

Psychology

Cambridge International
Examinations Syllabus
Code 9990

IGCSEs needed

Communication and literacy skills at a level equivalent to IGCSE grade **B** in English.

Biology at IGCSE grade **B** is also advantageous

Course Overview

The studies we engage with offer perspectives on a range of different areas including biological, cognitive, learning and social psychology during AS and this becomes more specific when we look at the application of research in A2 for Health Psychology and Clinical Psychology such as stress, schizophrenia, depression and anxiety disorders. The course helps you to understand yourself and those around you better – but you won't be able to read minds. You may just be a little more empathetic at the end!

Syllabus Units/Topics

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biological Approach• Cognitive Approach• Learning Approach• Social Approach | A2
Clinical Psychology and
Health Psychology |
|--|---|

Assessment Details

AS Level Psychology candidates sit for two exams, each 1 hour 30 minutes long. The first is for approaches, issues and debates and the second is testing knowledge of research methods. For A2 candidates will also sit for two exams, also 1 hour 30 minutes long. These questions will be longer essay based questions which will require more detailed responses based on the specialism that has been selected.

Skills Developed

Psychology develops a range of transferable research, communication and evaluation skills. It enables candidates to think more about the behaviour of themselves and others within different settings and consider the reasoning and emotion behind the behaviour.

Degree course this will lead to:

Psychology will prepare candidates for a wide range of careers and psychology graduates are increasingly becoming the most sought-after students in recruitment due to the transferrable skills that they possess. These degrees include law, scientific research, social sciences, journalism, medicine, teaching and counselling as well as a psychology degree of course.

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Assessment Details

Paper 1 – Approaches, Issues and Debates

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

Candidate answer **all** questions.

This paper contains two sections:

- Section A: short answer questions
- Section B: extended response questions which may ask for comparison between studies and will require candidates to evaluate a study(s).

The paper tests candidates' knowledge of the core studies. Candidates will also be asked questions based on the four approaches (biological, cognitive, learning and social) and the AS Level issues and debates.

Paper 2 – Research Methods

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

Candidates answer **all** questions.

This paper contains two sections:

- Section A: short answer questions based on general research methods and research methods relating directly to a core study and three short answer scenario-based questions.
- Section B: a planning question where candidates plan a study and evaluate some aspects of this plan.

The paper will focus on knowledge and application of research methods and methodological concepts and how these relate to the core studies.

For the planning question, candidates will apply their knowledge of the research methods and practical issues and methodological concepts to plan an investigation. Some aspects of the investigation will be provided for candidates as part of the question and candidates will be required to plan the other aspects of the investigation.

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Paper 3 – Specialist Options: Approaches, Issues and Debates

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

This paper contains four specialist options. Candidates answer questions from the two options they have studied.

Candidates answer **all** the questions from these two specialist options.

There are four questions for each specialist option. Each specialist option will consist of:

- Short answer questions. There will be three questions consisting of structured short answer questions worth a total of 14 marks.
- Structured essay question, divided into two parts. There are 6 marks for the part (a) 'describe' question and 10 marks for the part (b) 'evaluate' question. The question will be based on a different topic area from those tested in the short answer questions.

Questions will require candidates to consider the subject content of the specialist options and approaches, issues and debates. The questions will be based on three topics or sub-topics within the studied specialist options. The topic areas for each specialist option will be different to the topic areas assessed in Paper 4.

Paper 4 – Specialist Options: Application and Research Methods

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 60 marks

This paper contains two sections.

Section A – candidates answer questions on the two specialist options they have studied.

There will be two structured questions on each of the specialist options, and candidates will answer all parts of the questions from the two specialist options they have studied.

Questions will require candidates to consider the subject content and Key Studies of the specialist options, research methods and methodological concepts. The questions are based on two topics or sub-topics within the studied specialist options. The topic areas for each specialist option will be different to the topic areas assessed in Paper 3.

Section B – candidates answer one planning question from a choice of four (one for each specialist option). In the planning question candidates must plan a study (10 marks) and answer structured questions to evaluate the plan (14 marks).

For the planning question, candidates will apply their knowledge of research methods and practical issues and methodological concepts to plan an investigation. Candidates will be required to specify both the **general features** which will apply to all research methods and the **specific features** which apply to the research method used.