

# Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level in Psychology

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## Qualification Outline

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First teaching from September 2015

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First assessment from June 2016

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# Introduction

This qualification outline document sets out an overview of the content and assessment for the new Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Level (IAL) in Psychology.

The document has been provided to help teachers plan for the delivery of the new IAL qualification ahead of first teaching in September 2015 and the final publication of the Specification and Sample Assessment Materials (SAMs) documents.

You can be assured that the **structure** of the qualifications, overarching **topics** and **texts** and the first **assessment availability** set out in these documents are confirmed, to enable you to plan your approach to delivery of this qualification with confidence.

Please note: the unit titles provided in this document are indicative, and there may be minor changes to the unit titles and content and assessment details in the final Specification and SAMs. Therefore it is important that you obtain copies of these when they are available in August 2015. Your Regional Development Manager will be able to support you with this.

We hope that you find this document helpful, if you have any questions please email: [internationalqualifications@pearson.com](mailto:internationalqualifications@pearson.com) and we will be happy to answer these.

# 1 Unit

## Social and Cognitive Psychology (IAS)



Externally  
assessed



Availability:  
**January and June**



First assessment:  
**June 2016**

### Overview of content

#### Topic A: Social psychology

##### Content Areas:

- Obedience
- Conformity

##### Methods:

- Self-reporting data
- Sample selection and Sampling data
- Quantitative data
- Ethical guidelines

##### Studies:

###### Classic study

- Moscovici et al (1969) Influence of a Consistent Minority on the Responses of a Majority in a Colour Perception Task.

###### Contemporary study

- Burger (2009) Replicating Milgram: Would people still obey today?

###### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Yi Huang et al. (2014) Conformity to the opinions of other people lasts for no more than 3 days.
- Haun et al. (2014) Children Conform to the Behavior of Peers; Other Great Apes Stick With What They Know.

**Practical Investigation:** research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in social psychology.

#### Topic B: Cognitive psychology

##### Content Areas:

- Models of memory

##### Methods:

- Experiments and experimental design

##### Studies:

###### Classic study

Bartlett (1932) War of the Ghosts.

###### Contemporary study

- Schmolck et al. (2002) Semantic knowledge in patient HM and other patients with bilateral medial and lateral temporal lobe lesions.

###### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Darling et al. (2007) Behavioural evidence for separating components within visuo-spatial working memory
- Sacchi et al. (2007) Changing history: doctored photographs affect memory for past public events.

**Practical Investigation:** research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in cognitive psychology.

# 1 Unit

## Overview of assessment

 Length: **1 hour 30 mins**

Students must answer all questions from three sections.

### **Section A:**

Social psychology, comprises short-answer questions and one extended open response question.

### **Section B:**

Cognitive psychology comprises short-answer questions and one extended open response question.

### **Section C:**

Comprises one extended open response question based on a social or cognitive psychology topic area.

# 2 Unit

# Biological Psychology, Learning Theories and Development (IAS)



Externally  
assessed



Availability:  
January and June



First assessment:  
June 2016

## Overview of content

### Topic C: Biological psychology

#### Content Areas:

- Structure and function of brain regions focusing on aggression
- Body rhythms

#### Methods:

- Correlational research
- Analysis of correlational data
- Scanning techniques
- Twin studies

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

- Raine et al. (1997) Brain abnormalities in murderers indicated by positron emission tomography.

##### Contemporary study

- Brendgen et al. (2005) Examining genetic and environmental effects on social aggression: A study of 6-year-old twins.

#### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- McDermott et al. (2008) Monoamine oxidase A gene (MAOA) predicts behavioral aggression following provocation
- Hoefelmann et al. (2006) Behaviors associated to sleep among high school students: cross-sectional and prospective analysis.

**Practical Investigation:** One practical research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in biological psychology.

### Topic D: Learning theories and development

#### Content Areas:

- Classical conditioning
- Operant conditioning
- Social learning theory
- Freud's psychosexual stages of development
- Therapies/treatments

#### Methods:

- Observations
- Content analysis
- Case studies
- Quantitative data and qualitative data

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

- Watson and Rayner (1920) Little Albert: Conditioned emotional reactions.

##### Contemporary

- Capafóns et al. (1998) Systematic desensitisation in the treatment of the fear of flying.

#### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Prot (2014) Long-Term Relations Among Prosocial-Media Use, Empathy, and Prosocial Behavior
- Bastian et al. (2011) Cyber-dehumanization: Violent video game play diminishes our humanity.

**Practical Investigation:** Two observations (one observation can be carried out if both qualitative and quantitative data are gathered in the same observation).

# 2

## Unit

### Overview of assessment

 Length: 2 hours

Students must answer all questions from three sections.

#### **Section A:**

Biological psychology comprises short-answer questions and one extended open response question.

#### **Section B:**

Learning theories and development, comprises short-answer questions and one extended open response question.

#### **Section C:**

Comprises two extended open response questions, covering both biological psychology, and learning theories and development topic areas.

# 3 Unit

## Applications of Psychology (IA2)



Externally  
assessed



Availability:  
**January and June**



First assessment:  
**January 2017**

### Overview of content

Students must study Topic E and choose either Topic F or Topic G.

#### Topic E: Developmental psychology

##### Content Areas:

- Attachment, deprivation and privation
- Cognitive and language development
- Social emotional development

##### Methods:

- Clinical interviewing
- Ethnographic field work
- Longitudinal/cross-sectional research in developmental psychology
- Cross-cultural research
- Ethics and the UNCRC (1989)
- Decision making and interpretation of data
- Evaluation of research in developmental psychology

##### Issues:

Issues in Developmental psychology linking to areas in Units 1 and 2

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg (1988) Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: A Meta-Analysis of the Strange Situation.

##### Contemporary study

Cassibba et al. (2013) Attachment the Italian way (Italy)

##### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Ashdown and Bernard (2012) Can explicit instruction in social and emotional learning skills benefit the social and emotional development, well-being and academic achievement of young children?
- Ding et al. (2014) The relation of early infant attachment to attachment and cognitive development outcomes in early childhood.

## Overview of content

### Topic F: Criminological psychology

#### Content Areas:

- Explanations for crime and anti-social behaviour
- Understanding the offender
- Factors influencing identification of offenders
- Treatment

#### Methods:

- Experiments as used in the study of eye witness memory.
- Mock jury research as a method for studying jury decision-making
- Ethical guidelines
- Decision making and interpretation of data
- Evaluation of research in criminological psychology

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

Loftus and Palmer (1974) Reconstruction of automobile destruction: An example of the interaction between language and memory.

##### Contemporary study

Bradbury M D and Williams, M R (2013) Diversity and Citizen Participation: The Effects of Race on Juror Decision Making.

#### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Ruva, McEvoy and Bryant (2007) Effects of pre-trial publicity and jury deliberation on jury bias and source memory errors.
- Valentine T and Mesout J (2009) Eyewitness identification under stress in the London Dungeon.

### Topic G: Health psychology

#### Content Areas:

- Physiology of stress
- Factors affecting stress
- Coping strategies
- Treatment and therapy for anxiety (biological and psychological)

#### Methods:

- Use of non-human animals in experiments in psychology practical
- Decision making and interpretation of data
- Evaluation of research in health psychology
- Use of standardised questionnaires

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

Brady (1958) Ulcers in executive monkeys.

##### Contemporary study

Nakonz and Shik (2009) And all your problems are gone: religious coping strategies among Phillipine migrant workers in Hong Kong.

#### One contemporary study from the following two choices:

- Avdagic et al. (2014) A randomised controlled trial of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) and cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) for generalised anxiety disorder.
- Russell et al. (2015) Adaptation of an adolescence coping assessment for therapeutic recreation and outdoor adventure settings.

# 3

## Unit

### Overview of assessment

 Length: **1 hour 30 mins**

Students must answer all questions from Section A and all questions from a choice of two topic areas in Section B.

#### **Section A:**

Developmental psychology, comprises short-answer questions and two extended open response questions. One question focusses on developmental psychology and one on synoptic question based on developmental and issues from Units 1 and 2.

#### **Section B:**

Presents students with a choice of one from either criminological or health psychology, each section comprises short-answer questions and two extended open response questions.

# 4 Unit

## Clinical Psychology and Psychological Skills (IA2)



Externally  
assessed



Availability:  
**January and June**



First assessment:  
**June 2017**

### Overview of content

#### Topic H: Clinical psychology

##### Content Areas:

- Definitions and debates in diagnosis
- One mental health disorder, symptoms, features, explanations
- Therapy/treatment

##### Methods:

- Randomised control trials (RCTs) related to clinical psychology.
- Neuroimaging including structural and functional brain scanning related to clinical psychology.
- Conventions of published psychological research
- Awareness of Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) guidelines for clinical practitioners.
- Decision making and interpretation of data
- Evaluation of research in clinical psychology

##### Practical Investigation:

One practical research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in clinical psychology

#### Studies:

##### Classic study

Rosenhan (1973) On being sane in insane places.

##### Contemporary study relating to schizophrenia

Suzuki et al. (2014) High prevalence of underweight and undernutrition in Japanese inpatients with schizophrenia

##### One from a choice of two contemporary studies, choosing one that suits the chosen 'other' disorder:

##### Depression:

- Hans and Hiller (2013) Effectiveness of and drop out from outpatient cognitive-behavioural therapy for adult unipolar depression: A meta-analysis of nonrandomised effectiveness studies
- Ma, Quan and Liu (2014) Mediating effect of social support on the relationship between self-evaluation and depression

##### Anorexia nervosa:

- Becker et al. (2002) Eating behaviours and attitudes following prolonged exposure to television among ethnic Fijian adolescent girls.
- Reichel et al. (2014) 'Glass fairies' and 'bone children': Adolescents and young adults with anorexia nervosa show positive reactions towards extremely emaciated body pictures measured by the body startle reflex paradigm.

# 4

## Unit

### Overview of content

#### Topic I: Psychological skills

##### Methods:

All methods from previous topic areas (Except Topics F and G)

##### Key questions:

Key questions for society using concepts, theories or research from one or more of Topics A to H (except Topics F and G).

##### Issues and debates

### Overview of assessment

 Length: 2 hours

Students must answer all questions from five sections.

#### Section A:

Clinical psychology, comprises short-answer questions.

#### Section B:

Clinical psychology, comprises one extended open response question.

#### Section C:

Psychological skills, comprises short-answer questions drawing on research methods from other topic areas (except Topics F and G).

#### Section D:

Psychological skills, comprises one extended open response question based on the analysis of an unseen study from other topic areas (except Topics F and G).

#### Section E:

Psychological skills, comprises one synoptic question based on issues and debates from other topic areas (except Topics F and G).