



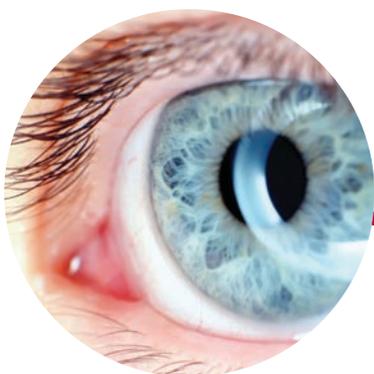
14-19 CHANGES
A LEVEL

A Level Psychology



For first teaching from
September 2008

"All units in this course cover the essential elements of Psychology, generate interest in students and provide a sound base for further study at Higher Education."



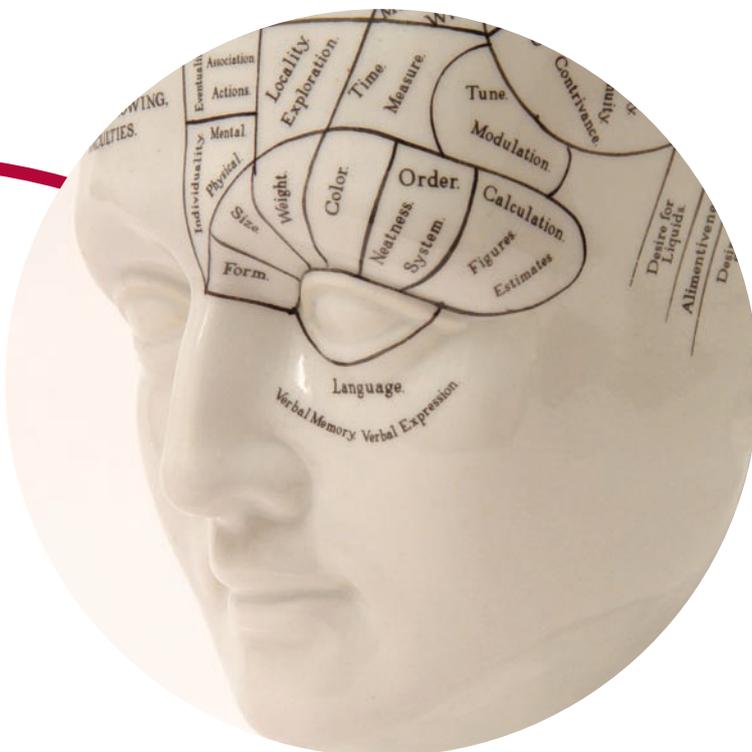
"This specification seems very straightforward and well structured, with clear sections to cover. This attracts me immensely."

OCR A Level Psychology

Our A Level Psychology content has been specifically designed to capture and inspire the learner's natural interest in psychology and to develop their understanding of the subject.

Our specification links to modern life and the behaviour of others, which learners find appealing.

We have improved links from AS to A2 and ensured that the new specification is suitable preparation for Higher Education.



The new A Level in Psychology

This practical and engaging course has been redeveloped in response to feedback obtained in extensive consultation with teachers. The content has been designed to inspire, nurture and develop learners.

The most popular aspects of our current A Level have been retained or enhanced, and the least popular changed – so you can be confident that the new OCR A Level Psychology specification is practical and enjoyable to teach.

Highlights include:

- **Improved support and more teacher guidance**

As well as building on the established, proven support we offer A Level Psychology teachers, we've developed new schemes of work, lesson plans, exemplar candidate work, and a teacher guidance document. There will be more INSET available than ever before and an opportunity to attend free introductory events on the new specification. On pages 10 to 15, you'll find more information, along with details of the published Heinemann resources and support available from the British Psychological Society. The lively e-community for OCR Psychology teachers is a really popular way of sharing ideas, resources and experiences with colleagues across the country.

- **One entire AS unit dedicated to core studies**

This has always been a unique feature of OCR A Level Psychology, popular with both teachers and learners. Now, having listened to a range of teachers' views, we've improved the unit even further by revising the choice of studies and reducing the number from 20 to 15.

- **Applied options at A2**

Learners have the opportunity to choose areas of specific interest to them from an exciting list, which includes clinical and forensic areas of Psychology.

- **A practical approach to the study of research methods**

Learners carry out four of their own small-scale investigations, giving them real-life, hands-on experience of Psychology. This approach is already very popular with learners, enabling them to develop evaluation skills and an understanding of research.

- **Straightforward structure which includes focused content**

Topics are addressed in whole units and sections, making the content of the course focused and easy to navigate. Improved progression from AS to A2 means that topics are clearly linked, and in response to teacher feedback more guidance has been included in the specification and accompanying teacher support document.

- **Familiar AS content**

To make the new specification easy for you to start teaching straightaway, we've made sure the AS units have strong links with the current OCR A Level Psychology.

- **Suitability for different learning styles**

In mixed-ability groups, all learners will benefit from the new specification. Structured approaches to core studies and the opportunities for hands-on research suit a range of learning styles, and the optional use of original research papers will stretch the most able.

A Level Psychology course details

For AS

Teaching units	Assessment method and weighting
<p>G541: Psychological Investigations</p> <p>Learners become familiar with four techniques for collecting/analysing data: self-report, experiment, observation and correlation. They can conduct their own small investigations and make a record of their activities if they wish.</p>	<p>Mandatory unit</p> <p>1 hour exam AS – 30% A Level – 15%</p>
<p>G542: Core Studies</p> <p>Learners build knowledge and understanding of 15 psychology studies. They demonstrate evaluation skills and an appreciation of wider psychological approaches/perspectives, theories, issues and debates. They also make comparisons and distinctions between core studies and examine the broader context of general debates within psychology.</p>	<p>Mandatory unit</p> <p>2 hour exam AS – 70% A Level – 35%</p>

For A2

Teaching units	Assessment method and weighting
<p>G543: Options in Applied Psychology</p> <p>Learners have the opportunity to study two areas of applied psychology from four options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forensic Psychology • Health and Clinical Psychology • Psychology of Education • Psychology of Sport and Exercise. <p>There is the opportunity to learn about applications of psychology and how theory is applied in real-life situations.</p>	<p>Mandatory unit</p> <p>1 hour 30 mins exam A Level – 25%</p>
<p>G544: Approaches and Research Methods in Psychology</p> <p>This unit is made up of two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research methods (design of a practical project) • Structured questions bringing together approaches, perspectives, methods, issues and debates covered throughout the course. 	<p>Mandatory unit</p> <p>1 hour 30 mins exam A Level – 25%</p>

Why choose OCR's specification?

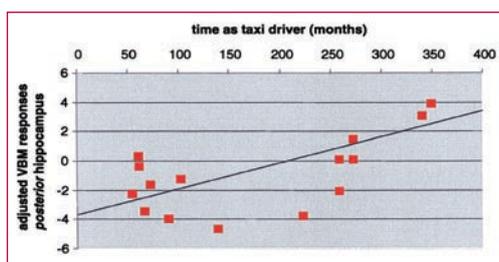
Unit 1: Psychological Investigations

Unit 1 introduces the world of psychological research methods by taking learners straight to the heart of active research, enabling them to conduct four small-scale investigations of their own in the school or college.

This hands-on approach is enjoyed by learners, who have the opportunity to take ownership of the tasks and develop their evaluation skills and understanding of research. Learners are required to build familiarity with four techniques for collecting/analysing data:

- **Self report**
- **Experiment**
- **Observation**
- **Correlation.**

A popular feature of the current specification, it is proven to be an effective way of introducing learners to carrying out research in a practical setting as well as introducing a range of methods, issues and debates concerning research which are explored and developed further at A2.



“Reducing the number of core studies down to 15 will improve the quality of teaching and learning. The overall approach means the level of understanding will increase. It enables both the teacher and the learner to get an in-depth knowledge of psychological issues essential to the subject.”

Unit 2: Core Studies

This unit is an ideal introduction to Psychology at AS and many teachers choose to introduce and teach a new study each lesson or week. It keeps topics fresh and maintains motivation, and learners enjoy getting straight to the heart of what’s interesting about Psychology. Teachers can choose to approach each study in the same way, making study logical and clear to learners.

The new specification has 15 studies – the number teachers have said they find manageable to teach, while still providing a good foundation to the subject. By the end of the unit, learners have built up a varied knowledge of exemplar studies, a sound understanding of key themes, and strong critical evaluation skills. This is also an excellent introduction to research methods.

Core studies

Topic/content

Cognitive Psychology

Loftus and Palmer	<i>Reconstruction of automobile destruction, 1974</i>	
Baron-Cohen et al	<i>Autism and theory of mind, 1997</i>	*NEW
Savage-Rumbaugh	<i>Chimpanzees and sign language, 1986</i>	*NEW



Developmental Psychology

Samuel and Bryant	<i>Asking only one question in conservation, 1984</i>	
Bandura and Ross	<i>Transmission of aggression, 1961</i>	
Freud	<i>Phobia in 5-year-old boy, 1909</i>	

Physiological Psychology

Maguire et al	<i>Navigation and taxi drivers, 2000</i>	*NEW
Dement and Kleitman	<i>Eye movements and dream activity, 1957</i>	
Sperry	<i>Hemisphere disconnection and consciousness, 1968</i>	

Social Psychology

Milgram	<i>Behavioural study of obedience, 1963</i>	
Reicher and Haslam	<i>BBC Prison Study and tyranny, 2006</i>	*NEW
Piliavin et al	<i>Good Samaritan, 1969</i>	

Psychology of Individual Differences

Rosenhan	<i>Being sane in insane places, 1973</i>	
Thigpen and Cleckley	<i>Multiple personality, 1954</i>	
Griffiths	<i>Fruit machine gambling, 1994</i>	*NEW

“The new core studies material looks very interesting. Having more time to cover them means there will be even more opportunity to engage students.”

“The new studies are contemporary and interesting, yet the classics are there too.”

Why choose OCR's specification?

Unit 3: Options in Applied Psychology

Learners will find these options particularly exciting and engaging, as they learn how psychology is used in applied areas:

- **Forensic Psychology**
- **Health and Clinical Psychology**
- **Psychology of Education**
- **Psychology of Sport and Exercise.**

They will learn how theory in these areas is applied to real-life situations, and explore social, moral, cultural and spiritual issues.

The exam gives learners a choice of staggered questions on each topic, and the opportunity to demonstrate their learning through extended writing.

Unit 4: Approaches and Research Methods in Psychology

Now familiar with research methodology and techniques covered at AS, candidates learn how to apply this and other material learnt in everyday settings. Learners are given the opportunity to design and outline a piece of research in response to material on a novel scenario. Learners bring together critical thinking skills developed elsewhere in the course to look at topical arguments in psychology in the forms of perspectives, issues and debates.

"The AS and A2 research methods are an excellent attempt at replacing coursework modules. They still allow students to be creative and actively involved in research and have obvious practical teaching opportunities within the classroom. Actively doing research is always a bonus. My students learn more about research methods by actually doing it for themselves."

What stays the same, and what changes?

If you're already working with the current OCR A Level Psychology, you'll want to know which parts of this remain in the new specification – and what the main changes are. The table below outlines the key points.

Main aspects that stay the same

E- community.

AS will be very familiar, promoting easy transition to the new specification, but with key improvements.

Many core studies have been retained: Loftus & Palmer *Reconstruction of automobile destruction*; Samuel & Bryant *Asking only one question in conservation*; Bandura & Ross *Transmission of aggression*; Freud *Phobia in 5yr old boy*; Dement & Kleitman *Eye movements and dream activity*; Sperry *Hemisphere Deconnection & consciousness*; Milgram *Behavioural study of obedience*; Piliavin *Good Samaritan*; Rosenhan *Being sane in insane places*; Thigpen & Cleckley *Multiple personality*.

A practical approach to research methods has been maintained.

Learners retain the ability to make choices within Unit 3, Options in Applied Psychology, which has been shown to help learners relate learning to everyday life.

Most important changes

New and improved teacher support including: overarching scheme of work; sample lesson plans; exemplar candidate work; teacher guidance documents; free INSET training; psychology e-community; published resources and The British Psychology Society's Research Digest links to our core studies.

Improved progression from AS to A2.

Core studies have been reduced from 20 to 15 in response to requests from centres. Some new studies have been introduced, with more up-to-date content. New studies are as follows: Baron-Cohen et al *Autism & theory of mind* 1997; Savage-Rumbaugh *Chimpanzees and sign language* 1986; Maguire et al *Navigation and taxi drivers* 2000; Reicher & Haslam *BBC Prison Study and tyranny* 2006; Griffiths *Fruit machine gambling* 1994.

Coursework has been removed in accordance with Qualifications and Curriculum Authority requirements.

Learners no longer take a portfolio evidence booklet into the exam. This is in response to centre feedback.

Options, updated in line with centre feedback and QCA criteria include: Forensic Psychology; Health and Clinical Psychology; Psychology of Education; Psychology of Sport and Exercise. Study of applied options include 4 sub-topics, rather than 8, in response to centre feedback.

Introduction of 'Stretch and Challenge'.

We have worked closely with teachers to ensure that structure is clear, logical and straightforward, providing appropriate guidance, improved progression from AS to A2 and sound preparation for university.

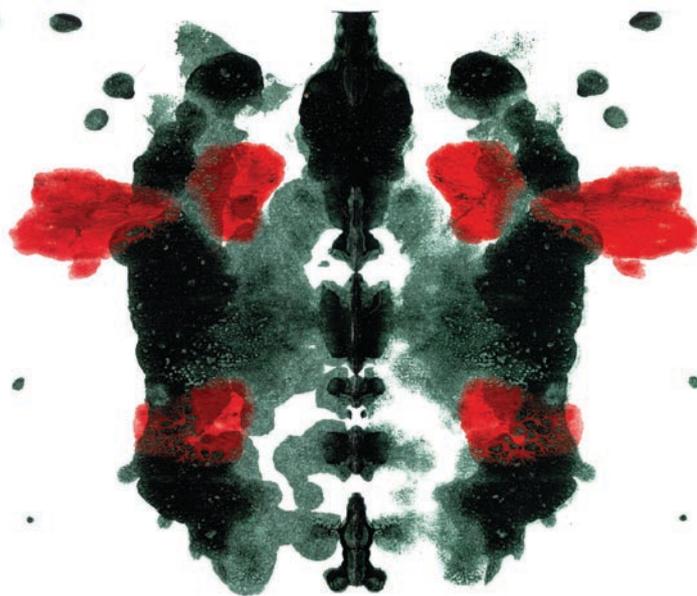
'Stretch and Challenge'

A new Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) initiative for A Levels, 'Stretch and Challenge' is designed to give learners the opportunity to demonstrate their potential, and to help universities differentiate between applicants. 'Stretch and Challenge' is embedded in A2 assessment, so it won't involve additional questions or exam papers.

'Stretch and Challenge' is reflected in the style of exam questions used at A2:

- The questions invite a greater variety of thinking and type of answer. For example, the introduction could ask the learner to 'analyse', 'evaluate' or 'discuss'.
- The questions are structured to show more connections between different sections of the specification.
- Extended writing is encouraged in all subjects (except in areas such as Maths, where it is clearly inappropriate).
- There's a wider range of question types – such as case studies and open-ended questions – rather than just short-answer questions.
- There are more synoptic assessments – exploring connections between different areas and levels of a subject – over and above the superficial links within question types.

You'll find examples of A2 exam questions in your specimen assessment materials which are also available on the OCR website.



Support for A Level Psychology teachers

To help you get started with the new A Level Psychology, OCR is running more training courses than ever before. We will also provide a range of detailed support materials and resources – some produced by OCR, some by our publishing partners.

Training

The following INSET courses will be available from September 2007:

Get ready – introducing the new specifications (first teaching from September 2008)

These **free** half-day (morning) sessions are designed to give you an overview of the new OCR specifications. They will:

- **Look at the structure of the new specifications**
- **Compare the new specification content with the old, including coursework and 'Stretch and Challenge' implications**
- **Discuss the support and resources available from OCR**
- **Summarise the benefits of the OCR specifications**
- **Introduce the new core studies.**

Get started – towards successful delivery of the new specification (first teaching from September 2008)

These full-day sessions will give you guidance and support in planning to teach the new AS/A Level specifications.

They will:

- **Give an introduction to the structure and content of the new specifications**
- **Consider approaches to first teaching, and suggest best practice**
- **Look at coursework and 'Stretch and Challenge' implications**
- **Provide sample assessment**
- **Review the support and resources available from OCR.**

This course will have some similarity to the half-day 'Get ready' sessions, but will look at the new specifications in more depth, with the emphasis on first teaching.

Places are allocated on a first come, first served basis – so if you're interested in attending one of these events, visit www.ocr.org.uk/training to find out the dates of the events nearest to you.

New and improved support

NEW AND IMPROVED SUPPORT FOR A LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY

New support has been designed in line with teacher feedback. OCR is producing the following materials to help you prepare for the new A Level Psychology:

- **Overarching scheme of work:** topic outlines, suggested teaching and homework activities, suggested resources and points to note. Available from the OCR website in Word, enabling teachers to adapt to their own needs.
- **Sample lesson plans:** detailed breakdowns of suggested teaching formats for the more difficult concepts within the unit(s). Available from the OCR website in Word, enabling teachers to adapt to their own needs.
- **Exemplar candidate work:** real learner answers to Specimen Assessment Materials, including indicative marks and examiner commentaries.
- **Teacher guidance documents:** accompanies the specification and includes a summary of the resources available, progression from AS to A2, opportunities for 'stretch and challenge', useful websites and wider reading.

All the above will be available from autumn 2007 with the exception of exemplar candidate work which will be available in spring 2008, and can be found on the OCR website www.ocr.org.uk

A Level Psychology e-community

The OCR A Level Psychology e-community gives you the chance to share ideas and resources with other OCR centres, so join up today for advice from fellow teachers or to share your resources.

Join the e-community on the OCR website at the following link:
<http://community.ocr.org.uk>

Support for A Level Psychology teachers

We're working with publishing partner Heinemann to provide further resources to support the new specifications.



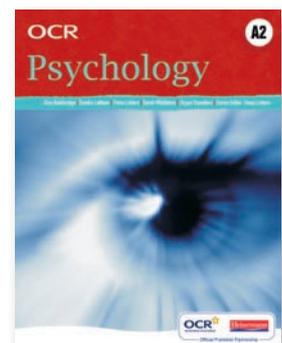
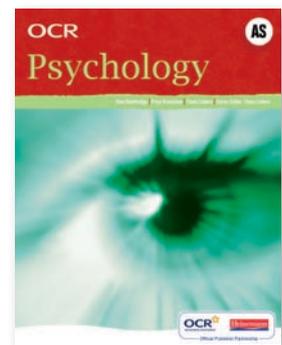
Heinemann publishing

Student Books

AS Book: Available from March 2008

A2 Book: Available from September 2008

- **The books are specifically tailored to the new specification.**
- **Comprehensive support for core studies** engages learners and brings the core studies to life.
- Learner-friendly **Exam Café** sections give learners a motivating way to prepare thoroughly for their exams.
- Lots of **inspiring activities** for use in class or for homework help to add variety to your lessons.
- Plus – free in the back of every book: an **Exam Café CD-ROM for Students** – a wealth of extra exam preparation in an exciting interactive format.



Planning and Delivery Resources with CD-ROMs

AS Resource: Available from March 2008

A2 Resource: Available from September 2008

These resources make it quick and easy for you to plan varied, active lessons. Because Heinemann is working closely with OCR, the materials complement OCR's scheme of work:

- The printed packs include teacher's notes and guidance for every unit, worksheets and sample lesson plans to inspire you.
- The CD-ROMs give you interactive materials to inspire your learners as well as customisable versions of all the Planning and Delivery Resource sheets, so you can tailor them to meet your own needs.

Revision Guides

Coming in 2009 – watch this space!

For more details, visit Heinemann at www.harcourt.co.uk/psychology

Looking to the future - New OCR past papers service

In response to centre demand, OCR will be publishing past papers for live specifications on the OCR website free of charge. OCR's revised policy means that question papers will be published on the website between nine and twelve months after each exam series. This will allow you to use the papers as practice assessment material before they become more widely available. Once published online, the papers will remain available for two years. All papers can be downloaded free of charge.

Other Useful Resources

The British Psychological Society's Research Digest is packed with engaging reports on the latest psychological findings from around the world. It provides a host of useful weblinks, free online psychology-related magazine articles, and much more. It is delivered in the form of a fortnightly email, which highlights how the research reports relate to the A Level syllabus.

To subscribe to the email and view the daily blog, see www.researchdigest.org.uk/blog. Also, if you visit www.researchdigest.org.uk/ocr, you will find a special posting relating to the OCR core studies element, including resources and comment from the original authors.

more resources via

www.researchdigest.org.uk/blog
from the british psychological society

Other publishers may also produce support material, and we will consider them for endorsement after we've assessed them against the OCR Quality Assurance process.

Other OCR Social Sciences qualifications

As a Psychology teacher, you may be interested to know about these OCR qualifications.

GCSE Psychology

Learners study Psychology at an introductory level, and gain a rounded knowledge of approaches, processes and issues.

For more information on GCSE Psychology visit:
www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/psychology

GCSE and A Level Sociology

GCSE Sociology is a well-established option at Key Stage 4 and is particularly popular as an option in Year 12 and for adult returners. At this level, Sociology provides an opportunity to study topics and themes that relate to PSE and to Citizenship, and to take a more disciplined approach than might otherwise be possible, including the critical study of evidence about the social and political world. This GCSE specification provides excellent progression to advanced levels of study.

At A Level, the specifications focuses on the contemporary United Kingdom, but learners are encouraged to make use of comparative and historical examples from other societies. The specification supports the European dimension in education, in connection with the report *Environmental Responsibility; An agenda for further and higher education* (HMSO 1993).

For more information on GCSE Sociology visit:
www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/sociology

For more information on A Level Sociology visit:
www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/1419changes/alevels

A Level Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking is a skills-based rather than a content-based A Level. It develops the ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate ideas and arguments, and can support thinking skills in all subject areas, from arts and humanities to sciences.

For more information on A Level Critical Thinking visit:
www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/1419changes/alevels

Want to find out more?

For more information on the new OCR A Level Psychology –
and on all our Social Sciences qualifications –
visit www.ocr.org.uk or call **01223 553998**

www.ocr.org.uk

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YEARS
1858–2008
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