

Psychology Progression Guide Moving from GCSE to GCE (Edexcel specifications) and beyond

Introduction and content of the guide

This guide has been designed for centres that are delivering Edexcel's GCSE courses and are progressing students to Edexcel's GCE 2008 qualification. The guide is organised into the following sections:

1. *Practical considerations*
2. *Content mapping*
3. *Approaches to teaching and learning*
4. *Skills and techniques*
5. *Language and terminology*
6. *Useful resources*
7. *Beyond GCE*

The guide outlines what is required to make the transition from GCSE to GCE a successful one. It outlines some of the linkages between GCE and GCSE and also some of the key differences that need to be considered by centres.

1. Practical considerations

Psychology GCE without GCSE?

The GCE specification was written with the idea that many candidates would not have studied the subject at GCSE and the intention was that candidates could do well with or without having studied GCSE psychology. So the GCE specification stands alone, though this does not mean that learning the subject at GCSE is not a help for GCE.

Candidates are likely to have covered some GCE Psychology issues in KS3 subjects, and in GCSE Science, such as evolution, descriptive statistics, and 'doing' science. In addition knowledge of other issues from sociology (such as self fulfilling prophecy or issues of prejudice and gender) or from the media (such as how violence in the media can affect behaviour) or other sources is useful both for GCE and GCSE.

Centres find non-GCSE candidates are successful at GCE level. It is only very recently that more GCSE Psychology specifications have been introduced/offered (from September 2009) and before that rarely was GCSE Psychology studied under the age of 16. Syllabuses were 'mature', which discouraged schools from offering GCSE Psychology.

Issues that help candidates to do well without GCSE in the subject include:

- Some centres require such candidates to have gained BB for Dual Award Science and / or a grade C or B in Maths, English or both before taking GCE Psychology.
- For what can be a new subject to them, candidates are well motivated.
- Some centres have a 'trial-period' policy of 3 weeks at the start of the GCE course.

Though this is not to say that taking GCSE Psychology first would not be helpful, as is indicated later when considering overlap in skills and so on.

Coursework/practicals

The GCSE does not involve Controlled Assessment (coursework) and there is no 'coursework' in the GCE either.

However, GCSE does encourage learning through doing class practicals and the GCE requires class practicals as part of the course.

Resources in common

In general there are GCSE materials and GCE materials and the two are separate. This is because, as will be seen, the content requirements are often different. However, methodology issues are shared, and so glossaries of methodology terms, and ideas for practicals can be shared. Websites are often useful as they offer a wide coverage of topics and issues within psychology, so when teaching GCSE and moving to GCE resources can be common ones, though main textbooks will differ. Videos can be used at both levels, such as for general theories like behaviourism and social learning, as well as for issues around 'doing psychology' such as ethics and data gathering techniques.

2. Content mapping

Both the GCSE and GCE contain almost exclusively core content with very little choice (only Unit 3 of the GCE offers a choice of two from four applications):

Figure 1: GCSE and GCE Units - brief overview of content

	Unit 1 (40%)	Unit 2 (60%)	Unit 3 (40%)	Unit 4 (60%)
GCSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we see our world? Is dreaming meaningful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do TV and video games affect young people's behaviour? Why do we have phobias? Are criminals born or made? 	Not applicable	Not applicable
GCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Approach Cognitive Approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Psychodynamic Approach Biological Approach Learning Approach 	Choice of two applications from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminological Child Health Sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Issues and Debates

Figure 1 shows that the GCSE is based around questions to be answered using material suggested, and to be explored. The GCE is more 'traditional' by offering approaches at AS

and applications at A2. The GCSE was written with the GCE in mind and allowing for progression without too much repetition. Though there is some repetition of main theories such as social learning and biological issues. The choice at A2 in Unit 3 allows for using GCSE learning and building on it, by choosing criminological psychology, for example, or the choice can be made to introduce something different, such as sport psychology or health psychology.

Figure 2: Overview of the GCE Specification

Unit 1 (40%)		Unit 2 (60%)	
Explaining the question How do we see our world?	Biology and the eye; depth cues, illusions, Gestalt and Gregory; schemas	Explaining the question: Do TV and video games affect young people's behaviour?	Biology and social learning as causes of aggression; nature-nurture and aggression; individual differences in aggression
Investigating the question	Lab experiments; ethics; Palmer (1975); Bartlett (1932); Carmichael, Hogan and Walter (1932)	Investigating the question	Content analysis; ethics; Anderson and Dill (2000); Ramirez et al (2001); Charlton et al (2000); Williams (1981)
Why psychology matters	Schemas, eye witness testimony and society	Why psychology matters	The effects of TV on aggression; the role of the educational psychologist and use of anger management
		Exploring the question further	Censorship and the watershed
Explaining the question: Is dreaming meaningful?	Freud and dreams; neuronal transmission; activation synthesis; biology v psychodynamic	Explaining the question: Why do we have phobias?	Preparedness (evolution), social learning and classical conditioning as explanations for phobias; nature-nurture and understanding phobias
Investigating the question	Case studies; Little Hans study; ethics	Investigating the question	Questionnaires; using animals in studies; Cover-Jones (1924); Bennett-Levy and Marteau (1984)
Why psychology matters	The role of the psychoanalyst and use of dream analysis; sleep disorder clinics	Why psychology matters	Therapies for phobias; the role of the clinical psychologist
		Exploring the question further	Cultural issues and phobias; Heinrichs et al (2005)
		Explaining the question: Are criminals born or made?	Biological and social explanations for criminality; nature-nurture and criminality
		Investigating the question	Sigall and Ostrove (1975); Madon et al (2004); Theilgaard (1984)
		Why psychology matters	Offender profiling; The role of the forensic psychologist including treating offenders
		Exploring the question further	Race, accent and appearance and jury decision making

Figure 3: Overview of the GCE Specification

GCE AS and A2	
<p>Unit 1 Social and Cognitive Psychology (AS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social psychology - interviews and questionnaires; obedience and prejudice; Hofling et al (1966) and one other study; key issue and practical • Cognitive psychology - experiments; memory and forgetting; Godden and Baddeley (1975) and one other study; key issue and practical 	<p>Unit 2 Understanding the Individual (AS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychodynamic psychology - correlations; psychosexual stages and gender, defence mechanisms; Little Hans and one other study; key issue and practical • Biological psychology - tests of difference; genes, hormones, brain and gender; CNS; Money (1979) and one other study; key issue and practical • Learning approach - observations; operant and classical conditioning and social learning theory; Bandura et al (1961) and one other study; key issue and practical
<p>Unit 3 Applications of psychology (A2) choice of two from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminological - experiments; explanations; eyewitness testimony; treatments; Loftus and Palmer (1966) and one other study, key issue and practical • Child - observations; Bowlby, Ainsworth and privation; developmental issues; daycare; Curtiss (1977) and one other study, key issue and practical • Health - studying the effects of drugs; explanations of substance abuse; two drugs in detail; treating substance misuse; Blättler et al (2002) and one other study; key issue and practical • Sport - questionnaires and correlations; explanations; achievement motivation; anxiety, arousal and audience effect; improving performance; Boyd and Munroe (2003) and one other study; key issue and practical 	<p>Unit 4 How Psychology Works (A2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical - methods; definitions; schizophrenia and one other disorder - explanations and treatments; other treatments from approaches; Rosenhan (1973) and two other studies; key issue and practical • Issues and debates - contributions; ethics; methods; key issues; debates (ethnocentrism, science, nature-nurture, social control)

Overviews of the GCE and GCSE specifications are shown (*Figures 2 and 3*).

The GCSE Specification was designed to feed into the GCE 2008 specification and provide a three or four year* psychology course for centres and candidates. There is overlap in skills and in some content, so that candidates can build on what they have learned at GCSE. However, there is plenty of new material for the GCE so that progression engages and stretches candidates.

*the GCSE can be covered in one year or in two years adding depth

Figure 4: Mapping GCSE to GCE Psychology - general differences

GCSE	GCE
Career information such as educational, forensic and clinical psychologists' work and the job of a psychoanalyst. This fits in with the core for GCSE, where career coverage is required.	No career information as such though psychoanalysis is covered in AS (Unit 2) and A2 (clinical). However, there is quite a strong focus on treatments in the A2, including those that different psychologists might use (including forensic, clinical, educational, health and sport psychologists).
Uses topic questions to focus on areas of psychology to answer questions of interest - to engage the candidates.	Focuses on five approaches for the AS and three applications together with some issues and debates for the A2. A different way of covering the material - to fit in with the core at GCE.
Focuses on how psychology works but GCSE is an additional science not a full science, and it has its own core.	Is a full science at GCE and follows the science core but with an appendix for psychology to show differences from science. Largely follows the science core and focuses on how psychology works - to reflect that.

The way the courses are structured differs deliberately partly to allow progression without too much repetition and partly to engage the candidates and address differences in their level and in other areas. Also the cores for GCSE and GCE Psychology differ so the courses have to suit different criteria. *Figure 4* illustrates some main differences.

Figure 5: Mapping GCSE to GCE Psychology - general similarities

GCSE	GCE
Treatments and therapies such as anger management for aggression, and systematic desensitisation and flooding for phobias.	Treatments and therapies are covered in the applications at A2 including systematic desensitisation, which can be covered in the AS too as a key issue for the Learning Approach. The debate about the power of the therapist in Unit 4 also relates. The GCE looks more at theories underlying the treatments and therapies - there is more both in breadth and depth.
Key issues for psychology covered in 'why psychology matters?' with regard to all five questions covered, and 'exploring the question further' with regard to Unit 2 questions.	Key issues in all five approaches for the AS and in the three applications for the A2 (two applications for Unit 3 and clinical psychology for Unit 4). The GCE asks for more depth in explaining such issues.
Core focuses on biological, social, cognitive, developmental and individual differences (as do most psychology courses)	Core focuses on biological, social, cognitive, developmental and individual differences (as do most psychology courses). The GCE has greater coverage.
Includes application of psychology to explain and influence everyday behaviour and experience within appropriate, relevant and contemporary contexts. This is found in 'why psychology matters' and 'exploring further', and other places within the five main topic questions.	Includes application of psychology to explain and influence everyday behaviour and experience within appropriate, relevant and contemporary contexts. This is found in the eight key issues covered for AS/A2, in the contributions studied within issues and debates, and in the applications at A2. The GCE asks for more depth.
Covers ethical issues including when using humans to study behaviour and when using animals. Ethical issues are threaded through the five topic questions.	Five main ethical issues are covered in the AS and ethical issues are brought into the A2 often as well. Both the AS and the A2 involve looking at using animals to study psychology as well as using humans. The GCE asks for more depth.

As both GCSE and GCE Psychology address core areas and skills and general concepts and underpinning assumptions are the same, there are similarities between the two courses as *Figure 5* illustrates some main similarities.

Figure 6: mapping GCSE content to GCE content - GCSE Unit 1

GCSE	GCE
Topic A: How do we see our world?	
Biological structure of the eye	Not on spec
Perception - depth cues, illusions etc	Not on spec
Schemas and how they affect how we see our world	Can choose reconstructive memory as a memory theory for cognitive psychology (Unit 1, AS). Bartlett etc. Also links to eyewitness testimony (ewt) as a key issue for cognitive psychology (Unit 1, AS). Ewt is a topic for criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2) and can be a key issue and contribution with regard to issues and debates (Unit 4, A2).
Eyewitness testimony	See above - links to AS (Unit 1) and A2 (Units 3 and 4)
Topic B: Is dreaming meaningful?	
Freud's theory of dreaming	Not on spec as such but Freud's theory is covered in Unit 2, the psychodynamic approach, and there are links (such as the role of the unconscious). And Freud's explanation of dreaming can be a key issue for this approach. Also links to power of the therapist (Unit 4, issues and debates).
Little Hans study	Yes on spec in Unit 2, the psychodynamic approach.
Activation synthesis to explain dreaming	Not on spec. May link to neuronal transmission though (Unit 2, biological approach)
Basic structure of neuron etc	In biological approach (Unit 2, AS) has same. Also in Health Psychology (Unit 3, A2, a choice).
Role of the psychoanalyst	Can be a key issue in AS (Unit 2) for psychodynamic approach. Relates to power of the therapist (Unit 4, A2). Can link to other areas where therapies and treatments are looked at - in the applications including clinical psychology for A2.

It can be seen from *Figure 6* that much of the content differs for Unit 1 and GCE psychology, however, there are some similarities, often being that the GCE builds on knowledge from the GCSE rather than repeating it, which was the intention. Note that understanding of methodology is covered under skills and techniques, which are looked at in a different section of this document.

Figure 7: mapping GCSE content to GCE content - GCSE Unit 2

GCSE	GCE
Topic C: Do TV and video games affect young people's behaviour?	
Biological causes of aggression	Biological explanations of gender are looked at in Unit 2 for the AS and there are some links such as Raine et al (1997) looking at brain abnormalities in those charged with murder. Also biological explanations for criminality covered in criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2, a choice).
Social causes of aggression	Covered in criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2, a choice). And social learning theory is covered in many places in the spec including sport psychology and issues and debates.
Nature-nurture issues (in other areas of the course too as well as Topic C)	A debate in Unit 4 for the A2 and also useful in other areas of the course, both AS and A2 (e.g. comparing explanations for gender behaviour in the AS, Unit 2).
Individual differences in aggression	Not specifically in the GCE but could draw on this material for criminological psychology.
The argument between TV and violence	Can be key issue in learning approach for AS (Unit 2). Also as a contribution in Unit 4, issues and debates (contribution of the learning approach). In criminological psychology if chosen (Unit 3, A2).
Anger management	Can be a treatment/therapy in clinical psychology (Unit 4, A2). Links to the cognitive approach (Unit 1, AS).
Watershed and censorship	Could be a key issue for learning approach (Unit 2, AS) and contribution for issues and debates (Unit 4, A2). Also could link to criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2).
TOPIC D: Why do we have phobias?	
Evolution and preparedness	Topic does not appear but evolutionary concepts are useful for child psychology (Unit 3, A2) and elsewhere - such as nature-nurture debate, twin studies, schizophrenia... Twin studies are in biological approach (Unit 2, AS) and in clinical psychology (as is schizophrenia) (Unit 4, A2).
Social learning theory	Learning approach (Unit 2, AS) and in many places in the A2 as an explanation for

	behaviour.
Classical conditioning	Learning approach, Unit 2, AS and elsewhere as an explanation for behaviour (e.g. clinical psychology, Unit 4)
Flooding and systematic desensitisation	Learning approach, Unit 2, AS as a key issue/therapy and also in clinical psychology if chosen as well as elsewhere (social control in Unit 4, debates, for example).
Cultural issues with regard to phobias	Not on spec but can relate to ethnocentrism in debates (Unit 4, A2). And cross cultural studies are found in child psychology (Unit 3, A2) so knowing about them can be useful.
Topic E: Are criminals born or made?	
Biology and criminality	Links well to criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2, a choice). Also to twin studies (Unit 2, AS and Unit 4, A2). And to biological psychology (Unit 2, AS).
Social explanations of criminality	Self fulfilling prophecy in criminological psychology (Unit 3, A2).
Nature-nurture and criminality	Useful throughout and nature-nurture is a debate in Unit 4 (A2).

Figure 7 shows how for Unit 2 as well much of the content differs from GCE psychology, however, there are some similarities, often being that the GCE builds on knowledge from the GCSE rather than repeating it, which was the intention. The idea is for candidates to use their understanding of psychology gained from GCSE to illustrate, expand and understand GCE material.

Note that understanding of methodology is covered under skills and techniques, which are looked at in a different section of this document.

3. Approaches to teaching and learning

Assessment Objectives

Figure 8 shows the Assessment Objectives for GCSE and GCE side by side for comparison purposes.

Figure 8: Assessment objectives and weightings

GCSE	GCE
AO1: Knowledge and understanding of how psychology works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the psychological 	AO1: Knowledge and understanding of science and of how science works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize, recall and show understanding of scientific knowledge

<p>models, theories, explanations, concepts and terminology in the specification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of the relationship of psychological evidence with explanations and theories • Show understanding of how psychological knowledge and ideas change over time and the evidence for these changes <p>30-34% of the GCSE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select, organize and communicate relevant information in a variety of forms <p>30-35% of the GCE</p>
<p>AO2: Application of knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply concepts, develop arguments and/or draw conclusions related to familiar and unfamiliar situations • Show understanding and access applications and uses of psychology with reference to contemporary situations • Evaluate the impact of psychological findings, developments or processes on individuals and communities <p>34-38% of the GCSE</p>	<p>AO2: Application of knowledge and understanding of science and of how science works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse and evaluate scientific knowledge and processes • Apply scientific knowledge and processes to unfamiliar situations including those related to issues • Assess the validity, reliability and credibility of scientific information <p>36.5-41.5% of the GCE</p>
<p>AO3: Interpretation, evaluation and analysis of psychological data and practice: Plan a psychological investigation testing an idea, answering a question or solving a problem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show understanding of research methods and methodology in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Evaluate methods and methodology used when collecting primary and secondary data, including ethical considerations • Analyse and interpret qualitative and quantitative data from sources • Discuss the validity and reliability of data in presenting and justifying conclusions <p>30-34% of the GCSE</p>	<p>AO3: How science works: psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe ethical, safe and skilful practical techniques and processes, selecting appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods • Know how to make, record and communicate reliable and valid observations and measurement with appropriate precision and accuracy, though using primary and secondary sources • Analyse, interpret, explain and evaluate the methodology, results and impact of their own and others' experimental and investigative activities in a variety of ways <p>27-32% of the GCE</p>

Figure 8 shows how the assessment objectives at GCSE and GCE are very similar with similar weightings. GCE assessment objectives match those for GCE sciences whereas GCSE assessment objectives are stand alone. For both though AO1 is knowledge with understanding, AO2 is about assessing and evaluating and AO3 is testing methodology knowledge and skills. Candidates who are familiar with the three assessment objectives at GCSE can useful use their understanding of them in the GCE course.

In general the GCE has as might be expected more focus on AO2 and the GCSE has more focus on AO3. And in general too the GCSE evaluation and AO2 skills centre around applying their knowledge and understanding where as the GCE, though it looks at application of knowledge too, has more focus on evaluation and assessing.

The GCSE requires understanding of changes over time (e.g. Freud's ideas on dreaming and later activation synthesis). The GCE does not specify this understanding.

Both require some practical skills and consider 'doing psychology' and 'why psychology matters', which also links to application of knowledge and understanding.

It can be seen that as far as teaching and learning are concerned the general focus on the three assessment objectives in just about the same weighting (one third for each) is a good guide both for GCSE and GCE.

Tiering

There is no tiering for GCSE Psychology and all candidates take the same paper both for Unit 1 and Unit 2. This is also the case for GCE where there is no tiering in any case. For both GCSE and GCE candidates can be prepared to take one single paper, which means all groups can be taught in the same way (although of course different candidates will reach different levels and need different levels of attention and focus).

The A and Stretch and Challenge at GCE*

The A* for GCE will be awarded first in summer 2010.

To achieve an A a candidate must:*

Achieve 80% of the total uniform marks for AS (there are 200 uniform marks to be achieved so 80% is 160 out of the 200) AND achieve 90% of the combined uniform mark total for the A2 units (there are another 200 uniform marks to be achieved so 90% is 180 out of the 200 available).

An 'A' grade is 80% of the total 400 uniform marks (UMS), which is 320 of the marks out of 400. An A has to achieve that 80% and also 90% of the 200 UMS for the A2 part of the course.*

In order to achieve 90% of the combined uniform marks for A2, candidates will need to achieve the top level of the mark scheme in Unit 3 and Unit 4. This means directly addressing the specific command word in the question (e.g. 'assess', 'evaluate') and ensuring their answers meet requirements in terms of range, balance, use of examples and quality of written communication. An example of a Level 4 mark band for a question from Unit 3, Contested Planet is shown in *Figure 9*:

Figure 9: An example of A2 Level 4 band

Q: The Governor of Markdale prison has recently had problems in managing the behaviour of the prisoners. The prison service has recommended using token economy programmes (TEP) as a technique to control behaviour.

Describe how the Governor might implement a token economy programme in Markdale prison and evaluate the effectiveness of token economy programmes. (12 marks)

Mark scheme extract:

Level 4	10-12 marks	<p>Candidate has attempted and answered both injunctions in the question very well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description includes an accurate detailed definition of TEPS and the underlying process - how learning principles are involved. Must refer to the scenario in the answer • Evaluation includes appropriate strengths/weaknesses discussed accurately. <p>The skills needed to produce convincing extended writing are in place. Very few syntactical and/or spelling errors may be found. Very good organisation and planning.</p> <p>Given time constraints and limited number of marks, full marks must be given when the answer is reasonably detailed even if not all the indicative content is present</p>
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Figure 9 helps to illustrate the demands on the candidate in terms of:

- Structure i.e. a logically organised, coherent answer.
- Evaluation i.e. giving strengths and or weaknesses at an appropriate level
- Balance i.e. not a one sided view. Both 'describe' and 'evaluate' must be addressed
- The two injunctions must both be done very well so there is no room for one to be better than the other until both are at least very good
- Underlying principles are required, in this case principles of operant conditioning, and there must be detail
- QWC accuracy

But note as well that candidates will get full marks even if the answer is not perfect. Excellent work will be rewarded and excellence is measured taking into account the time

available and such factors, so getting an A* is made accessible for those candidates who have the necessary skills and understanding.

Skills that are rewarded with an A* at GCSE will be the same skills that are needed for an A* at GCE so paying attention to stretch and challenge will be the same for both levels, GCE and GCSE, though what is asked for in the way of understanding and skills will be at a higher level - taking into account the candidate's growing maturity.

Research skills

Perhaps the most significant step up from GCSE to GCE is the expectation that students will undertake their own research and engage in independent learning. This approach is key to A2 Unit 4, issues and debates and is developed through the AS units, where practicals are run. In some centres students will be carrying out their own choice of practical and the teacher (s), while having some teaching input, will have more of a facilitating role. This can also be true of the key issues, though often there is class input with regard to practicals and key issues at least at AS level.

For many candidates research skills and independent learning skills need to be taught. A number of centres have successfully used the time in June and July at the end of the AS year to focus on research skills and methodology, prior to starting the A2 content. Areas that might be focused on include:

- Exploring departmental and resource centre / library resources, to recognise that books, journals, magazines, videos, DVDS etc could all be used as part of research. Recognising the limitations of some resources in terms of their age, relevance and accuracy.
- Getting the best out of the internet; finding useful sites, recognising sites which are of little value or are heavily bias
- Note taking; especially condensing material into a digestible form for essay writing or revision purposes. This skill is also useful for the A2 practical that requires finding and summarising two articles on a key issue of the candidate's choice.
- Reading for meaning; recognising bias. This skill is also useful for evaluating studies and their own practicals.

It should be noted that there are more resources specifically for the GCE than currently for the GCSE and, with at least three targeted textbooks for GCE, candidates who study the material carefully may not need to do too much of their own research though encouraging that is beneficial.

Examination demands

Moving from GCSE to GCE involves a change to the length of exams and to an extent the style of exam questions, though there are sufficient similarities for the change to be smooth. These changes are summarised in *Figure 10*:

Figure 10: GCE and GCSE exams compared

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
GCSE	<p>1 hour 15 minutes</p> <p>multiple choice and short answer questions (up to around 4 marks)</p> <p>Questions are in topic order (A then B) rather than type of question order</p> <p>60 marks</p> <p>worth 40% of the GCSE</p>	<p>1 hour 45 minutes</p> <p>multiple choice, short answer and extended writing. (extended writing can go up to 10 marks)</p> <p>Questions are in topic order (C, D then E) and extended writing occurs towards the end of each topic rather than at the end of the paper only</p> <p>90 marks</p> <p>worth 60% of the GCSE</p>	Not applicable	Not applicable
GCE	<p>1 hour 20 minutes</p> <p>Multiple choice (objective test items), short answer and extended writing</p> <p>One 12 mark piece of extended writing at end of paper</p> <p>Questions range across the section of the specification in no particular order</p>	<p>1 hour 40 minutes</p> <p>Multiple choice (objective test items), short answer and extended writing</p> <p>One 12 mark piece of extended writing at end of paper</p> <p>Questions range across the section of the specification in no particular order</p>	<p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Short answer and extended writing for each application</p> <p>One 12 mark piece of extended writing at the end of each application</p> <p>Questions range across the section of the specification application by application</p>	<p>2 hours</p> <p>Short answer and extended writing for both parts</p> <p>One 12 mark piece of extended writing at the end of clinical</p> <p>A longer essay at the end of part 2 (a choice of two titles - 18 marks)</p>

	60 marks Worth 40% of the AS and 20% of the whole A level	80 marks Worth 60% of the AS and 30% of the whole A level	60 marks Worth 20% of the whole A level	90 marks Worth 30% of the whole A level
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The longer exam papers and greater use of extended writing means candidates must develop their writing skills as they move from GCSE to GCE. Students will find the format of GCE similar to GCSE - enough to feel comfortable with the paper. For example, in general assume one mark per minute with regard to time. And one mark per point for many of the question, though not all. Levels marking is used for the essays (12 mark questions) and some of the other questions. A similar idea of not just showing knowledge but also showing understanding applies. More about this is discussed in the section on skills and techniques which follows.

Significant practice, using past papers and mark schemes, will help students understand the demands of GCE. Some of this practice should be under timed conditions. Peer marking and use of GCE examiners reports (which contain examples of 'real' students responses) are both very useful.

GCE examiners reports can be found here:

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/gce08/psych/Pages/default.aspx>

GCE past papers can be obtained from:

<http://www.edexcel.com/i-am-a/teacher/Pages/pastpapers.aspx>

4. Skills and techniques

Figure 11 considers skills that candidates need for GCSE and compares them with GCE skills

Figure 11: Comparing skills needed at GCSE and GCE

GCSE	GCE
Interpreting a question in an exam - injunctions	Same skill required
Understanding difference between study and theory	Same skill required
Understanding that to describe a study aim, method, results, conclusions are needed	Same skill required
Knowing what makes a 'mark' in an exam e.g. point by point but must make point clearly	Same skill required - possibly need a little more depth to make a point - make it even more clearly or give an example to show understanding

Having the skills for answering multiple choice (careful consideration, for example, or not being put off first thought...)	Same skill required for AS units, not for A2
Practising mark a minute and reading time	Same skill required
Knowing that levels marking applied to extended writing and responding to scenarios and some short answer questions (e.g. definitions)	Levels marking applied to extended writing, answering about practicals, and some short answer questions e.g. definitions, but not when responding to scenarios
Understanding that there is no choice in the question papers - all candidates answer all questions	Same skill required though one choice in Unit 4 part 2 - two essay titles offered at the end. Also choice of options for Unit 3 (two applications from four)
Practising skill of answering 6, 8 and 10 mark extended writing (and can be marks in between e.g. 7)	Extended writing is a 12 mark essay though there are also questions with other marks, rarely over 7 except for the 12 mark ones
Focus on quality of written communication	Same skill required
Getting to know the three assessment objectives	Same skill required - a few differences in the requirements but very little. Some more depth as would be expected given the rise in level - but still the same three AOs
Working with a modular specification - Unit 1 is available January and June, with Unit 2 only available in June. Planning resits etc.	Same skill required. Units 1 and 3 are available January and June and Units 2 and 4 only in June.
Getting used to revision smaller and larger amounts of materials (Unit 1 is 40% and Unit 2 is 60%)	Same skill required. See earlier for weightings.
Focus on how psychology works, methodology, terms and so on	Same skill required. More information etc to learn perhaps, but same skill.
Ramping is used per topic (the paper adds depth per topic rather than over the whole paper)	Ramping is over the whole paper with the 12 mark extended writing at the end for the two AS papers. For A2 papers ramping is topic by topic.
Questions can come from any part of the relevant area of the specification (such as within 'why do we have phobias' questions can be within any of the four sections...)	Same skill required
Stimulus materials are used in questions so that knowledge and understanding must be applied to that stimulus (and possibly evaluation skills too)	Same skill required

Figure 11 shows that in many cases the same skills are required, and this can be useful when progressing candidates from GCSE to AS to A2. There is building on those skills over the years of study but the basic skills are the same. Both specifications are about doing psychology, why psychology matters and applying psychological ideas and concepts.

Figure 12: Comparing methodology from GCSE to GCE - what is required?

GCSE	GCE
Experiments and related terms - independent variable, dependent variable, experimental hypothesis, repeated measures and independent groups designs, mean, median, mode, range, bar chart, variable, control	Same and some other issues too such as demand characteristics, situational and participant variables, order effects, matched pairs design... And a requirement to carry one out
Case studies	Same and including issues of evaluation and ethics
Ethics and humans - informed consent, right to withdraw, privacy, confidentiality, protection of participants. Also ethics involved in dealing with offenders	Same and adding competence and more depth
Qualitative and quantitative data	Same but adding depth such as being able to discuss why one type of data is preferred over another
Generalisability, reliability, subjectivity, objectivity, validity	Same and using such terms to evaluate
Content analysis and related issues - sampling, tallying	Same and a requirement to carry one out (Unit 3, A2)
Questionnaires and related terms - open and closed questions, rank scales, response bias, social desirability	Same and a requirement to carry one out (and also interviewing and terms etc. needed)
Ethics and animals - social isolation, number and choice of species	Same and more depth
Practical issues of using animals in lab experiments	Same and more depth
	Note observations and other methodological issues are required for GCE and not for GCSE

Figure 12 helps to show how there is clear progression from GCSE to AS and A2 and that a lot of underpinning issues in psychology such as methodology and ethics appear both in GCSE and GCE though with more depth and detail needed for GCE as would be expected.

5. Language and terminology

Command words

A key difference between GCSE and GCE is the use of examination command words and the depth required in an answer. This reflects the higher level skills which are assessed at AS and A2 level compared to GCSE, though for the most part the difference is in the depth of reply credited as much as in the different injunctions used. *Figures 13 and 14*, which are illustrative only, show how command words progress from GCSE, to AS then A2. Many good GCE students struggle with the difference between 'outline', 'describe' and 'explain', so it is well worth spending time in class on command word interpretation. Past papers, sample assessment materials and examiners reports are all sources of examples of command word use. All are available at www.edexcel.com.

Figure 13: AO1 Command words and what might be expected - GCSE and GCE compared

Command word	GCSE	GCE
State	Give the answer very simply and straightforwardly. There are not likely to be more than one or two marks here. E.g. state the result in the table...	The same - unlikely to be used though as usually more is asked.
Identify	Make sure you give enough material for the examiner to understand. E.g. identify a study that looks at schemas...	The same - and as in the GCSE the name and date of a study is not needed if asking to 'identify'. For example, 'the boy afraid of horses' is enough. At GCE knowing the name of a study is more expected though.
Name	The answer has to be exact e.g. name one of Freud's defence mechanisms. Not often used unless candidate is extremely likely to know the exact name or term.	The same - and again not likely to be used unless terms are very clear (e.g. Freud's stages for GCE).
Outline	Give enough information so that there is more than identification of an answer - detail is there to inform someone unfamiliar with the material. E.g. outline the Gestalt theory of perception. Sometimes an example can help to show knowledge and adds to an outline.	The same - and is often used in GCE as in GCSE. Possibly more marks available than at GCSE (e.g. 3 marks not 2 marks) and more likely to use an example to illustrate. The outline of the theory (for example) must be in more detail than at GCSE usually but the command word is the same and means the same.
Describe	More detail than 'outline' but still	Same but again each point may need

	<p>about giving information and showing understanding. Used when a lot of the available material can be given in the answer so detail is required. 'Outline' tends to mean give some of the material available not all of it. E.g. Describe Bartlett's study... The answer must give some of aim, procedure, results and conclusions though up to 4 marks likely for Unit 1 so not a lot of depth can be given.</p>	<p>more to get the mark. Used in the same way as at GCSE though. For an example of more depth, consider 'describe Godden and Baddeley's study...' The answer must give aim, procedure, results and conclusions (all of them).</p>
<p>Explain</p>	<p>Not used as often in GCSE but means give enough information that full understanding is there. Again an example can help (though if an example is required, the question would say so). E.g. explain Freud's theory of dreaming means say what it is but by showing the background to it, such as explaining the role of the unconscious or how the manifest content is interpreted. 'Explain' as an AO1 injunction is not really different from 'describe' but means detail is needed to show underlying features.</p>	<p>The same - for the same reasons 'explain' is used to ask for knowledge with understanding in GCE. Tends to be used more at GCE as explaining is more focused on - adding the depth and detail.</p>

Figure 14: AO1 Command words and what might be expected - GCSE and GCE compared

Command word	GCSE	GCE
Explain	Can be an AO2 injunction as might refer to explaining how someone might be treated for a phobia - this is applying knowledge so AO2. The same idea as for AO1 applies - give enough information to show reasons why...such as why the treatment helps a phobia. But it is not that different from describing.	The same - for the same reasons. It is not the command word that makes a question about AO1 or AO2 (or AO3) but the skill required. So if explaining in order to apply knowledge, that is AO2.
Outline a weakness...	This is to show that the command word is not what makes a question AO1 or AO2 (or AO3) but what is asked and the skill required. If describing a weakness or strength, for example, this is AO2 as it is giving evaluation.	The same - for the same reasons. At GCE there may be more marks available and more depth required, including terms (e.g. validity).
Evaluate	Give strengths and/or weaknesses. It means making a comment in some way, and that can include comparing, saying what is good, what is bad and so on. E.g. evaluate Bartlett's study. Unlikely to carry more than 4 marks and can be fewer.	The same - but may carry more marks. Such as 'evaluate Milgram's study...' and 5 marks being available. More likely to be expected for each point, such as explanations if mentions poor ethics.
Compare	Not likely to be used a lot at GCSE and likely to suggest in the question that comparison includes both similarities and/or differences (to avoid the problem with interpreting 'compare and contrast'). Likely to have a small number of marks.	The same - but likely to be used more often and likely to carry more marks. Will still explain that it means giving similarities and/or differences.
Assess	Unlikely at GCSE. It means give strengths and weakness (evaluate) but also come up with an answer about what is best...	Unlikely at AS but more likely at A2. E.g. assess how far schizophrenia can be explained biologically. Means the same though.
Apply	Unlikely at GCSE. Testing ability to apply knowledge is likely, but using different words in a question so that what is required is clear,	Unlikely at AS and A2 as well. Would mean apply understanding of social identity theory (for example) to explain prejudice - which is not

	rather than asking for 'apply'.	really different from asking a candidate to 'use SIT to explain prejudice' so the simpler question is more likely to be chosen
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Terminology

Psychology involves a lot of terminology which in a way is shorthand so that others can understand what is being said. This is why studies are referred to by name, such as War of the Ghosts, or Bartlett (1932) and theories are names, such as Gestalt theory. Someone who has learned about such studies or theories will understand what is meant using such names. So candidates should try to use names of theories and studies in their exam answers. This is perhaps more true of GCE than GCSE so it is good practice to encourage learning names and terms at GCSE to help with GCE.

Methodology terms are used in psychology as well, and reflect psychology as a science. Candidates might already be using terms such as 'validity' and 'reliability'. It is important, however, that terms are used specifically and appropriately. For example, people use the term 'random' in a general way - such as talking about meeting some random person. However, 'random' has to mean, in psychology, everyone having an equal chance of being chosen. And 'valid' means true to life or everyday behaviour, and has to be used only in that way.

Method terms are used in GCSE as well as in GCE and in the same way. More terms are expected in GCE but possibly not more understanding. So moving to GCE from GCSE will not be a problem in this regard - the same requirements are there with regard to using terms.

Key Words

A common barrier to success at GCE level is a failure to address certain key words in questions. Often these are very commonly used words and as such can easily be overlooked in an exam question, whereas they must be completely focused on. Examples are:

- behaviour (e.g. criminal behaviour)
- explanations (e.g. cognitive explanations - like explaining perception)
- usefulness (e.g. of anger management)
- issues (e.g. ethical issues)

As well as focussing on command words, it is worth spending time to build student understanding of these key words. There are likely to be more key words at GCE than at GCSE as questions ask for more depth at GCE. For an example, consider the question about token economy programmes (pXX). Candidates are asked about implementation of TEPs in a prison and to consider their effectiveness. A GCSE question is less likely to ask such specific questions.

6. Useful resources

Below is a range of resources that are available to support both GCSE and GCE. They include textbooks, student unit guides, teacher's guides and other resources.

At GCSE an endorsed textbook is published by Heinemann

(<http://www.edexcel.com/resources/Pages/home.aspx>)

At GCE level endorsed textbooks and other resources are published by Pearsons, Folens and Philip Allan (<http://www.philipallan.co.uk/>)

What follows gives some textbooks and resources but the lists are not exhaustive. When considering resources it is worth checking that the resource is suitable for Edexcel. Other awarding bodies have GCSE and GCE Specifications that have different coverage and different requirements.

Textbooks for GCSE

1. Brain, C., Russell, J., and Smith, K. (2009) Edexcel GCSE Psychology: Student Book. - http://www.pearsonschoolsandcolleges.co.uk/Secondary/SocialScience/Psychology/EdexcelGCSEPsychology/EdexcelGCSEPsychology.aspx?gclid=CJebk7_SiaQCFOGY2Aod-U-BHw

Other GCSE Resources

1. GCSE Psychology, Evaluation Pack - <http://www.edexcel.com/resources/pages/viewItem.aspx?item=153>

General resources suitable for GCSE and GCE

1. Materials from other teachers on many issues/topics - <http://www.psychexchange.co.uk/tag/Edexcel/>
2. <http://www.s-cool.co.uk/alevel/psychology.html>
3. <http://www.youramazingbrain.org.uk/teachers/default.htm>
4. <http://www.psywww.com/selfquiz/index.htm>
5. <http://www.gerardkeegan.co.uk/>
6. <https://eiewebvip.edexcel.org.uk/pastpapers/> (past papers from Edexcel)
7. Hayes, N. A First Course in Psychology (suitable for GCSE and GCE though not all topics covered/required)
8. Gross, R. Psychology the Science of Mind and Behaviour (suitable for teachers and as a resource book)
9. <http://www.psychexchange.co.uk/videos/> - for video sharing (these have not been checked out)
10. <http://onlineclassroom.tv/> - for purchase of DVDs (these have not been checked out)
11. http://www.learnoutloud.com/content/blog/archives/2009/08/free_online_psy.html - for various resources (these have not been checked out)
12. <http://www.learner.org/resources/series138.html> - more video resources (also not checked out)
13. <http://alevelpsychology.co.uk/> - A level psychology resources

14. <http://www.psychotron.org.uk/newResources/cogPerception.html> - this is about perception and there are other resources at this web address
15. <http://www.uniview.co.uk/acatalog/psychology-resources.html> - videos to choose from

Textbooks for GCE

- 1) Brain, C., Smith, K., Harty, S. and Major, A. Edexcel AS Psychology: Student Book and Active Book, Pearsons
- 2) Brain, C., Smith, K., Ghalib, A, Collis, D. And Reeve, E. Edexcel A2 Psychology: Student Book, Pearsons
- 3) Brain, C. Edexcel AS Psychology, Philip Allan (Hodder)
- 4) Brain, C. Edexcel A2 Psychology, Philip Allan (Hodder)
- 5) Jarvis, M., Russell, J. and Collis, D. Angles on Psychology for Edexcel AS Psychology. Folens/OUP
- 6) Russell, J. and Jarvis, M. Angles on Psychology, A2 student book Edexcel, Folens/OUP - <http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/education/secondary/psychology/9781850082972000.do?sortby=pubDateDescend>

Other GCE Resources

- Brain, C. (2009) Edexcel A2 Psychology: Teacher Guide, Philip Allan (Hodder)
- Psychology Review, A-level student magazine published by Philip Allan www.philipallan.co.uk
- Russell, J. and Jarvis, M., Angles on Psychology A2 Teachers Guide Edexcel, Folens/OUP
- Brain C., A student guide: Edexcel Psychology: Unit 1: Social and Cognitive Psychology. Published by Philip Allan
- Brain C., A student guide: Edexcel Psychology: Unit 2: Understanding the individual. Published by Philip Allan
- Brain C., A student guide: Edexcel Psychology: Unit 3 Criminological and Child Psychology, published by Philip Allan
- Brain C., A student guide: Edexcel Psychology: Unit 3 Health and Sport Psychology, published by Philip Allan
- Brain C., A student guide: Edexcel Psychology: Unit 4, published by Philip Allan

7. Beyond GCE

Many students consider psychology, or related courses, beyond A-level when they apply to Higher Education. The number and variety of different courses which relate to psychology is very large indeed. Below is a brief (i.e. not comprehensive, please see www.ucas.ac.uk) list students interested in psychology might want to consider.

There is a long list of psychology degrees including:

- Applied Psychology

- Behavioural Psychology
- Child Psychology
- Clinical Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology
- Developmental Psychology
- Educational Psychology
- Occupational Psychology
- Psychological Counselling
- Psychology
- Psychology specialisations
- Social psychology

You can see that many of these areas are covered in GCSE, AS and A2 Edexcel Psychology - of course not in anything like the same depth as in Higher Education.

This coverage, however, can help a student to decide where their future career path lies.

The topics in the list above help to show all the possible specialisms that can come from studying psychology and there are more such as Sport Psychologist, Health Psychologist, Forensic Psychologist...

Additional psychology resources on progression and careers can be found at:

http://www.bps.org.uk/careers/careers-in-psychology---undergraduate/careers-in-psychology---undergraduate_home.cfm