GCSE Psychology 2017 – Scheme of Work

Contents

GCSE Psychology: introduction to the Scheme of Work

This document is intended to be an example of how the new GCSE course could be delivered over a two-year period in a typical school setting. It is not prescriptive and each topic has been treated separately so that, if the scheme is used as a basic pattern, the order in which topics are taught can be modified to suit the individual.

The course planner document sets out other strategies for teaching and can be used, in conjunction with this document, to provide a scheme of work tailored to your needs.

There is a wealth of materials available on the internet that can be used to enrich the learning experience. As all teachers are aware, there is always a trade-off between enrichment and covering the specification requirements in sufficient detail. The judgement about where the balance lies is unique to each centre and the suggested resources and strategies are just that, suggestions. Much more could be included, far less could be done: decisions must be made to suit both teacher and students.

Exemplar Scheme of Work

This exemplar is for teaching over two years with research methods integrated.

Many of the papers referred to can be found quickly on the internet by using google scholar. Type author(s) names a year and a key term into the search box at: http://scholar.google.co.uk/

Year 1

Development

Week	Development	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	What is psychology? A general introduction to the subject	The brain and the mind Using behaviour to understand the mind Thinking about how to assess/measure behaviour and science	Ask students to investigate what makes subjects sciences. Match up the criteria that are said to make a subject a science against psychology. E.g. Using experiments. Resource: cards showing subjective and objective criteria for sorting, to show how objective criteria are generally seen as scientific and subjective criteria as non-scientific.
	What is meant by developmental psychology?	Explore the concept of development, why most focus is placed on child development and why understanding change is important.	Ask small groups to chart and then share logs of the different types of change, e.g. physical, social, language, thinking. These categories could be subdivided into age bands if more subgroups would be useful.
2	Developmental stages	Developmental stages from birth to adulthood Guideline ages and key changes	Ask students to interview their parents about when some key developmental milestones happened in their lives – e.g. first tooth, first steps – to emphasise variability. Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips to illustrate developmental changes.
	Development of the brain	Early brain development including critical parts of brain	Either a model of the brain or video clips showing brain scans of development.
3	Piaget's developmental theory, including an evaluation of the theory	Key aspects of Piaget's theory, including schema theory How the process of development comes about Strengths and weaknesses of the theory	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips showing observations of conservation tasks. Use a model of Piaget and Inhelder's 'Three mountains task' to recreate the study scenario.

	Ethical issues in psychological research	Ethical issues of research, including working with children Introduce the British Psychological Society's (BPS) ethical guidance	Pose the question: why are ethical guidelines necessary? Begin with safeguarding, which students will already be familiar with.
4	Observation as a research method Study: Piaget and Inhelder (1956)	Piaget and Inhelder (1956) study: use framework of aim, procedure, findings and conclusions (APFC) for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	Undertake an observation using internet clips of children playing. Ask students to decide on suitable categories and agree on definitions of behaviour. Use simple comparisons for inter-rater reliability.
5	Dweck's mindset theory	Fixed and growth mindsets: what they are, how they are recognised and the implications for development and success Strengths and weaknesses of the theory	Facilitate a discussion on mindset theory in e.g. Times Educational Supplement as part of the evaluation. e.g. www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-news/carol-dweck-whole-idea-growth-mindset-say-yes-they-can
6	Study: Gunderson *et al.* (2013) Correlation, drawing and interpreting scatter diagrams	Gunderson *et al.* (2013) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	Teachers produce a summary of the Gunderson *et al.* paper showing key points to help consolidate them. Use data from Gunderson *et al.* paper to explore correlations and what they show. Produce a class correlation using self-report data, e.g. estimated self-esteem and a self-esteem score generated by responses to questions or from observation (week 4).
7	Willingham's learning theory of development		Willingham has a 'Science and Education' blog that he uses to present his ideas.
8	Evaluation of Willingham's learning theory Issues and debates: moral development, including Piaget's view	Strengths and weaknesses of the theory	Tie in with Dweck and Willingham, and higher-order moral reasoning

9	Moral development, continued End-of-topic test	Kohlberg's view of moral development Look at more recent views of development as evaluation.	Use Heinz' dilemma, including gender issues on moral development Can be found on e.g. Wikipedia Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Memory

Week	Memory	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
10	The information processing approach Stages of memory including short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory (LTM) Bar charts and histograms	Use of computer analogy (flow diagram) Understanding hardware/software distinction	Use memory experiments to illustrate the stages of memory. E.g. serial position curve, Brown-Peterson technique. There are many more. Use bar charts and histograms to illustrate evidence from e.g. Peterson and Peterson (1959) (see week 12).
11	Atkinson and Shiffrin's Multi-store Model of Memory (MSM) (1968) Normal distribution, percentages and fractions	Describe and evaluate MSM with both supporting and contradictory evidence.	Miller *The Magical Number Seven+/-2* Glanzer and Cunitz (1966) Murdoch (1962) Normal distribution: use data from a memory experiment to show distribution and introduce the concept of normal distribution, percentages and fractions.
12	Experiments as a research method Study: Peterson and Peterson (1959)	Define an 'experiment' – i.e. the key features – and differentiate between methods. Peterson and Peterson (1959) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	Build on experience from class experiments run over the previous two weeks to introduce the experiment as a method with evaluation of the different types (i.e. lab, field, natural). Ask students to suggest ways to make traditional memory experiments more realistic, e.g. make a shopping list of things they may need to buy/acquire when setting up a new flat for themselves.

13	Bartlett's Theory of Reconstructive Memory (1932), including description, evidence and evaluation	Components of Bartlett's theory Contrast with MSM, which emphasises structure whereas Bartlett emphasises process	Read a story that students will be required to remember at the start of next week's lesson. Taking into account the more global nature of modern society, choose a story that is as alien to students as 'War of the Ghosts' would have been 90 years ago. Consider cultures that are not so well known, such as the Australian aboriginal culture, nomadic cultures from Mongolia or fictitious alien cultures from science fiction.
14	Study: Bartlett's War of the Ghosts (1932) Variables in research and how to control them	Bartlett's (1932) War of the Ghosts study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. As students become more familiar with the experiment as a research tool, consider variables and how they should be dealt with: • independent and dependent variables • situational variables • participant variables.	Do an unexpected recall task the week after you introduced students to an original story (see week 13). Brainstorm in groups all of the variables that might affect a study.
15	Amnesia: retrograde and anterograde	Defining amnesia: • retrograde – possible causes, e.g. trauma such as concussion, Alzheimer's disease • anterograde – possible causes including drugs	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips of e.g. Clive Wearing showing how anterograde amnesia causes the 'waking for the first time' phenomenon.
16	Designing studies: independent groups, repeated measures, matched pairs	Study designs: strengths and weaknesses Undertake a design exercise to apply what students have learned about experiments and their design.	Useful examples that raise many issues for discussion include: 1 the effect of alcohol on reaction time (great for raising ethical as well as practical issues) 2 left versus right handers and some skill or ability, such as how good they at maths (avoid tasks that would be naturally easier or

			harder depending on which hand is used) 3 blondes v brunettes on test performance (where do artificial hair colours belong?) 4 different ways of teaching reading to children 5 organised versus unorganised wordlists and the effect on recall 6 how context can influence memory (location, smell, taste, or sound).
17	Reductionism and holism End-of-topic test	Breaking down ideas into simpler components to ease understanding or seeing the bigger picture The usefulness of both reductionism and holism in understanding complex ideas and behaviour.	Assign students to small groups and give each group an idea to break down. Suitable examples from material already covered in the course would be conservation or the stages of memory. Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Psychological problems

Week	Psychological problems	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
18	Introduction to mental health issues, depression and addiction (description of symptoms) Diagnosis and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD)	What is a psychological problem? (Distress/dysfunction concepts are useful here) Depression and addiction: use the symptoms list from ICD as a framework to understand what symptoms are and why they are important. Use of ICD as a diagnostic tool Change in incidence over time: is this due to changes in society creating new pressures or better recognition of problems?	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips of interviews as a means of understanding depression and addiction. Ask students to either interview elderly relatives about or watch videos showing changes in knowledge and/or attitudes towards mental or physical disorders.

	Issues of reliability and validity Primary and secondary data	Use diagnosis to consider reliability and validity Collecting evidence for diagnoses and how this can come from both primary (e.g. interview) and secondary (e.g. hospital records) data	Ask students to collect primary and secondary data about themselves, e.g. historical record of performance and a current assessment.
19	Depression: genetic explanation	The role of genes in determining behaviour Short form of HTTLPR gene and its possible role in clinical depression, including evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Genetic aspect of brain abnormalities, such as neurotransmitter anomalies and their possible role in depression, including evaluation of strengths and weaknesses.	Students will be familiar with the concept of genetic propensity in physical disorders – ask them to look at how much predictability this gives in order to show that propensity is not the same as inevitability. Use evidence from drug treatments to show potential weakness in the simple genetic arguments.
20	Depression: cognitive explanation Study: Caspi *et al.* (2003) Writing hypotheses Drawing and interpreting frequency graphs	Faulty cognitions as a cause of depression – include Beck, Ellis and also Seligman, as well as evaluation of strengths and weaknesses. Caspi *et al.* (2003) study: use APFC framework for description, evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. Write hypotheses for experimental design exercises undertaken on memory.	Use evidence from soaps etc. to show how faulty cognitions can develop. Use graphs and data in Caspi *et al.* study to aid understanding of how to draw and interpret frequency graphs.
21	Addiction: genetic explanation	The issue of whether there is a genetic basis for addictive behaviour Susceptibility of individuals to the addictive component of the dopamine reward system Evaluation of these explanations including strengths and weaknesses	Use resources for a debate – the genetic explanation is a hotly contested issue in the media. There are excellent articles and research papers that lay out the evidence on both sides. E.g. https://www.drugabuse.gov/sites/default/files/genetics.pdf

			Newspapers and popular videos tend to oversimplify and sensationalise while using little real evidence.
22	Addiction: learning explanation	Role of classical conditioning in the development of addiction Role of operant conditioning in the maintenance of addictive behaviour Social learning theory as an explanation of how people can be introduced to addictive behaviour Evaluation of these explanations including strengths and weaknesses	Ask students to compare the classical conditioning and social learning theory aspects of experiences they have had with those of their parents and grandparents. Consider the ease/difficulty of resisting.
23	The use of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) for treating depression The use of CBT for treating addiction	Explain and evaluate CBT. CBT as the preferred treatment for depression Increased use of CBT for other disorders, in particular addiction	Students could conduct an internet search on CBT and how it is delivered, including self-help systems.
24	Therapeutic drugs as treatments Study: Young (2007)	Drug treatment e.g. methadone, antabuse Young (2007) study: using CBT for addiction – use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
	Sampling	Target populations and sampling rationale Types of sample including random, stratified, volunteer and opportunity	Ask students to select different types of sample from their school population to answer a brief questionnaire they have devised (using only closed questions).
	An overview of arithmetic and numerical computation	Remind students about basic computations including measures of central tendency and variance Use of the appropriate number of decimal places	Ask students to use data from various samples they have collected to practice computations. What do their results show?
25	Nature and nurture issues	The contrast between nature and nurture explanations as exemplified in mental health issues	

	End-of-topic test	The interactionist perspective and diathesis stress	Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

The brain and neuropsychology

Week	The brain and neuropsychology	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
26	Anatomy of the brain	Identify and understand the function and location of the lobes of the brain, cerebellum and corpus callosum.	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips showing brain anatomy.
27	Synapses and neurotransmitters	Understand the function of and processes involved in the central nervous system (CNS), synaptic transmission and neurotransmitters.	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips showing synaptic function, etc.
28	Brain lateralisation (1)	Left and right dominance Gender differences in brain lateralisation	Observe seating preferences in a room as an example of Right–Left preference. (Ensure the entrance is centre back.)
29	Brain lateralisation (2) Study: Sperry (1968)	Causes of differential lateralisation Sperry (1968) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
30	Neurological damage and its effects (1)	How neurological damage can occur and the wide variety of effects Introduction to the problems associated with visual agnosia and prosopagnosia	Use media sources to illustrate visual agnosia and prosopagnosia.
31	Neurological damage and its effects (2)	The impact of damage to the pre-frontal cortex Why case studies are used for studying such disorders	
32	The case study method Study: Damasio *et al.* (1994)	The case study as a research method, including strengths and weaknesses	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips showing the skull and the tamping iron.

		Damasio *et al.* (1994) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
33	Historical perspectives and psychology End-of-topic test	Use of brain and CNS research to show how understanding and research methods evolve over time Use of modern technologies to aid understanding	Use a card sorting activity to put developments into chronological order. Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Week	Content	
34	Revision	
35	End-of-year examinations	
36	End-of-year examinations	

Year 2

Social influence

Week	Social influence	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Bystander behaviour	Explain the concept of social influence – start from everyday experiences. Bystander behaviour: helping and inactivity including work by Darley and Latané	The case of Kitty Genovese, although somewhat discredited these days, is a good, salutary starting point. The story is available on Wikipedia
2	Factors affecting bystander behaviour Study: Piliavin *et al.* (1969) Mean, median, mode and range Convert data between tables and graphs	Factors affecting bystander behaviour, including personal and situational factors Piliavin *et al.* (1969) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	 Use data from study to practice measures of central tendency and dispersion, as well as converting data between tabular and graphical forms.
3	Conformity Factors affecting conformity	Nature of conformity Informational and normative conformity Mediating factors in levels of conformity, including personal and situational factors	
4	Study: Haney, Banks and Zimbardo Stanford Prison experiment (1973) Qualitative and quantitative data, questionnaires and interviews	Stanford Prison experiment (1973): use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. Questionnaires and interviews	Use media resources for original study material. http://www.prisonexp.org/ Design a questionnaire with open and closed questions to teach students about qualitative and quantitative data.
5	Obedience	Nature of obedience Distinction between obedience and conformity Consider the wide variability in factors affecting obedience, including personal and situational factors.	There are both historical videos and more recent replications of Milgram's classic study available online. They all make for sobering viewing. E.g. Milgram's variation studies. Meeus & Raaijmakers (1986)

			Slater et al (2006) Hamilton & Sanders (1995)
6	Behaviour of crowds and individuals within crowds. Effect of collective behaviour.	Issues relating to deindividuation. Pro and anti-social behaviour	Examples from riots, peaceful demonstration, the military etc. Try to make current for the students.
7	Blind obedience and how to prevent it	Strategies to enable people to retain the autonomous state and resist blind obedience	Use classic real-life data to illustrate the factors involved.
8	Role of social and cultural issues in psychology. End-of-topic test	Understand the terminology. Relate research about social influence to explaining issues in society	 Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Optional topics

Criminal

Week	Criminal	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Skinner's Operant Conditioning Theory (1948)	The principles of Operant Conditioning (OC) Theory, and its strengths and weaknesses How OC can be used to explain criminal behaviour	
2	Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977)	The principles of Social Learning Theory (SLT), and its strengths and weaknesses How SLT can be used to explain criminal behaviour	
3	Study: Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) Study: Charlton *et al.* (2000)	Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. Charlton *et al.* (2000) study: use APFC	Resource: clips from the Bandura studies are available on the internet.

		framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
4	Eysenck's biological explanation of criminality (1964)	Eysenck's personality theory and underpinning biological explanation for extraversion, introversion, neuroticism and psychoticism The relationship of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism to criminality	Resource: Eysenck's personality questionnaire is available on the internet so students can try it out for themselves. Just put the term in your search engine to find sites which give pdf versions you can use.
5	Punishment and recidivism	Punishment, linked back to OC Prison, community sentencing and restorative justice. Recidivism: what it is, why it happens and how to reduce it	
6	Treating offenders	Alternatives to punishment Understanding how to change behaviour using psychological principles, e.g. anger management, token economy	Facilitate a debate on what students think prison is for.
7	End-of-topic test		Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

The self

Week	The self	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Self-concept (Lewis, 1990)	The self-concept, development and the rouge test (Lewis & Brookes-Gunn) to chart emergence	Search online for video clips of the rouge test or an appropriately aged child with parental co-operation for observation.
2	Humanistic explanation of the self (Rogers, 1959 & 1951, and Maslow, 1943)	Rogers' view of the self-concept and its relationship to parental attitudes Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the relationship to the self	Use recall from childhood to show unconditional positive regard.

3	Study: Van Houtte and Jarvis (1995) Erikson (1959) Baumeister (2008)	Van Houtte and Jarvis (1995) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. Erikson's theory of the stages of identity development Baumeister's theory of self: the need to belong and self-defeating behaviour	
4	Study: Vohs and Schooler (2008) External and internal factors	Vohs and Schooler (2008) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses. How external and internal factors mediate the development of self	Facilitate a brainstorming session on external influences.
5	Measuring personality	Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to measuring personality Thematic Apperception test (TAT) and Rorschach test as idiographic methods	Materials related to TAT and Rorschach tests utpsyc.org/TATintro/ theinkblot.com
6	Trait theories of personality	Eysenck's Personality Inventory (EPI) and OCEAN traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) etc. as nomothetic tests Link to trait theories of Eysenck, Allport (1936), Cattell and the Big Five (e.g. Costa and McCrae)	Both EPI and OCEAN tests are available on the internet so students can try them out for themselves. Just put the terms in your search engine to find versions you can use. e.g. outofservice.com/bigfive/ personality-testing.info/tests/BIG5.php
7	End-of-topic test		Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Perception

Week	Perception	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Monocular and binocular cues	Mechanisms for binocular and monocular distance cues	Ask students to test themselves for binocularity using convergence tests, etc.

		Why redundancy is useful	(Expect about 1 in 20 not to have binocular vision!)
2	Illusions and constancies Study: Haber and Levin (2001)	Include Gestalt ideas Haber and Levin (2001) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	Conduct a class experiment on the Müller-Lyer illusion.
3	Gregory's Constructivist Theory of Perception (1970)	Top-down theory of perception Understanding and interpretation as a result of past experience	Use illusions such as Muller-Lyer to illustrate Gregory's theory in practice. (Most illusions can be explained using either Gregory's theory or Gestalt psychology).
4	Gibson's Direct Theory of Perception (1996)	Bottom-up theory of perception. Interpretation of input as a means of understanding the world	Get students to consider how Gregory and Gibson tackle the same issues.
5	Perceptual set	The use of set as a means of understanding and interpreting the world Predispositions as a result of motivation, expectation, experience, emotion, context and culture (wider than visual)	Resource: perceptual set experiments, e.g. ABC/12, 13, 14 as used by Bruner and Minturn Resources: the rabbit–duck illusion, Leeper's lady illusions.org/dp/1-37.htm allartdirectory.com/young-or-old-woman/
6	Study: Carmichael *et al.* (1932)	Carmichael *et al.* (1932) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
7	End-of-topic test		Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Sleep and dreaming

Week	Sleep and dreaming	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Functions of sleep	Stages and patterns of sleep How stages of sleep fulfil different roles for the body and mind Sleep research	Ask students to start keeping dream diaries.

2	Internal and external factors affecting sleep Study: Siffre (1975)	Endogenous and exogenous pacemakers to maintain sleep/wake cycle Siffre (1975) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	Ask students to recall jet-lag experiences to help illustrate the factors affecting sleep.
3	Sleep disorders	Sleep disorders narcolepsy (possibly include cataplexy and hypersomnia) Insomnia (how much sleep do we need?)	Conduct a survey on sleep patterns.
4	Freud's theory of dreaming (1900)	Why do we dream? The Freudian explanation of dreams	Resource: the dream diaries students began keeping in week 1
5	Study: Freud – Little Hans (1909)	Little Hans (1909) study: can use APFC framework but as this is a case study, it is often easier to describe as case history, case method, results and conclusions. Evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
6	Hobson and McCarley's Understand Activation Synthesis Theory (1977)	Hobson and McCarley's activation-synthesis model of dreaming	Resource: video sharing sites (such as YouTube) offer clips of fMRI scans during sleep and their match to dream content.
7	End-of-topic test		Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

Language, thought and communication

Week	Language, thought and communication	Content	Suggested resources and strategies
1	Language–thought issues	The relationship between language and thinking The one-directional journey Preliminary thoughts on language, communication and thought, and what distinctions there may be between them	

2	Piaget (1950)	Piaget's view on the development of language and thought Language acquisition within the framework of cognitive development Strengths and weaknesses of the theory	Explore the principle differences between Piaget's and Vygotsky's predictions, e.g. is language severely impaired in those with learning difficulties?
3	Vygotsky (1981)	Parallel development of thought and language, merging at approximately two years of age Gradual internalisation of speech Strengths and weaknesses of the theory	
4	Linguistic relativism and linguistic determinism Study: Boroditsky (2001)	Language relativity hypothesis – hard and soft versions Boroditsky (2001) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	The apocryphal story of the number of words for snow in Inuktitut (the Inuit language) is incorrect but a good class experiment in the UK is the number of English words for rain!
5	Aitchison's criteria (1983) Darwinian view of non-verbal communication	Aitchison: determining what allows something to be classified as a language Note: Aitchison's criteria would exclude sign 'language' and toddler 'language', as languages. Similarities and differences between human and animal communication. Darwin's view on emotional expression in humans and non-human species Universal expressions as innate	Use a simple line drawing to show basic emotions – use dots for the eyes and nose, then draw the eyebrows slanted, straight or arched and the mouth up, down or arched. Get students to guess/label emotions.
6	Non-verbal communication (NVC) Study: Yuki *et al.* (2007)	NVC: gesture, facial expressions, body posture, eye contact, intonation, non-verbal sounds, proxemics	Watch an interview with the sound turned off and ask the students to judge mood/honesty/level of interest, etc. based on NVC.

		Cultural differences and species similarities Yuki *et al.* (2007) study: use APFC framework for description then evaluate using strengths and weaknesses.	
7	End-of-topic test		Use questions from SAMs or past papers to develop a short test.

The remaining time in the second year of the course is intended to be primarily for revision and the honing of examination technique. Currently GCSE examinations occur quite early in the summer. It is possible that the period intended for consolidation and revision may be as little as five or six weeks. No attempt has been made to provide a scheme of work for this period as the priority areas will vary between centres.