



EXAM STRUCTURE

For **OCR Psychology** both the AS and A Level qualifications are linear which means that students will sit their exams at the end of the course. Most students are entered for the full A Level so will sit all three of their exams at the end of their two years of study.

AS LEVEL

Paper 1: Research Methods (1hr 30mins)

75 marks (50% AS grade)

This component introduces and develops knowledge and understanding of the process of planning, conducting, analysing and reporting psychological research across a range of experimental and non-experimental methodologies and techniques. Competency and confidence in a variety of mathematical procedures and problem-solving skills should also be gained through involvement with practical work associated with the concepts covered.

Section A: Multiple-choice questions

Section B: Mixed extended answer questions on Research Design and Response

Section C: Mixed extended answer questions on Data Analysis and Interpretation

Paper 2: Psychological Themes through Core Studies (1hr 30mins)

75 marks (50% AS grade)

Section A: This component aims to develop the critical thinking and independent learning skills essential to the scientific study of Psychology through a focus on some of the key themes investigated within the subject. For each key theme, students are presented with both a classic and a contemporary study. The classic studies are 'landmark' pieces of research that have helped to shape the course of Psychology which all students should become familiar with. The contemporary studies are more 'up to-date' pieces of research that engage in some way with the issues being explored in the classic studies they are paired with. The core studies chosen reflect the contribution of Psychology to an understanding of individual, social and cultural diversity.

Section B: Students will be asked questions that invite them to generate an extended discussion, recognising the inter-relationship between different Areas, Perspectives and Debates in Psychology.

Areas: Social, Cognitive, Developmental, Biological and Individual Differences.

Perspectives: Behaviourist and Psychodynamic

Debates: Nature/ Nurture, Freewill/ Determinism, Reductionism/ Holism, Individual/ Situational explanation, Usefulness of Research, Ethical Considerations, Conducting Socially Sensitive Research, and Psychology as a Science

Section C: In order to encourage awareness of Practical Applications of Psychology, this section will require students to apply their knowledge and understanding of Psychology to a novel source as provided in the examination. The source could be a newspaper or magazine article, a blog, a diary entry, email exchange or equivalent written source.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Students should know, understand, apply, critically analyse and evaluate content in the following topic areas, performing procedures and making connections where appropriate. Their knowledge and understanding of research methods and mathematical skills is assessed through practical research involved with the designing and conducting of research studies and analysing and interpreting data.

All skills are assessed using standardised criteria known as **Assessment Objectives**. At A level there are three objectives: AO1, AO2 and AO3. These are set by Ofqual and are the same across all AS and A-level Psychology specifications and all exam boards. Exams measure how well students achieve these objectives.

- **AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding** of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.
- **AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding** of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures: in a theoretical context, in a practical context, when handling qualitative data and when handling quantitative data.
- **AO3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate** scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to: make judgements and reach conclusions, develop and refine practical design and procedures.

A LEVEL

Paper 1: Research Methods (2hrs)

90 marks (30% A Level grade)

This component introduces and develops knowledge and understanding of the process of planning, conducting, analysing and reporting psychological research across a range of experimental and non-experimental methodologies and techniques. Competency and confidence in a variety of mathematical procedures and problem-solving skills should also be gained through involvement with practical work associated with the concepts covered.

Content Covers: Research Methods and Techniques, Planning and Conducting Research, Data Recording, Analysis and Presentation, Report Writing, Practical Activities and How Science Works.

Section A: Multiple-choice questions

Section B: Mixed extended answer questions on Research Design and Response

Section C: Mixed extended answer questions on Data Analysis and Interpretation



Paper 2: Psychological Themes through Core Studies (2hrs)**105 marks (35% A Level grade)**

Section A: This component aims to develop the critical thinking and independent learning skills essential to the scientific study of Psychology through a focus on some of the key themes investigated within the subject. For each key theme, students are presented with both a classic and a contemporary study. The classic studies are 'landmark' pieces of research that have helped to shape the course of Psychology which all students should become familiar with. The contemporary studies are more 'up to-date' pieces of research that engage in some way with the issues being explored in the classic studies they are paired with.

Section B: Students will be asked questions that invite them to generate an extended discussion, recognising the inter-relationship between different Areas, Perspectives and Debates in Psychology.

Areas: Social, Cognitive, Developmental, Biological and Individual Differences.

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Debates: Nature/ Nurture, Freewill/ Determinism, Reductionism/ Holism, Individual/ Situational explanation, Usefulness of Research, Ethical Considerations, Conducting Socially Sensitive Research, and Psychology as a Science

Section C: In order to encourage awareness of Practical Applications of Psychology, this section will require students to apply their knowledge and understanding of Psychology to a novel source as provided in the examination. The source could be a newspaper or magazine article, a blog, a diary entry, email exchange or equivalent written source.

Paper 3: Applied Psychology (2hrs)**105 marks (35% A Level grade)**

In this component students will need to be familiar with one compulsory section, Issues in Mental Health, which provides an introduction to the topic of Mental Health. Students will also study two out of the following Applied Psychology Options: Child Psychology, Criminal Psychology, Environmental Psychology, Sports and Exercise Psychology. Students will need to be familiar with the Issues and Debates that run through this component.

Section A: Issues in Mental Health – Mixed extended answer questions (worth 35 marks)

Section B: Options (choose two from the four) - Mixed extended answer questions (each worth 35 marks)

