

# AS and A Level Psychology



## Course Planner

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Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Psychology (9PS0)

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Psychology (8PS0)

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# AS and A level Psychology 2015: Course planner

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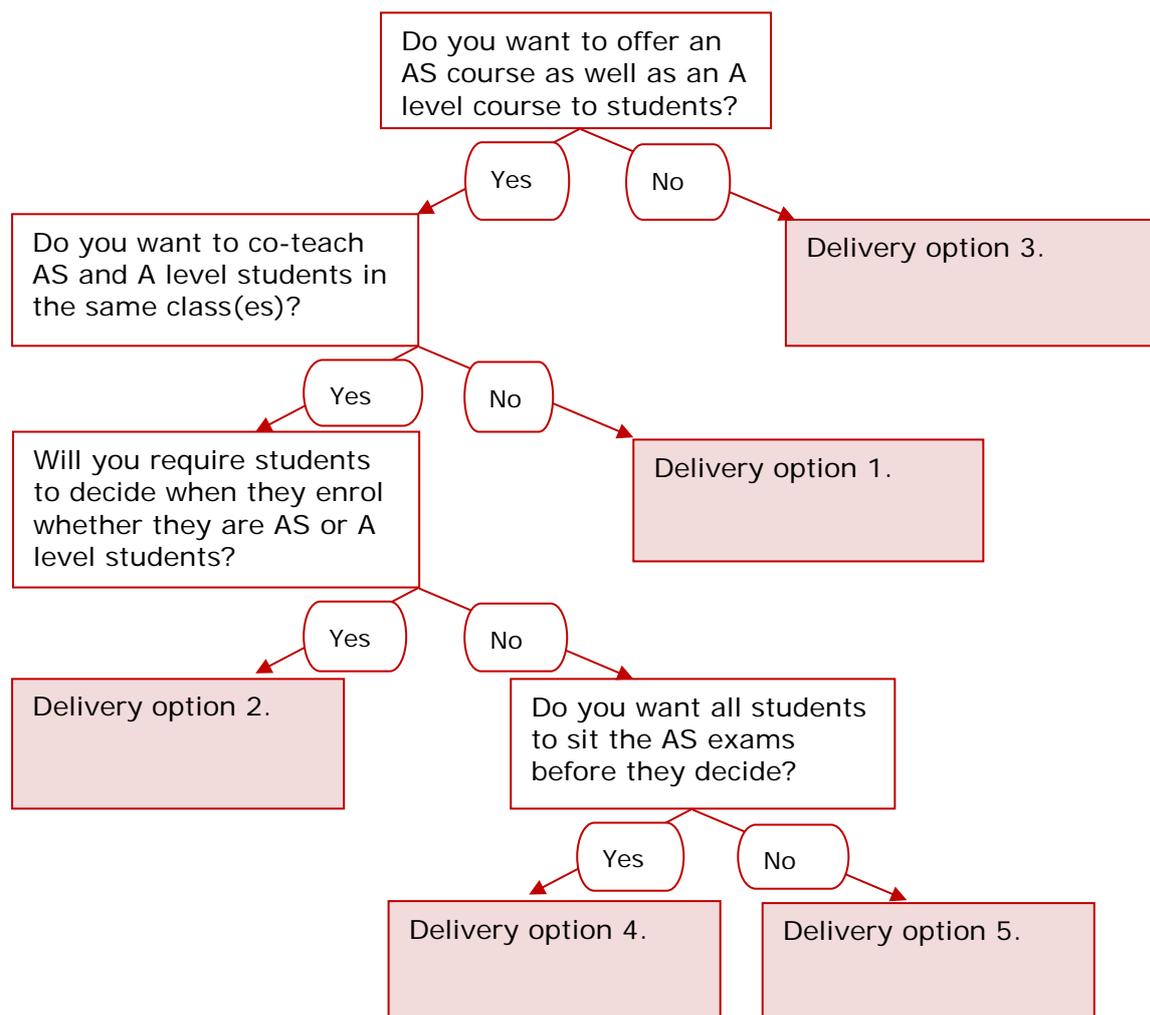
## Introduction

From 2015, AS Psychology will be a standalone qualification: it cannot contribute towards an A level. It equates to half the content of an A level, but the assessment will be at a similar standard to the current AS (and therefore a different standard from A level). Both qualifications will have linear assessment: all examinations at the end of the course.

This de-coupling of AS from A level and the move from modular to linear assessment have implications for planning and delivery which are considered in this course guide, but it will be for centres to decide which approach is the most suitable for their staff and students.

## Which delivery model?

The flowchart below outlines some of the key questions Psychology departments will need to consider when planning for the new course. Each level links through to a delivery option underneath where more detail on the advantages and disadvantages is given, and to the relevant course planner models below.



## Delivery options

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
<i>Enrolment</i>	Students enrol on either an AS course or an A level course, with no option to switch later on.		Only an A level is offered: all students must do the full two-year course.	Students enrol on either an AS course or an A level course, but can switch later on.	
<i>Teaching</i>	AS and A level students are taught separately.	AS and A level students are taught in the same class.	Only A level is taught.	AS and A level students are co-taught in same classes.	
<i>End of year 1</i>	AS students sit AS exams. A level students sit an internal exam on year 1 topics, using A level-style question stems/formulations.		Internal exam on year 1 topics, using A level-style question stems/formulations.	All students sit an AS exam. Teaching finishes in time for revision for AS exams. Students decide whether to continue to A level once they have their AS results.	Students to confirm by entry deadline whether they want to continue to A level. Only those not continuing to A level sit the AS exam. Others sit an internal exam but focusing on A level additional demands and then starts year 2 material.
<i>Pros</i>	Greater flexibility in ordering of A level topics. Teacher can focus on AS only or A level only.	Not running two separate AS/A courses may be easier for timetabling. Know from the start which students will do A level.	Greater flexibility in structuring the course – can do papers in any order. More time within course, with all exams at the end.	More flexible for students – can leave their decisions until they have AS results. For 2015 cohort(s), this may appeal more, as non-2015 subjects will still have nested AS and option to decide after AS results.	More flexible for students – can leave their decisions until part-way through the course. A level students not being examined on Paper 1/2 content twice.
<i>Cons</i>	May need greater timetabling and staffing flexibility and resource to run two separate courses. Less flexible for students – need to decide upfront.	Need to prepare students in one class for different assessments.	Less flexible for students – have to commit to two-year course. AS Psychology can't be taken as a fourth subject for breadth.	Less teaching time in year 1. Less flexibility in structuring course. Co-teaching more complicated. A level numbers not confirmed until AS results out. AS results doesn't count to A level – students have to be examined on year 1 content twice.	Less flexibility in structuring course – but can start A level content (year 2 material) at end of year 1. Co-teaching more complicated – preparing only some students for AS exams. Requires students to decide whether to continue without having AS results.

## Course planners

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This document provides a sample course planner for A level Psychology that can be adapted by centres to fit their timetabling and staffing arrangements. It is meant as an example approach only and is not intended to be prescriptive.

This course planner gives examples of a co-teachable approach as well as an approach which assumes that the A level will not be co-taught with the AS level and broadly follows the order in which the content is set out in the specification. It shows how the topics can be spread over a one- or two-year course.

The ordering of the topics in this course planner reflects the preferences of the writer, and centres are encouraged to organise the topics to suit their centre and students. The planner assumes **34 teaching weeks** in each year including part of the summer term after the AS examinations. There is a separate scheme of work document that provides a range of examples for suggested activities and resources which follows the approach of this course planner.

## One-year AS model

Issues and debates highlighted in bold in the table below will only be tested at A level. This model is designed to show how it can be co-taught.

Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
Week	Content	Week	Content	Week	Content
1	Introduce ideas around methodology and doing psychology – psychology and science	13	Case studies of brain damaged patients and analysis of data	25	Operant conditioning; social learning (and key question)
<b>Topic 1: Social psychology</b>		14	Experimental method and issues (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology)	26	Social learning theory (cont'd); phobias (and key question)
2	Obedience	15	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology) <b>Levels of measurement, using critical value tables</b>	27	Classic and contemporary study; <b>issues and debates</b>
3	Obedience and bring in key question	16	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology) <b>reasons for tests calculating tests</b>	28	Using animals and experimental method
4	Prejudice	<b>Topic 3: Biological psychology</b>		29	Observations and analysis (and practical)
5	Prejudice and bring in key question	17	Mode of function of recreational drugs, neurotransmitters; (and key question)	30	Revision for AS exam
6	Classic study and contemporary study; <b>issues and debates</b>	18	Brain function and structure including for aggression; evolution and aggression (and key question)	31	Revision for AS exam
7	Methodology (and practical) – interview and questionnaire	19	Hormones; Freud’s theory and aggression (and key question)	32	Revision for AS exam
8	Methodology (and practical) – qualitative and quantitative, sampling and ethics	20	Brain scanning; twin and adoption studies	33	Revision for AS exam

9	Methodology – analysis of data (and practical)	21	Correlations and analysis of correlations	34	Revision for AS exam
<b>Topic 2: Cognitive psychology</b>		22	Practical and Spearman analysis including doing the test using <b>algebraic equation</b>		
10	Multi-store model and episodic and semantic memory (and key question)	23	Classic and contemporary study; <b>issues and debates</b>		
11	Working memory model and reconstructive memory model (and key question)	<b>Topic 4: Learning theories</b>			
12	Classic study and contemporary study; <b>issues and debates</b>	24	Classical conditioning and the ethics of using animals (and key question)		

## Two-year model (A level)

### Model 1: (co-teachable with AS standalone qualification)

This approach assumes that A level will be co-taught with the AS qualification and the issues and debates content (which is A level content only) will be taught at the end of the second year to allow for co-teachability.

#### Year one

Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
Week	Content	Week	Content	Week	Content
1	Introduce ideas around methodology and doing psychology – psychology and science	13	Classic study and contemporary study	25	Classic and contemporary study
<b>Topic 1: Social psychology</b>		14	Case studies of brain damaged patients and analysis of data	26	Key assumptions and mock exam
2	Obedience	15	Experimental method and issues (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology)	<b>Topic 4: Learning theories</b>	
3	Obedience and bring in key question	16	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology)	27	Classical conditioning and the ethics of using animals (and key question)
4	Prejudice	17	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology)	28	Operant conditioning; social learning (and key question)
5	Prejudice and bring in key question	18	Key assumptions and mock exam	29	Social learning theory (continued); phobias (and key question)
6	Classic study and contemporary study	<b>Topic 3: Biological psychology</b>		30	Classic and contemporary study
7	Methodology (and practical) – interview and questionnaire	19	Mode of function of heroin, neurotransmitters (and key question)	31	Observations and analysis (and practical)
8	Methodology (and practical) – qualitative and quantitative,	20	Brain function including for aggression and brain lateralisation;	32	Using animals and experimental method

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	sampling and ethics		evolution and aggression (and key question)		
9	Methodology – analysis of data (and practical)	21	Hormones; Freud's theory and aggression (and key question)	33	Key assumptions and mock exam
10	Key assumptions and mock exam	22	Brain scanning; twin and adoption studies	34	Revision week for AS – or mop-up week
<b>Topic 2: Cognitive psychology</b>		23	Correlations and analysis of correlations		
11	Multi store model and episodic and semantic memory (and key question)	24	Practical		
12	Working memory model and reconstructive memory model (and key question)				

## Year two

Autumn term		Spring term				Summer term	
Week	Content	Week	Content			Week	Content
1	<b>Introduce year 2 and format, link to year 1</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>6: Criminological</b>	<b>7: Child</b>	<b>8: Health</b>	24	Methodology and issues
<b>Topic 5: Clinical psychology</b>		<b>13</b>	Explanations of criminal behaviour – biological and learning (including gender) (and key question)	Bowlby and Ainsworth on attachments including cross cultural research (and key question)	Mode of action of alcohol and one other drug (not heroin) (and key question)	25	Inferential stats and math
2	4 'D's and DSM	14	Explanations of criminal behaviour – social (including gender) (and key question)	Separation and deprivation research (and key question)	Explanations of drug misuse – one biological, one learning (and	26	Practice method questions

					key question)		
3	Schizophrenia – symptoms, features, two explanations (and key question)	15	Treatments – behavioural, CBT, biological (and key question)	Research into pros and cons of day care (and key question)	One anti-drug campaign including psychological strategies (and key question)	27	Review of studies practice questions on unseen material
4	Schizophrenia – two treatments (and key question)	16	Eye witness reliability and cognitive interview (and key question)	ADHD or Autism – features, explanations, treatments/the rapies (and key question)	One treatment for alcohol addiction and its effectiveness, and one study related to this (and key question)	28	Practice questions on the classic studies
5	Other disorder – symptoms, features, two explanations (and key question)	17	Jury decision making (and key question)	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	One treatment for a drug other than alcohol or heroin, and its effectiveness, and one study related to this (and key question)	29	Review Issues and debates
6	Other disorder – two treatments (and key question)	18	Psychological formulation and the role of the forensic psychologist (and key question)	Observations	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	30	Review Issues and debates
7	Classic and contemporary studies;	19	Classic and contemporary	Cross-cultural methods and	Animal lab experiments,	31	Review Psychological skills (mock exam)

	issues and debates		studies; issues and debates	meta analyses	ethics and issues		
8	HCPC guidelines for research	20	Experiment and analysis of quantitative data (and sampling)	Interview and questionnaire	Two methods to study drugs and humans, and ethical issues – and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	32	Revision week
9	Longitudinal research design, cross-sectional, cross-cultural, meta-analysis	21	Case study and analysis of qualitative data	Ethical issues and researching with children	Cross-cultural research and nature–nurture issues	33	Revision week
10	Interview research method and case studies	22	Practical	Practical	Practical	34	Revision week
11	Practical	23	Key assumptions and mock exam	Key assumptions and mock exam	Key assumptions and mock exam		
12	Key question and mock exam	<b>Topic 9: Psychological skills</b>					

**Model 2: (A level not co-taught with AS standalone qualification)**

This approach assumes that A level will not be co-taught with the AS qualification, and the issues and debates content (which is A level content only) will be taught alongside each topic area.

Year one

Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
Week	Content	Week	Content	Week	Content
1	Introduce ideas around methodology and doing psychology – psychology and science	13	Classic study and contemporary study; issues and debates	25	Classic and contemporary study; issues and debates
<b>Topic 1: Social psychology</b>		14	Case studies of brain-damaged patients and analysis of data	26	Key assumptions and mock exam
2	Obedience	15	Experimental method and issues (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology)	<b>Topic 4: Learning theories</b>	
3	Obedience and bring in key question	16	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology) levels of measurement, using critical value tables	27	Classical conditioning and the ethics of using animals (and key question)
4	Prejudice	17	Statistics and analysis (and practical) (include what is needed in biological psychology) reasons for tests calculating tests	28	Operant conditioning; social learning (and key question)
5	Prejudice and bring in key question	18	Key assumptions and mock exam	29	Social learning theory (continued); phobias (and key question)
6	Classic study and contemporary study; issues and debates	<b>Topic 3: Biological psychology</b>		30	Classic and contemporary study; issues and debates
7	Methodology (and practical) – interview and questionnaire	19	Mode of function of recreational drugs, neurotransmitters (and key question)	31	Observations and analysis (and practical)
8	Methodology (and practical) – qualitative and quantitative,	20	Brain function including for aggression and brain lateralisation;	32	Using animals and experimental method

	sampling and ethics		evolution and aggression (and key question)		
9	Methodology – analysis of data (and practical)	21	Hormones; Freud’s theory and aggression (and key question)	33	Key assumptions and mock exam
10	Key assumptions and mock exam	22	Brain scanning; twin and adoption studies	34	Ideas include: mop-up weeks, end-of-year exam, move on to year 2, work on maths element and statistical testing ...
<b>Topic 2: Cognitive psychology</b>		23	Correlations and analysis of correlations		
11	Multi-store model and episodic and semantic memory (and key question)	24	Practical including doing the Spearman test using algebraic equation		
12	Working memory model and reconstructive memory model (and key question)				

Year two

Autumn term		Spring term				Summer term	
Week	Content	Week	Content			Week	Content
1	<b>Introduce year 2 and format, link to year 1</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>6: Criminological</b>	<b>7: Child</b>	<b>8: Health</b>	24	Methodology and issues
<b>Topic 5: Clinical psychology</b>		<b>13</b>	Explanations of criminal behaviour – biological and learning (including gender) (and key question)	Bowlby and Ainsworth on attachments including cross cultural research (and key question)	Issues around drug taking including addiction, tolerance ...	25	Inferential stats and maths
2	4 ‘D’s and DSM	14	Explanations of criminal behaviour – social (including	Privation and deprivation research (and	Mode of action of alcohol and one other	26	Practice method questions

			gender) (and key question)	key question)	drug (not heroin) (and key question)		
3	Schizophrenia – symptoms, features, two explanations (and key question)	15	Cognitive interview and understanding offending behaviour	Research into pros and cons of day care (and key question)	Explanations of drug misuse – one biological, one learning (and key question)	27	Review of studies practice questions on unseen material
4	Schizophrenia – two treatments (and key question)	16	Treatments – behavioural, CBT, biological (and key question)	Autism – features, explanations, treatments/the rapies (and key question)	One anti-drug campaign including psychological strategies (and key question)	28	Practice questions on the classic studies
5	Other disorder – symptoms, features, two explanations (and key question)	17	Eye witness reliability and cognitive interview (and key question)	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	Two treatments for alcohol addiction and effectiveness (and key question)	29	Issues and debates
6	Other disorder – two treatments (and key question)	18	Jury decision making (and key question)	Observations and data analysis	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	30	Issues and debates
7	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	19	Classic and contemporary studies; issues and debates	Cross-cultural methods and meta analyses	Animal lab experiments, ethics and issues	31	Review Psychological skills (mock exam)
8	HCPC guidelines for research	20	Experiment and	Interview and questionnaire	Two methods to study drugs	32	Revision week

			analysis of quantitative data (and sampling)		and humans, and ethical issues – and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data		
9	Longitudinal research design, cross-sectional, cross cultural, meta-analysis	21	Case study and analysis of qualitative data	Ethical issues and researching with children	Cross cultural research and nature-nurture issues	33	Revision week
10	Interview research method and case studies	22	Practical	Practical	Practical	34	Revision week
11	Practical	23	Key assumptions and mock exam	Key assumptions and mock exam	Key assumptions and mock exam		
12	Key question and mock exam	<b>Topic 9: Psychological skills/Revision</b>					

**Note:** Although the ethos of this specification is for mathematical skills to be integrated into unit delivery throughout the course, some centres may wish to choose to deliver mathematical skills as a discrete module. There are advantages to this approach in that the learners will develop these skills in a focused way and the teacher/lecturer can then refer back to these skills at relevant times as the need arises in each of the units. This approach could also enable some centres to draw on the skills of colleagues from the mathematics department to help with delivery the content and build on the mathematical skills already developed in KS4.

How to deliver and develop the mathematical skills needed by learners in Psychology is very much a centre decision to be determined by the nature of the centre learners.