

AS and A Level Psychology



PROGRESSION GUIDE

From GCSE to AS/A level

GCE Psychology 2015

Progression Guide

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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 2015 qualifications. The guide discusses the full A Level. There is a separate section for the AS at the end, just to explain what it entails in the new GCE format. 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*
8. *The AS exam*

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. 'GCE' refers to the 'A' Level. The AS Level has a separate section, Section 8, just to explain the differences. This guide mainly focuses on GCSE to GCE (the full A level).

1. Practical considerations

Psychology GCE without GCSE

The GCE specification has been 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 will 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. Therefore, other GCSEs will contribute to GCE Psychology.

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.

Assessment Overview

- 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 practical's and the GCE requires class practical's 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 practical's 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. GCE requires a different level from GCSE so common resources would be useful as a starting point but GCE would tend to require more investigation of an area of content.

2. Content mapping

Both the GCSE and GCE contain almost exclusively core content with very little choice. With regard to GCE Paper Two offers a choice, which is one from three applications. There are choices within Topic Areas as well, such as in each Topic Area which one of three contemporary studies to choose. Largely though, as with GCSE, there is little choice in the core content:

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

	Unit 1 (40%)	Unit 2 (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? 	
	Paper 1 (35%) - Foundations in Psychology	Paper 2 (35%) Applications of Psychology	Paper 3 (30%) Psychological Skills (synoptic)

GCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Psychology • Cognitive Psychology • Biological Psychology • Learning Theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical Psychology <p>ONE FROM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminological Psychology • Child Psychology • Health Psychology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research methods • Review of studies • Issues and debates
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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 foundations of psychology for the Year One (and AS) and applications and a synoptic paper in Year Two. 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 in Year Two, Paper 2, 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 child psychology or health psychology.

Figure 2: Overview of the GCSE 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	Explaining the question: Why do we have phobias?	Preparedness (evolution), social learning and classical conditioning as explanations for phobias; nature-nurture and

	psychodynamic		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>Paper 1 (Year One material - also comprising the AS): Foundations of Psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social psychology –obedience and prejudice; interviews and questionnaires, and ethics; Sherif et al. (1954/1961) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates • Cognitive psychology –memory; experiments and case studies of patients with brain damage; Baddeley (1966b) and one contemporary study; key 	<p>Paper 2 (Year Two material - part): Applications of Psychology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical psychology - Diagnosis of mental disorders, 4D's, DSM and ICD, schizophrenia and one other disorder; longitudinal, cross-sectional, cross-cultural, meta-analyses, primary and secondary data, case studies and interviews; Rosenhan (1973), Carlsson et al. (1999) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates <p>Choice of one from:</p>

<p>question and practical; issues and debates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological psychology - CNS, neurotransmitters, structure and function of the brain, evolution and natural, Freud's psychodynamic theory (contrasts with biological theory), the role of hormones; correlations, brain scanning, twin studies and adoption/twins reared apart studies; Raine et al, (1997) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates • Learning Theories - classical and operant conditioning, social learning theory, phobias; observation, using animals in experiments, and content analysis; Watson and Rayner (1920) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Criminological psychology - biological and social explanations of crime, understanding offenders, treatments for offenders, eye witness testimony and jury decision-making; experiments, case studies and ethics; Loftus and Palmer (1974) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates</i> • <i>Child psychology - attachment theories, deprivation, privation, day care, cross cultural research into attachment, autism; observation, questionnaire, interview, cross-cultural research; van IJzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates</i> • <i>Health psychology - drug misuse, biological and learning explanations for drug misuse, treatments for drug misuse and one anti-drug campaign; Using animals in studies, human drug study methods, cross-cultural research; Olds and Milner (1954) and one contemporary study; key question and practical; issues and debates</i>
	<p>Paper Three (Year Two material - part): Psychological Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods (review from all Topic Areas) • Review of studies • Issues and Debates: Ethics; Practical issues in the design and implementation of research; Reductionism; Comparisons between ways of explaining behaviour using different themes; Psychology as a science; Culture and gender; Nature-nurture; An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time; Issues of social control; The use of psychological knowledge in society; Issues related to socially sensitive research.

Overviews of the GCSE and GCE specifications are shown (*Figures 2 and 3*). The GCSE Specification was designed to feed into the GCE 2008 specification and now into the GCE 2015 specification, and to 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 treatments are covered in Learning Theories as well as in Clinical Psychology and the other three applications. The applications help with careers, such as becoming a forensic psychologist, a clinical or a health psychologist.
Uses topic questions to focus on areas of psychology to answer questions of interest – to engage the candidates.	Focuses on four foundation Topic Areas in Year One and two applications together with synoptic material including issues and debates in Year Two. 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 Learning Theories in Year One including systematic desensitisation, which can be covered in Year Two as well in clinical psychology as appropriate to the mental disorders chosen. The Year Two Applications include treatments and therapies such as behavioural and biological treatments in criminological psychology and drug therapy in health psychology, as well as in clinical psychology. The

	issues and debates, such as about the power of the therapist (social control) 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 questions in all four Topic Areas for Year One and in the four applications for Year Two (clinical psychology and one other from three offered). The GCE asks for more depth in explaining such issues, which in GCE are called 'key questions'.
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. Individual differences and developmental psychology are threaded through all Topic Areas in the GCE, the other three are seen in the foundations Year One section as well as drawn on in Year Two applications.
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 the GCE (candidates study 6 of these because of the options), in the issues and debates, and in the applications in Year Two. 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.	The BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009) is covered in Year One as are ethics when using animals in experiments. The HCPC is covered in Year Two and, if child psychology is chosen, the implications of the UNCRC (1989) on the rights of the child. Health psychology looks again at the ethics of using animals as well as humans. Ethics are throughout, such as in all practical's. 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	Reconstructive memory is a memory theory for cognitive psychology (Paper One). Bartlett etc. Also links to eyewitness testimony (ewt) which can be a key question for cognitive psychology (Paper One). Ewt is a topic for criminological psychology (Paper Two) and can be used when considering issues and debates (Paper Three).
Eyewitness testimony	See above – links to Paper One, Paper Two and Paper Three
Topic B: Is dreaming meaningful?	
Freud’s theory of dreaming	Not on spec as such but parts of Freud’s theory are covered in Paper One, when a contrast is offered to biological psychology, and there are links (such as the role of the unconscious).
Little Hans study	Can be briefly studied when looking at the psychodynamic explanation of aggression, as an example and as a method.
Activation synthesis to explain dreaming	Not on spec. May link to neuronal transmission though (Paper One, biological psychology)
Basic structure of neuron etc	In biological psychology (Paper One) has same. Also in Health Psychology (Paper Two, a choice).
Role of the psychoanalyst	Can be a key question in AS (Unit 2) for psychodynamic theory within biological psychology, though there is not as much emphasis on psychodynamic ideas in GCE 2015 as there was in GCE 2008. Can link to other areas where therapies and treatments are looked at – in the applications including clinical psychology in Year Two.

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 for aggression (and human behaviour in general) are looked at in Paper One, 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 (Paper Two, a choice).
Social causes of aggression	Covered in criminological psychology (Paper Two, a choice). And social learning theory is covered in many places in the spec including Learning Theories and then in applications as an explanation.
Nature-nurture issues (in other areas of the course too as well as Topic C)	One of the issues and debates in Paper Three and also arises in other areas of the course, both Year One and Year Two (e.g. when studying twin, adoption and twins reared apart studies in biological psychology, Paper One).
Individual differences in aggression	Individual differences are looked at in each of the 8 Topic areas and this includes in biological psychology (Paper One) where aggression is largely the focus (such as Freud’s ideas about personality in that Topic Area).
The argument between TV and violence	Can be key question in learning theories in Paper One. Can arise in biological psychology as an alternative to biological explanations for aggression (as an environmental cause) (Paper One).
Anger management	Criminological psychology asks for behavioural treatments and CBT and anger management can be part of that.
Watershed and censorship	Could be a key question for learning theories (Paper One). Could be an issue and debate (Paper Three) as it is how psychology is used in society.
TOPIC D: Why do we have phobias?	
Evolution and preparedness	Evolution is in biological psychology (Paper One) though preparedness is not necessarily involved. Also evolution can be seen elsewhere - such as nature-nurture debate, twin studies,

	schizophrenia... Twin studies are in biological psychology (Paper One).
Social learning theory	Learning theories (Paper One) and in many places in Year Two as an explanation for behaviour.
Classical conditioning	Learning theories, (Paper One) and elsewhere as an explanation for behaviour .
Flooding and systematic desensitisation	Learning theories (Paper One) as a therapy for phobias (systematic desensitisation is required, flooding can be a choice). Can also be used in issues and debates as examples of social control (Paper Three).
Cultural issues with regard to phobias	Not on spec as such but can relate to ethnocentrism (Paper Two, child psychology). And cross cultural studies are found in child psychology and health psychology (Paper Two) so knowing about them can be useful. Cultural issues regarding obedience and prejudice are in social psychology (Paper One).
Topic E: Are criminals born or made?	
Biology and criminality	Links well to criminological psychology (Paper Two, a choice). Also to twin studies (Paper One, biological psychology) and other areas in biological psychology, looking at aggression (Paper One).
Social explanations of criminality	Self fulfilling prophecy can be chosen as a social explanation in criminological psychology (Paper Two).
Nature-nurture and criminality	Useful throughout and nature-nurture is a debate (Paper Three)
Jury decision-making	Also in criminological psychology (Paper Two, a choice).

Figure 7 shows how for Unit 2 as well much of the content differs from GCE psychology, however, there are also some notable 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
<p>AO1: Knowledge and understanding of how psychology works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the psychological models, theories, explanations, concepts and terminology in the specification • 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>	<p>AO1: Knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes techniques and procedures</p> <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: Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in a theoretical context • in a practical context • when handling qualitative data • when handling quantitative data <p>30-35% of the GCE</p>
<p>AO3: Interpretation, evaluation and analysis of psychological data and practice:</p> <p>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 	<p>AO3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make judgements and reach conclusions • develop and refine practical design and procedures

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>35-40% of the GCE</p>
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Figure 8 shows how the assessment objectives at GCSE and GCE are similar with similar weightings overall, though in GCE 'doing science' does not have an assessment objective of its own. In GCE AO1 is knowing and understanding material, including method material; AO2 is applying that knowledge and understanding of material, including method material; AO3 is evaluating (and so on) what is learned, including method material.

GCE assessment objectives match those for GCE sciences whereas GCSE assessment objectives are stand alone. Overall there are the same requirements - knowing (with understanding), applying (with certain requirements such as both theoretically and in a practical sense), evaluating (including analysis and interpretation), though they are put found within different assessment objectives. Candidates who are familiar with the three assessment objectives at GCSE can usefully use their understanding of them in the GCE course, however, the difference (that method is threaded throughout with other material and that AO2 is apply, AO3 is evaluate) needs to be noted.

Both require some practical skills and consider 'doing psychology' and 'why psychology matters' though the GCE spreads the assessment of practical skills through AO1 (know and understand), AO2 (apply) and AO3 (evaluate) whereas for the GCSE AO3 focuses on practical skills.

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. The skills required and assessed are the same - know and understand; apply; evaluate.

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).

GCE Psychology 2015 is a linear course where three papers are taken at the end of the course and GCSEs are 'going linear' so will have the same requirements, all papers are taken at the end of the course.

(Note that the AS has not yet been discussed, it has a separate section at the end - it has two papers taken at the end of the AS, which is likely to be at the end of Year One, as will be seen)

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 all Topic Areas, where practical investigations are run in each one. 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 questions, though often there is class input with regard to practical investigations and key questions at least at Year One level and this can happen in Year Two as well.

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 Year One to focus on research skills and methodology, prior to starting the Year Two content. However, method and practical investigations are threaded through the course as they are in each Topic Area so possibly that time at the end of Year One can be used either to start on Year Two material or to draw together issues and debates in preparation, or for some similar purpose. In fact, with the new structure, only centres where all students are doing the AS will have that period at the end of Year One - without the AS there are no first year exams so teaching carries on. More on the AS later. (take out – seems as if not required) Areas that might be focused on in the period after the AS if it is taken 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.
- Reading for meaning; recognising bias. This skill is also useful for evaluating studies and their own practical investigations.

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	
GCSE	1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 45 minutes	

	<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 worth 40% of the GCSE</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 worth 60% of the GCSE</p>	
	Paper One	Paper Two	Paper Three
GCE	<p>2 hours</p> <p>Short answer and extended writing, including stimulus response questions</p> <p>4 sections, 1 for each Topic Area 1 other section of 20 marks with 2 extended response questions covering issues and debates</p> <p>Questions range across the Topic Area sections within each Topic Area</p> <p>90 marks</p> <p>Worth 35% of the whole A level</p> <p>First assessment summer 2017</p>	<p>2 hours</p> <p>Short answer and extended writing, including stimulus response questions</p> <p>4 sections, 1 for clinical and then 1 for the other 3 applications (candidate chooses clinical and one other)</p> <p>Clinical psychology has 54 marks and a 20 mark essay at the end, the other application has 36 marks.</p> <p>Questions range across the Topic Area sections within each Topic Area</p> <p>90 marks</p> <p>Worth 35% of the whole A level</p> <p>First assessment summer 2017</p>	<p>2 hours</p> <p>Short answer and extended writing, including stimulus response questions</p> <p>3 sections, 1 for methods, 1 for studies, 1 for issues and debates</p> <p>The method section has 24 marks, the studies section has 24 marks and the issues and debates section as 32 marks</p> <p>Questions range across each of the sections, within each section</p> <p>80 marks</p> <p>Worth 30% of the whole A level</p> <p>First assessment summer 2017</p>

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 and some of the other questions (tends to be questions with 8 marks or more). 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 will be found here (these will be posted after exams have taken place):

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

GCE past papers will be obtained from (these will be posted after exams have taken place):

<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 (note injunctions are in the specification at GCE with details as to what is required. And there are different requirements, such as for 'evaluate' candidates must come to a judgement.
Understanding difference between study and theory	Same skill required
Understanding that to describe a study aim, method, results, conclusions are needed	Same skill required. Possibly at GCE background is used more.
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	There is no multiple choice in the GCE

thought...)	
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 applies to extended writing and in a way to some method questions such as 'give the hypothesis..' because if there are 2 marks, the answer is marked as 'fully operationalised' or 'partly operationalised' (for example) which in essence is levels marking. Officially though it is the extended writing that is marked using levels.
Understanding that there is no choice in the question papers – all candidates answer all questions	Same skill required though in Paper Two the candidates choose their application.
Practising skill of answering 6, 8 and 10 mark extended writing (and can be marks in between e.g. 7)	Extended writing can be from 8 marks to 20 marks and marks in between so that skill required here too
Focus on quality of written communication	Same skill required
Getting to know the three assessment objectives	Same skill required – note the differences in the assessment objectives for the GCE
The new GCSEs are going to be linear so the skill of revising and drawing on all material in the examinations is required	Same skill required. GCE 2015 is a linear course with all exams taken at the end. Paper Three is a revision Paper to help.
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)	Similar for GCE, extended writing and short answer questions are mixed, though extended writing is there at the end particularly in Paper One (Section E) and Paper Three (issues and debates)
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. One of the assessment objectives is 'apply' on its own, so expect a lot of stimulus material questions so candidates can show their skill at applying their knowledge and understanding

Figure 11 shows that in many cases the same skills are required, and this can be useful when progressing candidates from GCSE to GCE. 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. Also case studies of brain damaged patients are specific (Paper One, cognitive psychology)
Ethics and humans – informed consent, right to withdraw, privacy, confidentiality, protection of participants. Also ethics involved in dealing with offenders	Same but focusing on the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct so wider than five ethical issues, risk management (this is new) and in Year Two the HCPC and for child psychology, if chosen, the UNCRC
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. Add scientific credibility
Content analysis and related issues - sampling, tallying	Same and a requirement to carry one out (Paper Two, clinical psychology)
Questionnaires and related terms – open and closed questions, rank scales, response bias, social desirability	Same and a requirement to carry one out (Paper One, social psychology, and possibly in Year Two as there is a choice) Interviewing is needed for the GCE as well as questionnaires
Ethics and animals – social isolation, number and choice of species	Same and more depth (e.g. Scientific Procedures Act)
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 GCE 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. Some injunctions, however, have different requirements. Also in GCE only one injunction would be used for each question, so 'describe and evaluate', for example, would not be used.

Figures 13 and 14, which are illustrative only, show how command words progress from GCSE, to GCE. 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: 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. Involves the recall of one or more pieces of information, can be used for information in context
Identify	Make sure you give enough material for the examiner to understand. E.g. identify a study that looks at schemas...	The same – some key information to be selected from a given stimulus or source
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 – same as in 'state' and 'give' though here there should be a name that the candidate can give
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.	Not on the list of injunctions for GCE, expect 'describe' even for a low number of marks

Describe	More detail than 'outline' but still 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.	Same - to give an account of something. Does not need a justification or a reason. Though statements need to be developed.
Explain	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.	The same in a way – thought an explanation needs a justification added to a description point. There must be some reasoning involved.
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 in a way - though in the GCE this means reviewing information and then bringing it together to form a conclusion. The conclusion draws on strengths and weaknesses as well as evidence and so on.
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. It means giving similarities and/or differences. Does not need a conclusion.
Assess	Unlikely at GCSE. It means give strengths and weakness	Give consideration to all factors that apply and identify

	(evaluate) but also come up with an answer about what is best...	which are the most important or relevant. Make a judgement and come to a conclusion.
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, rather than asking for 'apply'.	Not in the GCE list of injunctions.
Analyse; Calculate; Draw; Interpret; Justify; Plot; Predict; Suggest; To what extent...? These are all in the GCE list of injunctions and this helps to show the different level between GCSE and GCE.		

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. 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, Hodder and Philip Allan (<http://www.philipallan.co.uk/>) and Pumpkin.

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.pearsonschoolsandfecolleges.co.uk/Secondary/SocialScience/Psychology/EdexcelGCSEPsychology/EdexcelGCSEPsychology.aspx?gclid=CJebk7_SiaQCFQGY2Aod-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)

Assessment Overview

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

8. The AS exam

The AS is basically the Year One of the GCE and all comments about Year One apply to the AS except for two areas: methodology and issues and debates.

a) Methodology

There are some areas in the quantitative skills appendix for psychology (Appendix 3 in the GCE specification) that are not required for AS, such as levels of measurement. However, these differences are not that easy to separate out as the AS students do often require them for the practicals they do. Therefore, it makes

sense to teach AS students all the methodology as they do Year One. The 'bold' in Appendix 3 highlights the areas that are not needed.

b) Issues and debates

The AS candidates do not need to study all the issues and debates that are listed for the GCE. However, some they will do anyway, so for co-teaching there is very little difference. Figure 14 shows the GCE issues and debates and then sets out alongside which ones AS students will cover anyway as they work through Year One. Just those not covered in Year One specifically can be taught after the AS students have finished.

Figure 14: Issues and debates and co-teaching AS and A level

Issues and debates	What Year One covers anyway
Ethics	Social psychology covers ethics
Practical issues in the design and implementation of research	Doing 4 practicals will involve looking at this issue
Reductionism	Learning theories has this issue in the sped material
Comparisons between ways of explaining behaviour using different themes	Social psychology compared social identity theory and realistic conflict theory, for example. Learning theories use three different theories to explain behaviour.
Psychology as a science	Learning theories has this issue in the sped material
Culture and gender	Obedience covers both cultural and gender effects on obedience and prejudice covers cultural differences, in social psychology
Nature-nurture	Biological psychology looks at twin and adoption studies
An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time	Milgram is studies in social psychology and if Burger's study is chosen that shows similarities over time (in social psychology). In other areas differences over time are covered, such as using fMRI scanning now (In biological psychology)
Issues of social control	In learning theories, two therapies/treatments for phobias are looked at
The use of psychological knowledge within society	Each Topic Area has a key question for society
Issues related to socially sensitive research	Studies looking at aggression (biological psychology) or those looking at case studies of brain damaged patients (cognitive psychology) are examples.

Taking into account the two differences between AS and Year One GCE, it can be seen that the two are co-teachable. This means that all that has been said about GCSE and Year One GCE in the guide in the way of material suits AS too.

Assessment in the AS is different and all that is said that is Year Two will not apply to AS candidates.