

PSYCHOLOGY

It's easy to join us

Moving to OCR's A Level in Psychology from AQA

Are you currently teaching AQA's A Level in Psychology?

This short guide will take a look at our refreshed A Level in Psychology and show you how it compares to the AQA A Level and how you can easily move to teaching our specification.

We **collaborate** with teachers, employers and Higher Education representatives to develop qualifications which are relevant and meet the needs of students.

We **listen**. The decisions we make when we develop our specification are based on teacher and student feedback. To tell us more about your experiences of teaching OCR, join our teacher panel and help shape the future of our assessments.

Our A Level in Psychology has lots of **key benefits** for teachers and students:

- a **manageable** amount of content
- a greater emphasis on **practical** investigation
- a **consistent** and **accessible approach** to assessment
- exciting and **relevant** psychological studies
- a **highly structured** approach across the specification and assessment model
- a **familiar** approach to the mathematical requirements
- compulsory sections on the engaging topics of **mental health** and **criminal psychology**
- **option** to study child, environmental or sport and exercise psychology.

Your students will develop:

- a lifelong passion for psychological issues
- a deep understanding of how psychology relates to the wider world
- the key skill of application and be encouraged to think like psychologists
- essential knowledge of the factors that influence human behaviour
- a deep understanding of relevant topics such as mental health and criminal psychology
- essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of psychology and how they relate to each other
- key skills needed to interpret and critically assess scientific data
- the ability to plan, conduct and analyse their own practical investigations
- competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem-solving skills.

About our A Level in Psychology

We believe in developing specifications that are engaging and contemporary, equipping students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their studies and beyond.

Informed by research and extensive engagement with the teaching community, we've created specifications that aim to enthuse and inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities, helping you to help them achieve their full potential.

We offer a range of support services to help you at every stage, from preparation to delivery:

- expert **Subject Advisors** who are part of their subject communities and here to support you with advice, updates on resources, and information about training opportunities
- free detailed **assessment resources** including practice materials and examiners' reports to help you navigate the specification and its content
- free comprehensive curriculum planners and schemes of work to support with **planning**
- free teaching resources to use **in the classroom** with your students
- engaging **audio/visual clips** and programmes hosted by the Educational Recording Agency (ERA), that are mapped to the H569 specification
- **textbooks** and a range of teaching and learning **resources** from leading publishers and third parties. For details of all published and digital resources check the Teach Cambridge website
- **ExamBuilder**: our free question-building platform that helps you to build your own tests using OCR exam questions as our bank of past live-series grows
- **Active Results**: our free results analysis service to help you review the performance of individual students or whole school
- an extensive range of both live and on-demand **professional development** courses, covering everything from '**Starting to Teach**' and '**Exploring the Exam**', through to '**Enhancing your teaching**' and '**Exam Review**'.

To find out more about all of our support services, please visit [Teach Cambridge](#).

At a glance specification comparison

	OCR Psychology	AQA Psychology
Structure	There are three mandatory components which are all externally assessed via examination. There are optional topics in Component (Paper) 3.	There are three mandatory components which are all externally assessed via examination. There are optional topics in paper 3.
Grading	The qualification is graded on the scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, where A* is the highest. Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for E will be Unclassified.	The qualification is graded on the scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, where A* is the highest. Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for E will be Unclassified.
Assessment	<p>Paper 1 (H569/01) 2 hours 80 marks</p> <p>Paper 2 (H569/02) 2 hours 80 marks</p> <p>Paper 3 (H569/03) 2 hours 80 marks Optional topics</p>	<p>Paper 1 2 hours 96 marks</p> <p>Paper 2 2 hours 96 marks</p> <p>Paper 3 2 hours 96 marks Optional topics</p>

Comparing assessment models

OCR Psychology	AQA Psychology
<p>A Level Paper 1 (H569/01)</p> <p>Research methods</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 80 marks</p> <p>Section A: Multiple choice questions 15 marks</p> <p>Section B: Short and medium answer questions and one extended response 35 marks</p> <p>Section C: Short answer questions 30 marks</p>	<p>A Level Paper 1</p> <p>Introductory topics in psychology</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 96 marks</p> <p>Section A-D: Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing 24 marks</p>
<p>A Level Paper 2 (H569/02)</p> <p>Psychology through core studies</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 80 marks</p> <p>Section A: Short and medium answer questions 25 marks</p> <p>Section B: Short and medium answer questions and one extended response 25 marks</p> <p>Section C: Short and medium answer questions and one extended response 30 marks</p>	<p>A Level Paper 2</p> <p>Psychology in context</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 96 marks</p> <p>Section A-B: Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing 24 marks</p> <p>Section C: Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing 48 marks</p>
<p>A Level Paper 3 (H569/03)</p> <p>Applied psychology</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 80 marks</p> <p>Section A: Short and medium answer questions and one extended response 30 marks</p> <p>Section B: Short and medium answer questions and one extended response 30 marks</p> <p>Section C: Choose one of three topic options. One medium answer question and one extended response 20 marks</p>	<p>A Level Paper 3</p> <p>Issues and options in psychology</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>Written paper 2 hours 96 marks</p> <p>Section A: Possible combination of multiple choice, short/medium answer and extended response 24 marks</p> <p>Section B-D: Choose one topic each. Possible combination of multiple choice, short/medium answer and extended response 24 marks</p>

It's easy to switch

- If you're an OCR-approved centre, all you need to do is download the specification and start teaching.
- Sign up for our [Choosing OCR webinar](#) exclusively for centres who are thinking of moving to or are new to OCR.
- [Be kept up-to-date](#) with the latest news including professional development and Teacher Networks.

And finally...

Comparison of papers

OCR A Level in Psychology		AQA A Level in Psychology			
Paper 1: Research methods		AQA Paper 1	AQA Paper 2	AQA Paper 3	Compulsory or optional content
Section	Content				
1.1 Research methods and techniques	Experiment	✓	✓	✓	C
	Observation	✓	✓	✓	C
	Self-report	✓	✓	✓	C
	Correlation	✓	✓	✓	C
	Case study	✓	✓	✓	C
1.2 Planning and conducting research	Aims and hypotheses	✓	✓	✓	C
	Populations, samples and sampling techniques	✓	✓	✓	C
	Experimental designs	✓	✓	✓	C
	Variables and how they are operationalised	✓	✓	✓	C
	Designing observations	✓	✓	✓	C
	Designing self-reports	✓	✓	✓	C
1.3 Data recording, analysis and presentation	Raw data	✓	✓	✓	C
	Levels and types of data	✓	✓	✓	C
	Descriptive statistics	✓	✓	✓	C
	Graphs	✓	✓	✓	C
	Inferential statistics	✓	✓	✓	C
	Methodological issues	✓	✓	✓	C
1.4 Report writing	Sections and sub-sections of a practical report	✓	✓	✓	C
	Citing academic references	✓	✓	✓	C
	Peer review	✓	✓	✓	C
1.5 Practical investigations	Reflect on own practical investigations				
1.6 Science in psychology	Nature and principles of scientific enquiry	✓	✓	✓	C

Paper 2: Core studies in psychology		AQA Paper 1	AQA Paper 2	AQA Paper 3	Compulsory or optional content
Section A: Core studies					
Section	Content				
Social Area	Milgram (1963) - Obedience to authority	✓			C
	Piliavin et al. (1969) - Helping behaviour				
	Levine (2001) - Cross cultural altruism				
Cognitive Area	Loftus and Palmer (1974) - Eyewitness testimony	✓			C
	Grant et al. (1998) - Context-dependent memory				
	Simons and Chabris (1999) - Visual inattention				
Developmental Areas	Bandura et al. (1961) - Transmission of aggression	✓			C
	Chaney et al. (2004) - Adherence to medical regimes				
	Lee et al. (1997) - Lying and truth telling				
Biological Area	Sperry (1968) - Lateralisation of function in the brain		✓		C
	Casey et al. (2011) - Delayed gratification				
	Maguire et al. (2000) - Brain plasticity		✓		C
Individual Differences Area	Freud (1909) - Phobias		✓ Psychodynamic		C
	Baron-Cohen et al. (1997) - Autism and theory of mind			✓ (Autism/ theory of mind)	O
	Van Leeuwen et al. (2008) - Intelligence				
Methodological issues	Analysis and evaluation of psychological research	✓	✓	✓	C

Paper 2: Core studies in psychology		AQA Paper 1	AQA Paper 2	AQA Paper 3	Compulsory or optional content
Section B: Areas, perspectives, issues and debates					
Section	Content				
Areas	Social	✓			C
	Cognitive		✓		C
	Developmental				
	Biological		✓		C
	Individual differences				
Perspectives	Behaviourist		✓		C
	Psychodynamic		✓		C
Issues	Ethical issues	✓	✓	✓	C
	Conducting socially sensitive research				
	Usefulness of research				
Debates	Nature/nurture			✓	C
	Freewill/determinism			✓	C
	Reductionism/holism			✓	C
	Individual/situational explanations	✓		✓	C
	Psychology as a science		✓	✓	C/O

Paper 2: Core studies in psychology		AQA Paper 1	AQA Paper 2	AQA Paper 3	Compulsory or optional content
Section C: Practical applications					
Section	Content				
The practical applications of psychology	<p>Identify and apply psychological content to a novel source</p> <p>Make evidence-based suggestions in relation to the source</p> <p>Consider the strengths and weaknesses of the suggestions made</p>				<p>Similar to AQA, OCR also has application to scenarios throughout the papers.</p> <p>However, this section emphasises practical applications of psychology with a longer novel source for students to use, typically an extract from a news article.</p>

Paper 3: Applied psychology		AQA Paper 1	AQA Paper 2	AQA Paper 3	Compulsory or optional content
Section A	Content				
Mental health (compulsory)	What is mental health?		✓		C/O
	The medical model		✓		C/O
	Alternatives to the medical model		✓		C/O
	Modern approaches to mental health				
Section B	Content				
Criminal psychology (compulsory)	Turning to crime			✓	O
	Building a case				
	In the courtroom				
	Managing offenders			✓	O
Section C	Content				
Child psychology (Option 1)	Pre-adult brain development				
	Perceptual development				
	The development of attachment	✓			C
Environmental psychology (Option 2)	Biological rhythms		✓		C
	Recycling and conservation behaviours				
	Psychological effects of the built environment				
Sport and exercise psychology (Option 3)	Exercise and mental health				
	Motivation				
	Audience effects				

Need to get in touch?

If you ever have any questions about OCR qualifications or services (including administration, logistics and teaching) please feel free to get in touch with our customer support centre.

Call us on
01223 553998

Alternatively, you can email us on
support@ocr.org.uk

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Though we make every effort to check our resources, there may be contradictions between published support and the specification, so it is important that you always use information in the latest specification. We indicate any specification changes within the document itself, change the version number and provide a summary of the changes. If you do notice a discrepancy between the specification and a resource, please [contact us](#).

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Whether you already offer OCR qualifications, are new to OCR or are thinking about switching, you can request more information using our [Expression of Interest form](#).

Please [get in touch](#) if you want to discuss the accessibility of resources we offer to support you in delivering our qualifications.

A Level Psychology (draft)
Version 1