
GCSE Psychology 2017

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Introduction

The new GCSE specification has some important features that are laid down by Ofqual, and therefore show little variation. The material in the core topics (Paper 1 of the Edexcel specification and research methods) is almost identical across the three specifications, with only minor variations in emphasis and particular additional topics. The major difference between the specifications is the optional topics. Of the five optional topics agreed with Ofqual, the Pearson Edexcel specification offers a choice, with centres being required to choose two topics to study. In both the AQA and the OCR specifications no choice is given and centres must study the topics selected by the examination boards. Edexcel is the *only* specification that gives centres choice.

The first table below summarises the key differences in the way the new Edexcel specification compares with the 2008 specification. It looks at both the pattern of assessment, as well as key aspects about the way in which the specification will operate. The second table looks in more detail at the content of the new specification and how this compares with the 2008 Edexcel specification. If there is no comparable content from the legacy specification, this box is left blank.

The new specification does not have embedded practical assignments, however most teachers find the use of short practicals useful in helping effective learning. Therefore, within the course content in the specification, studies that can be replicated are identified with an asterisk. This will enable more effective teaching of research methods as students will appreciate the implications of design decisions, undertaking data analysis and the interpretation of results when they have undertaken such tasks 'for real'.

The subsequent tables in this mapping document show key comparisons between the new Pearson Edexcel specification and the legacy specifications of AQA and OCR respectively.

Assessment comparison between 2017 Pearson Edexcel and 2008 Pearson Edexcel

2017 specification		2008 specification
<p>Two papers</p> <p>Total time for the qualification is the same, although the balance is switched round from 2008</p>		<p>Two papers</p>
<p>Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes</p> <p>Marked out of 98 marks</p> <p>55% of the marks for the qualification</p> <p>Multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, open-response questions and extended writing</p>		<p>Paper 1: 1 hour 15 minutes</p> <p>Marked out of 60 marks</p> <p>40% of the marks for the qualification</p> <p>Multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions</p>
<p>Paper 2: 1 hour 20 minutes</p> <p>Marked out of 79 marks</p> <p>45% of the marks for the qualification</p> <p>Multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions and extended writing</p>		<p>Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes</p> <p>Marked out of 90 marks</p> <p>60% of the marks for the qualification</p> <p>Multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions and extended writing</p>
<p>Paper 1 (1PS0/01)</p> <p>Five compulsory core topics</p> <p>Six sections</p> <p>One section for each of the five compulsory core topics; each section will contain multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions.</p> <p>The final section will contain two extended open-response questions that will focus on debates within psychology and interrelationships between the core topics.</p>		<p>Paper 1</p> <p>Two compulsory topics</p> <p>One section for each of the two topics</p> <p>Topic A: How do we see our world?</p> <p>Topic B: Is dreaming meaningful?</p>

<p>Paper 2 (1PS0/02)</p> <p>Section A: Compulsory questions on research methods. This section may also draw on material from the compulsory core topics.</p> <p>Questions will include calculations, multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions, and one 12-mark open-response question.</p> <p>Sections B–F: Optional topics</p> <p>One section for each of the optional topics. Students will study two of these topics. There will be multiple-choice and short-open questions, as well as one extended open-response question.</p>		<p>Debates in psychology</p> <p>Three compulsory topics</p> <p>Topic C: Do TV and video games affect young people's behaviour?</p> <p>Topic D: Why do we have phobias?</p> <p>Topic E: Are criminals born or made?</p>
<p>Assessment objectives:</p> <p>AO1: 35% of marks – Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures</p> <p>AO2: 35% of marks – Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures</p> <p>AO3: 30% of marks – Analyse and evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures to make judgements and draw conclusions</p>		<p>Assessment objectives:</p> <p>AO1: 30–34% – Knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works</p> <p>AO2: 34–38% – Application of knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works</p> <p>AO3: 30–34% – Interpretation, evaluation and analysis of psychological data and practice</p>

Content comparison between 2017 Pearson Edexcel and 2008 Pearson Edexcel

2017 specification		2008 specification
Research methods assessed separately in Paper 2 Greater emphasis on mathematical components than previously		Research methods embedded within the papers
Key debates integrated in the core topics and will be used to support the synoptic element within the assessment. These topics are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • morality and moral development • reductionism/holism • nature/nurture • the wider historical perspective • the role of culture and society in understanding behaviour. 		
Every section has the same structure with content and two related studies. Studies appropriate for class reproduction are clearly identified.		
Compulsory core topics encompassing major areas within psychology An assessment question which requires candidates to integrate thinking on two or more of these core topics		Compulsory topics used as a vehicle to introduce concepts such as physiological versus psychodynamic explanations of dreaming
Optional topics – centres choose two out of five possible topics		Three themed debates – all compulsory

Mapping 2017 Pearson Edexcel and AQA 2014

Pearson Edexcel 2017		AQA 2014
Two papers: 1 hour 45 minutes and 1 hour 20 minutes		Two papers: both 1 hour 30 minutes
Paper 1 content		
Development: Stages of development and early brain development Piaget's theory of cognitive development Dweck's mindset theory Willingham's learning theory Development of morality		
Memory: Structure and the information processing approach Bartlett's Theory of Reconstructive Memory The Multi-store Model of Memory Amnesia Reductionism/holism		Memory: Structure and the information processing approach Bartlett's Theory of Reconstructive Memory The Multi-store Model of Memory Amnesia
Psychological problems: Depression Addiction Cognitive behavioural therapy as a treatment Drugs as treatment Nature and nurture		
The brain and neuropsychology: Brain structure including CNS and PNS Synaptic transmission		

Brain lateralisation Effects of brain damage on cognition and behaviour Changes in understanding over time		
Social influence: Personal and situational factors affecting behaviour Bystander influence Conformity Obedience Crowd behaviour The role of culture and society		Social influence: Personal and situational factors affecting behaviour Bystander influence Conformity Obedience The role of culture and society

Paper 2 content		
<i>Options</i>		
Criminal: Learning and biological explanation of criminality Effects of punishment on recidivism Treatments for criminality		Biological & situational explanations of anti-social personality disorder Treating and reducing aggression
The self: Concepts of the self, including identity, free will and humanistic Personality, influences and measuring Trait theories of personality		Personality, influences and measuring Trait theories of personality
Perception: Illusions, constancies and cues Gibson's and Gregory's theories Perceptual set		

Sleep and dreaming: Sleep, and its nature, functions and disorders Freudian explanation of dreams Activation synthesis model of dreams		
Language, thought and communication: Piaget's & Vygotsky's views on language Language relativity and non-human claims to language Non-verbal communication Darwinian explanation of communication		Non-human communication and human language Non-verbal communication
Research methods: Different methods of research Ethical issues Sampling Designing experiments Carrying out descriptive statistics including creating graphs Interpreting results both arithmetic and graphs Types of data		Research methods: Different methods of research Ethical issues Sampling Designing experiments Carrying out descriptive statistics including creating graphs Interpreting results both arithmetic and graphs Types of data

Mapping 2017 Pearson Edexcel and OCR 2012

Pearson Edexcel 2017		OCR 2012
Two papers: 1 hour 45 minutes and 1 hour 20 minutes		Three papers: papers 1 & 2 1 hour 15 minutes each Paper 3: 1 hour
Paper 1 content		
Development: Stages of development and early brain development Piaget's theory of cognitive development Dweck's mindset theory Willingham's learning theory Development of morality		Development: Stages of development Piaget's theory of cognitive development
Memory: Structure and the information processing approach Bartlett's Theory of Reconstructive Memory The Multi-store Model of Memory Amnesia Reductionism/holism		Memory: Structure Multi-store Model of Memory
Psychological problems: Depression Addiction Cognitive behavioural therapy as a treatment Drugs as treatment Nature and nurture		

The brain and neuropsychology: Brain structure Brain lateralisation Effects of brain damage on cognition and behaviour Changes in understanding over time		
Social influence: Personal and situational factors affecting behaviour Bystander influence Conformity Obedience Crowd behaviour The role of culture and society		Personal and situational factors affecting behaviour Obedience

Paper 2 content		
<i>Options</i>		
Criminal: Learning and biological explanations of criminality Effects of punishment on recidivism Treatments for criminality		Criminal: Learning and biological explanations of criminality Punishment, social skills training
The self: Concepts of the self, including identity, free will and humanistic Personality, influences and measuring Trait theories of personality		The self: Concepts of the self, including identity, free will and humanistic Trait theories of personality

Perception: Illusions, constancies and cues Gibson's and Gregory's theories Perceptual set		Perception: Illusions, constancies and cues Gibson's and Gregory's theories
Sleep and dreaming: Sleep, and its nature, functions and disorders Freudian explanation of dreams Activation synthesis model of dreams		
Language, thought and communication: Piaget's and Vygotsky's views on language Language relativity and non-human claims to language Non-verbal communication Darwinian view of communication		Non-verbal communication
Research methods: Different methods of research Ethical issues Sampling Designing experiments Carrying out descriptive statistics including creating graphs Interpreting results both arithmetic and graphs Types of data		Research methods: Different methods of research Ethical issues Sampling Designing experiments Carrying out descriptive statistics including creating graphs Interpreting results both arithmetic and graphs Types of data