four areas are covered: self-report, experiments, observation and correlation. There are methodological issues covered within the practicals. Candidates can be asked about research in general, a proposal for a piece of research or analysis. Edexcel has these same issues throughout the AS Units and adds inferential statistics too (three tests).
2 Social psychology: Obedience and prejudice (SIT only), key issue, survey as a practical and two studies in detail.	Unit 1 (pp 14-18)	
3 Research methods (<i>not additional or separate material</i>): In the Edexcel specification research methods are embedded (experiment in cognitive, survey in social for Unit 1, correlations, testing and observations for Unit 2).	Units 1 and 2 overall	
4 Specific methodology (<i>not additional or separate material</i>): Throughout the AS and includes the same as the AQA-A but without content analysis (which is in Unit 3 where a content analysis is carried out, and Unit 4 issues and debates).	Units 1 and 2 overall	



<i>Edexcel Unit 2 -three sections</i>		<i>OCR Unit 2 - five sections, three studies in each</i>
<p>1 Biological psychology: Genes, hormones, neurotransmitters, brain lateralisation and focus on gender, key issues, practical that is a test using independent groups and the Mann Whitney, and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 31-35)</p>	<p>Core studies: Unit 2 involves 15 core studies across different areas of psychology. There are three studies in five areas: 1 Cognitive psychology: Covers Loftus and Palmer, which links to memory and forgetting in Edexcel's cognitive psychology and to Unit 3 criminological. Covers Baron-Cohen's work on theory of mind which links to Edexcel's biological psychology in Unit 2 and Unit 3 Child Psychology (as possible issues). Chimps and language is the other study and not covered in the Edexcel specification.</p>
<p>2 Psychodynamic approach: Oedipus complex, two defence mechanisms, psychosexual stages of development, id/ego/superego and focus on gender, key issue, practical that is a correlational analysis using self report data (Spearman test) and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 26-30)</p>	<p>2 Developmental psychology: Covers Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) which is found in Unit 2 in the Edexcel specification - the learning approach. Covers Freud's Little Hans study, which is in Unit 2 of the Edexcel specification in the psychodynamic approach. And the other study is on conservation (Piaget), not covered in the Edexcel specification.</p>
<p>3 Learning approach: Classical and operant conditioning and social learning theory - and a focus on gender, key issue, practical that is an observation (chi squared test) and two studies in detail.</p>	<p>Unit 2 (pp 36-40)</p>	<p>3 Physiological psychology: Covers three studies that are not covered in the Edexcel specification though the study looking at the role of the hippocampus in memory links to the Cognitive Psychology section of Unit 1.</p>
	<p>Unit 2 throughout</p>	



		<p>4 Social psychology: Covers Milgram (1963) and Reicher and Haslam (2006) both of which are in the Edexcel Unit 1 social psychology section. The third study is Piliavin <i>et al</i> (1969), which the Edexcel social psychology section does not cover.</p>
<p>Individual differences (not additional or separate material): For Edexcel individual differences and developmental psychology are covered using the psychodynamic, biological and learning approaches and focusing on gender for all three.</p>		<p>5 The psychology of individual differences: The Rosenhan (1973) study is in Unit 4 Clinical Psychology in the Edexcel specification. The other two studies, one on multiple personality and one of cognitive bias in gambling are not covered in the Edexcel specification.</p>



<i>Edexcel Unit 3 - four applications, choose two</i>		<i>OCR Unit 3 - four sections, choose two</i>
<p>1 Criminological psychology: Two explanations for crime, eyewitness testimony and two ways of treating offenders, key issue, practical and two studies in detail (AQA-A has ewt in Unit 1, cognitive psychology). Includes how experiments are used in criminological psychology.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 42-44)</p>	<p>1 Forensic Psychology: Covers upbringing and turning to crime, which is partly in Criminological Psychology in the Edexcel specification. Covers cognition and crime (thinking patterns), which is not covered in the Edexcel specification. Covers biology and crime, and the biology partly covered in Unit 2, Unit 3 Health and Unit 4 Clinical Psychology (e.g. genes, neurotransmitter functioning, etc.) Covers interviewing witnesses and suspects, which is partly covered in Unit 3 Criminological Psychology, in the Edexcel specification and creating a profile, which can be a key issue in the Edexcel application (Criminological). Covers reaching a verdict, which is not covered in the Edexcel specification. Covers after a guilty verdict, which is not covered either but treatment programmes are found on both specifications.</p>
<p>2 Child psychology: Attachments, deprivation, privation, day care, one developmental issue e.g. ADHD, Autism, practical, key issue and two studies in detail. Includes: how observations and case studies are used in child psychology. AQA-A has a lot of the content material in developmental psychology in Unit 1 of the AS.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 45-47)</p>	<p>2 Psychology of Education: Covers teaching and learning, where behaviourism is covered and is in the Unit 2 learning approach in the Edexcel specification but the rest is not covered in the Edexcel specification. Covers student participation (e.g. motivation, which is in Edexcel Sport Psychology) but most is not in the Edexcel specification, which does not look at the psychology of education. Covers dealing with diversity, which is partly in Child Psychology in the Edexcel specification, such as additional needs, but mainly this section is not in the Edexcel specification.</p>



<p>3 Health psychology: Two explanations for substance misuse, two drugs (heroin and one other) and how they work, two treatments for substance misuse, one campaign against drug use, key issue, practical and two studies in detail. Includes how drugs are researched in psychology including animal studies AQA-A has some detail on substance misuse in Unit 3 and the psychology of addictive behaviour as an option in Unit 4, psychology in action.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 48-51)</p>	<p>3 Health and Clinical Psychology: Covers healthy living (e.g. theories of health belief), and only self-efficacy is covered in the Edexcel specification (in sport psychology). Covers stress, which is not covered in the Edexcel specification Covers dysfunctional behaviour and disorders, which is in the Unit 4 Clinical Psychology section.</p>
<p>4 Sport psychology: Two explanations for sporting performance and participation, two theories of motivation, two theories that between them cover arousal, anxiety and audience effect, two techniques for improving performance, two studies in detail, key issue and practical. Includes how questionnaires and correlational analyses are used in sport psychology.</p>	<p>Unit 3 (pp 52-55)</p>	<p>4 Sport and Exercise Psychology: Covers personality, aggression, motivation and sport - which are in the Edexcel Unit 3 Sport Psychology section as well (mainly). Covers arousal, anxiety and self-confidence, also covered in the Edexcel Unit 3 Sport Psychology section. Covers group cohesion, not in the Edexcel specification, audience effects, which are in the Sport Psychology Unit 3 Edexcel specification, and leadership and coaching - which is in the Edexcel specification in Sport Psychology as techniques for improving sport. Covers exercise psychology, which is not covered in the Edexcel specification.</p>



<i>Edexcel Unit 4 - two sections</i>		<i>OCR Unit 4 - two sections</i>
<p>1 Clinical psychology: Two definitions of abnormality, the DSM (reliability, etc.), explanations for, features of and treatments for schizophrenia, explanations for, features of and treatments for one other mental disorder (e.g. unipolar depression, anorexia nervosa...) Three studies in detail, key issue and practical. Includes how schizophrenia is studied. Some of the content material is covered in Unit 3 of the AQA-A specification.</p>	<p>Unit 4 (pp 58-61)</p>	<p>1 Research methods - designing a practical project: A lot of methodology and terms here, drawing on the research section of Unit 1. There are five inferential tests where the Edexcel specification has three in Unit 2. As with the Edexcel specification, research method material is examined in Unit 4.</p>
<p>2 Issues and debates: Contributions to society, ethical issues, research methods, key issues, debates (science, nature-nurture, ethnocentrism and social control). These five areas are covered drawing on the AS and A2 material - this is a synoptic element of the Edexcel specification with relatively little new learning (e.g. ethnocentrism is new). Quite a bit of this is covered in the AQA-A Unit 3.</p>	<p>Unit 4 (pp 62-64)</p>	<p>2 Approaches, perspectives, methods, issues and debates: As with the Edexcel specification methods, approaches, issues and debates are examined in Unit 4 at the end of the course Debates include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determinism and free will • reductionism and holism • nature-nurture • ethnocentrism • psychology as science • individual and situational explanations • usefulness of psychological research. <p>Edexcel specification does not cover the first two debates (free will/determinism and reductionism/holism) except as part of a debate about whether psychology is a science. However, there are many similarities in this section with the Edexcel issues and debates section.</p>

