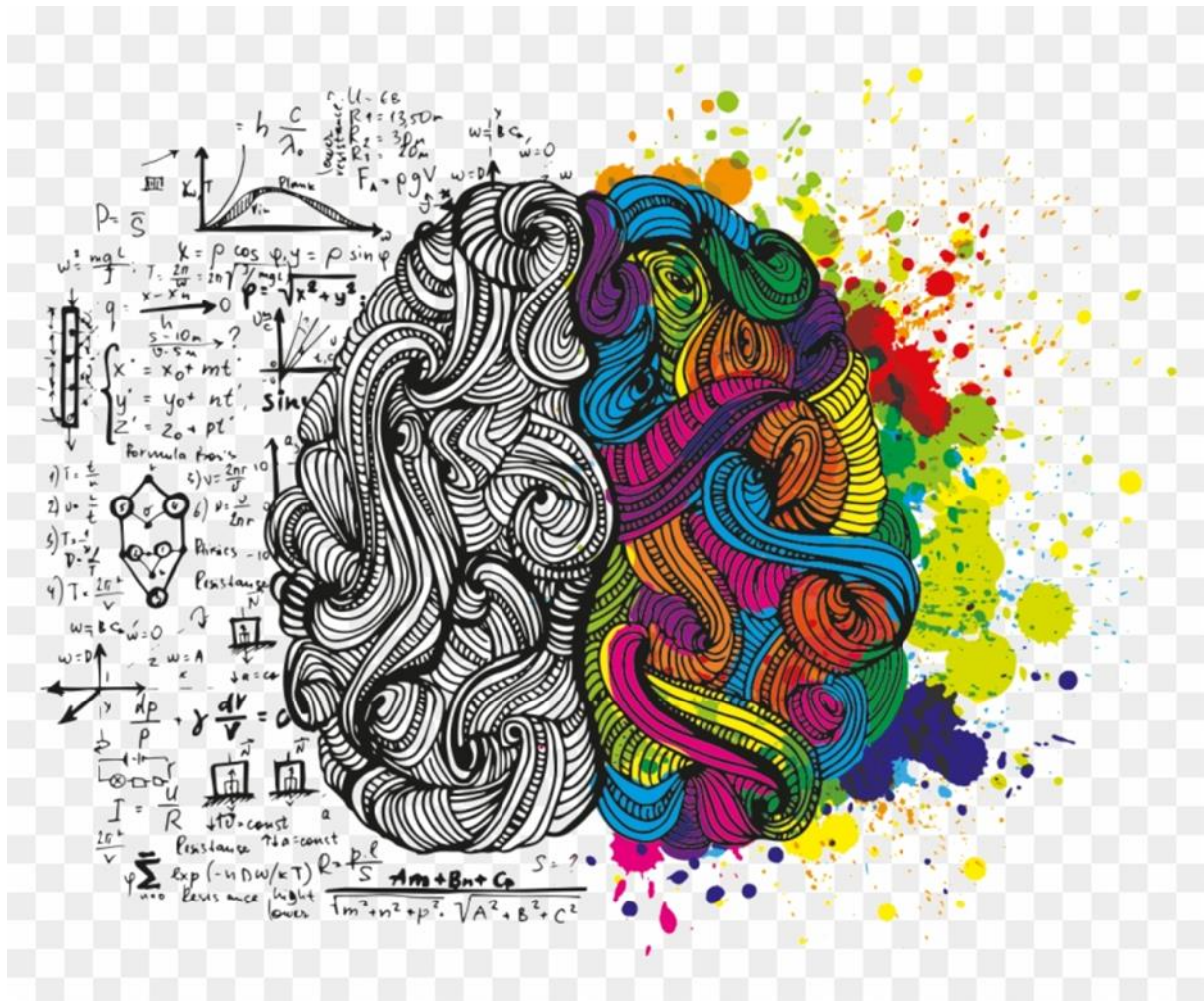


AQA A Level Psychology

Transitions Pack 2023



Name.....

Teachers in the department:

Mrs Worrell (Head of Faculty Social Sciences & Head of Psychology)

Mrs Alexander (Assistant Headteacher & Psychology teacher)

Miss Pinto (Head of Sociology and Psychology teacher)

Introduction

Congratulations on completing your GCSE's and WELCOME to A Level Psychology. This is such an exciting time for you to explore your new A Level subjects and have a real trial of what A Level lessons will be like in the new school year. For most of you, Psychology is a brand-new subject, and you may have a lot of questions about the course content, types of homework, exam questions and wider reading. This booklet is designed to give you a comprehensive introduction to the new skills and knowledge you will be learning over the next two years. This booklet will also highlight to you all the information you already know from your GCSE's that are going to be very important in some parts of the Psychology A Level.

Instructions for completing this booklet

In this booklet you have three main sections. The first one is biology, the second is maths and the third is psychology. You should read the information in this booklet and then complete the questions and tasks at the end of each section. In Autumn A you will have the opportunity to showcase your knowledge on the work in these sections in your first psychology EMB assessment.

You already have some knowledge of Psychology from your GCSE subjects...

Now you may be wondering...why biology and maths?! Well, A-Level Psychology studies the biology of the brain and nervous system as well as other main body functions such as the endocrine system, biological rhythms, and scientific ways to study the brain. In fact, Psychology is a science A-Level! You should be familiar with scientific processes from your GCSE Biology/Science and through completing the biology section in this booklet, you will start your A Level psychology classes with the confidence and knowledge you need to progress and succeed. The same goes for maths. About 35% of the entire A Level Psychology course requires you to demonstrate an understanding of mathematical and statistical knowledge. Now, please don't be put off by this! If you can remember your GCSE maths knowledge as outlined in section 2 of this booklet – you will be great!

Wider Reading in A Level Psychology

A very important part of all A Level courses (not just psychology!) is wider reading. This means reading books, journals, websites or watching TED talks, documentaries and movies on content that relates to your course. The purpose of wider reading is to give you additional knowledge and generate discussion points from lots of different points of view. A Level psychology involves the skill of evaluation and discussion as well as an ability to apply your knowledge to real life. So, reading around the subject will greatly enhance your exam technique as well as your love for the subject. Your teachers will be giving you a list of wider reading in September and your teachers also love a recommendation of wider reading from students! So, if you come across an interesting book or documentary, let us know! 😊

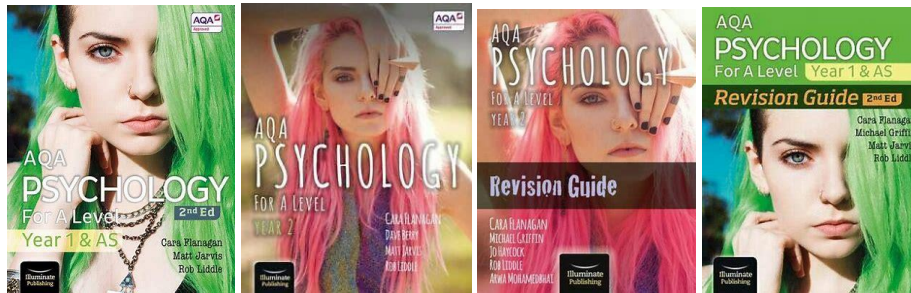
In the meantime – we suggest you have a watch and read of some of the following over the summer holidays to help you prepare for your A Level in Psychology

Best textbooks and revision guides for the course:

Psychology for A Level Year 1 and 2 (5th Edition) by Mike Cardwell and Cara Flanagan, Oxford

AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 and 2 by Cara Flanagan, Dave Berry, Matt Jarvis, Rob Liddle

AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 and 2 Revision Guide by Cara Flanagan, Dave Berry, Matt Jarvis, Rob Liddle.



Highly recommended reading to start the course:

Elephants on Acid by Alex Boese

Thinking fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman

The Gendered Brain by Gina Rippon

Biased by Jennifer Eberhardt

The Psychology Book: Big ideas simply explained

Forensic Psychology: A Short introduction by David Canter

The Curious Incident of the dog in the night-time by Mark Haddon

Make a note here of any other books you have read or documentaries you have watched that relate to psychology...

Best watchable encounters for the course:

[CrashCourse - YouTube](#) -An A Level YouTube revision Channel great for many A Levels including Psychology, Biology and History

Memory: https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_how_reliable_is_your_memory

Social Psychology: https://www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_the_psychology_of_evil

Social and Forensic Psychology:

https://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer_l_eberhardt_how_racial_bias_works_and_how_to_disrupt_it

Best apps for the course:

Ted talk

3D Brain

Tutor2u

BBC News

Best websites for the course:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology-7181-7182>

<https://www.bps.org.uk/>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology>

Please now read the instructions in each section that follows and complete the questions and tasks. Enjoy and we are really looking forward to teaching you in September! Mrs W, Mrs A & Miss P 😊

Section 1: Biology

The bullet points above relate to areas of your GCSE specification (AQA Biology grades 9-1) that are vitally important in your A Level Psychology. Please refer to your current GCSE biology revision notes and answer the questions in the tasks in this booklet. A reminder that you will be assessed on this GCSE Biology knowledge in the first term of your A level Psychology course.

TASK 1 THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD, DESIGNING EXPERIMENTS AND PRESENTING DATA

Outline what is meant by a peer review?

Explain why a peer review of research is important?

Explain what is meant by a computational model in science?

Explain why it is important to have a hypothesis for a scientific experiment?

What is an independent variable and what is a dependant variable?

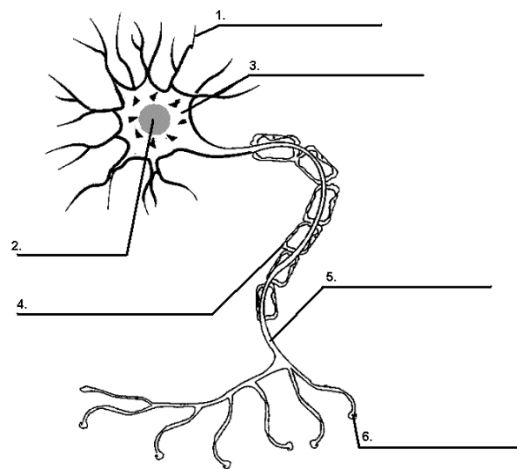
What is meant by the term cause and effect?

Explain why correlations cannot establish cause and effect?

Explain what is meant by the term 'discrete data'

Sketch a positive, negative and no correlation scatter graph

TASK 2: HOMEOSTASIS, THE NERVOUS SYSTEM, SYNAPSES AND THE BRAIN

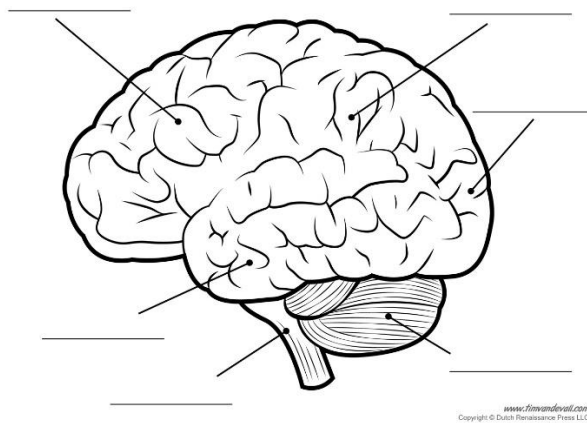


label this neuron

Homeostasis is the regulation and maintenance of systems within your body in response to external and internal conditions. Name three systems that are controlled by homeostasis

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Describe the process of synaptic transmission (aim to write at least four things and consider the correct terminology)



label this brain

Section 2: Maths

Rounding:

- 1 Write 6.47 correct to 1 decimal place.
- 2 Write 376 to the nearest hundred.
- 3 Write 5829 to the nearest thousand.
- 4 Write 7518 to the nearest hundred.
- 5 Write 1485 to the nearest thousand.

Fractions, Decimals and Percentages:

1. Write 0.29 as a percentage.
- 2 Write as a decimal $\frac{5}{100}$
- 3 Write 0.3 as a percentage.
- 4 Write 18% as a decimal.
- 5 Write 4% as a decimal.

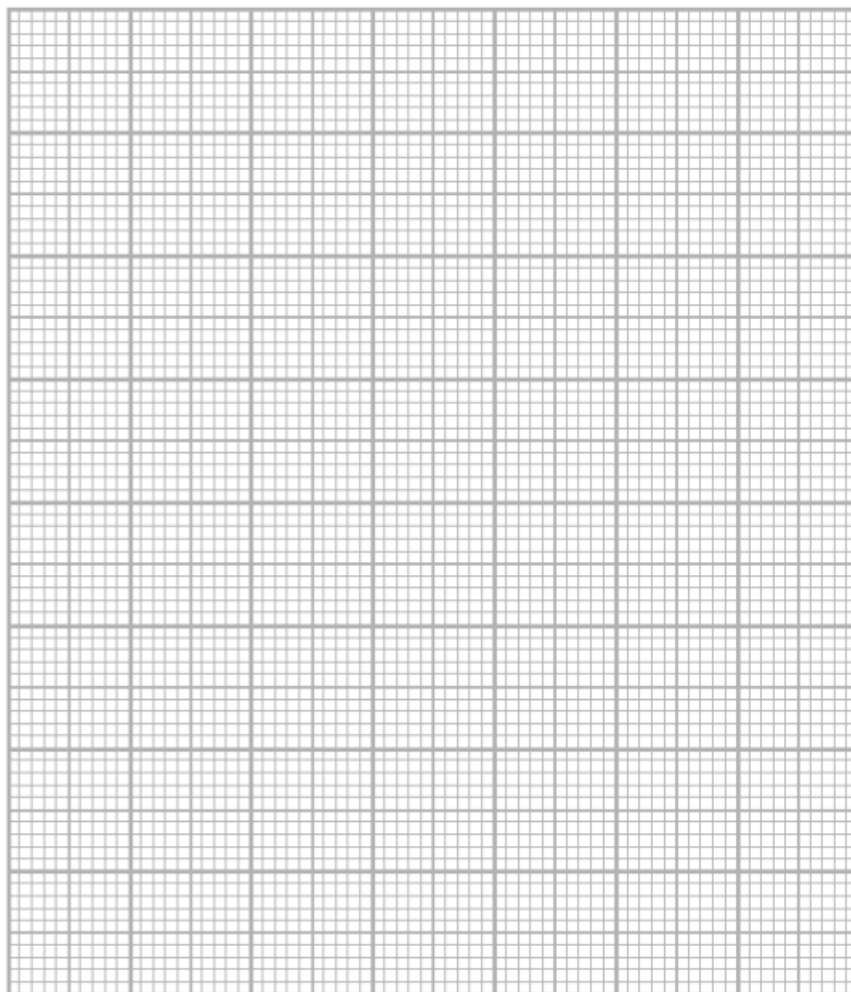
Averages, Bar Charts and Scatter graphs:

1. Here is a list of 10 numbers 2 3 4 4 4 5 6 6 7 7
 - (a) Work out the range.
 - (b) Find the mode.
 - (c) Calculate the mean.

2. Some people were asked their favourite activity out of swimming, cycling and running. The table shows the results for males and the results for females.

	Swimming	Cycling	Running
Males	7	6	7
Females	8	7	5

On the grid, draw a bar chart to show this information



3.

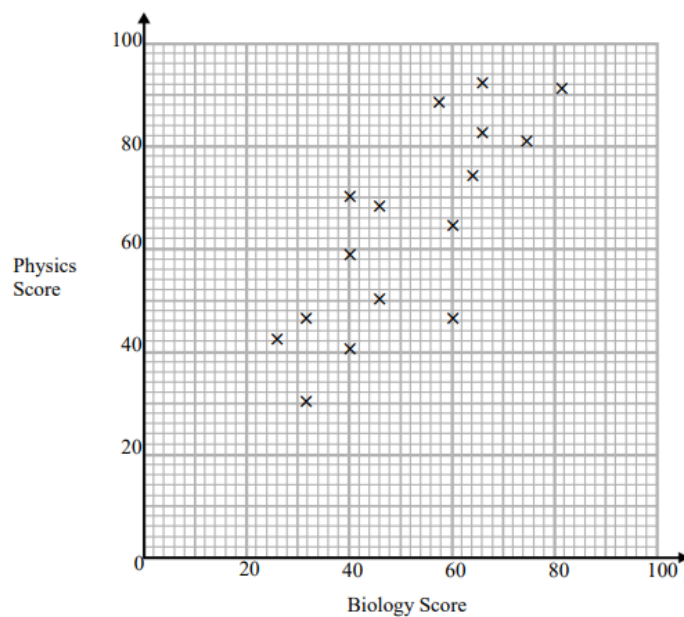
Adam is measuring the heights in cm of his tomato plants.

Height (cm)	Frequency
$140 < h \leq 150$	7
$150 < h \leq 160$	10
$160 < h \leq 170$	15
$170 < h \leq 180$	19
$180 < h \leq 200$	9

- (a) Estimate the mean height.
Give your answer correct to 1 decimal place.

4.

The scatter graph shows the scores of 16 students on their Biology and Physics tests.



- (a) What type of correlation does the scatter graph show?

.....
(1)

- (b) Another student scored 52 marks on their Biology test.
Estimate the Physics score for this student.

.....
(2)

Section 3: Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. On this course you will study core psychology units which are designed to give you a rounded understanding of how science and psychology work. In year two we will make unit choices from a variety of options including forensic, addiction, relationships, gender, schizophrenia, and cognitive development. You will specialise in three of these options as well as the core studies and research methods. Your research methods unit is very important as this section will be examined on in every topic of your exam. These qualifications are linear. Linear means that you will sit all the exams at the end of your second year.

COURSE CONTENT FOR YEAR 1:

Social influence

Social influence is the study of how people interact in groups and socially. You will study conformity and obedience and look at how studies can give us insight into how people behave individually and in groups.

Research Methods

This is a very important topic, and you will learn the features of the main methodologies used by psychologists. These include experiments, observations, case studies, correlation, and self-report. You will also learn about the features of a science and debate whether psychology is a science or a pseudo-science. You will also study statistics including how to analyse statistical outputs and test for significance.

Memory

Memory is part of a larger approach in psychology called cognitive psychology. In this unit you will learn about the different types of memory: sensory, short term and long term. You will look at different theories of memory and learn how to evaluate theories and supporting evidence. You will also study theories of forgetting.

Approaches

In this unit you will study the main approaches to psychology. These include cognitive, behaviourist, biological, psychodynamic, and humanistic. You will learn that these main approaches give different viewpoints into how to explain and analyse human behaviour. You will evaluate these approaches as well as look at their usefulness to society.

Psychopathology

This unit is about the study of mental health and disorders. You will study the main psychological definitions of mental ill-health and evaluate these definitions from a cultural point of view. You will also study in detail the following mental disorders, phobias, depressions and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Attachment

This is the study of how children develop in the first two years of their lives. We will look at normal and abnormal attachment including what happens to a child if they never form an attachment. There is an opportunity to look at case studies in this unit as well as some large-scale longitudinal research.

COURSE CONTENT FOR YEAR 2:

Biopsychology

This unit is an advanced unit that leads on from the biological approach. You will learn about the structure and function of the brain and central nervous system and analyse how biology affects our behaviour. You will study the effects that hormones, neurons, and chemicals have on the brain and evaluate the usefulness of the study of the brain for all sectors of psychology.

Issues and Debates

This unit spans the two years, and you will focus on learning the six main issues and debates in psychology. You can use these debates to evaluate and analyse any study or theory anywhere in the course as well as answering questions on these debates for this unit. The issues and debates are as follows; nature vs nurture, holism vs reductionism, free will vs determinism, culture and gender, ethical issues and idiographic and nomothetic.

Option 1: Schizophrenia

In this unit you will study the symptoms and features of the psychotic disorder schizophrenia. You will learn how schizophrenia affects the brain and behaviour, the detail of the symptoms and how to possibly treat the disorder. You will focus on studies and evaluate those studies in terms of improving our understanding of the disorder in psychology and society.

Option 2: Forensic

In this unit you will learn about the different theories as to why people turn to crime and evaluate those theories in terms of their effective explanations. You will also study the biological and social differences of criminals and non-criminals and look at treatment plans for the criminal population. You will look at profiling an offender and study psychological techniques that are used to catch criminals and rehabilitate them into society.

Option 3: Relationships or Cognition and Development

This is an options unit and is subject to change. You will study either Relationships or Cognition and Development. This will include theories relating to the units and evaluations of those theories to the economy, issues and debates and real-life applications.

Psychology Transitions Tasks:

Use [tutor2u | Support resources for Psychology students and teachers](#) to do some of your own research into the topics we will be studying in A Level Psychology. The full Specification can be accessed from the AQA website. [AS and A-level Psychology Specification Specifications for first teaching in 2015 \(aqa.org.uk\)](#)

Read the instructions and complete the tasks on three big studies in Psychology:

Study 1: Zimbardo's Prison Experiment from the Social Influence topic

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=zimbardo+ted+talk&cvid=0753ff7789584eb396c6cecae6197a2b&qs=edge.0.0j69i57j0l6j69i60.3308j0j4&FORM=ANAB01&DAF0=1&PC=U531>

Google Search: Zimbardo TED Talk

Watch the TED talk by Dr Phillip Zimbardo about the psychology of Evil.

1. What is social psychology and what do social psychologist's study?
2. Summarise (200 words) the Stanford Prison Experiment conducted by Phillip Zimbardo
3. Why was Zimbardo's prison experiment seen as unethical?
4. Even though this study was conducted in the 1970's – why are the results of this experiment still relevant today?

Study 2: Loftus Study on Leading Questions and False Memories from the Memory topic

https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_loftus_how_reliable_is_your_memory

Google search: Loftus TED talk

Watch the TED talk by Elizabeth Loftus about the impact of false memories

1. What is cognitive psychology and what do cognitive psychologists do?

2. Summarise (200 words) the car crash memory experiments on the effects on leading questions conducted by Professor Elizabeth Loftus

3. What impact does the recollection of false memories have on people?

4. Other memory topics that are of interest to study are memory loss (i.e. patient HM, Clive Wearing and Patient K.F) and memory savants (i.e. Stephen Wiltshire)

Research these cases and write a summary of why their memories are either impaired or savant

Study 3: Eberhardt Research on Racial Bias and how to Disrupt it

This research is not on our specification. However, it is important that your psychology department give you an insight into other research theories that are relevant to your lives and not just to your exams! Research such as this by Jennifer Eberhardt highlight the vital importance of studying issues that face people in their everyday lives. As part of your A Level course, your teachers want to empower you with the knowledge that will help you succeed as young women of the future.

https://www.ted.com/talks/jennifer_l_eberhardt_how_racial_bias_works_and_how_to_disrupt_it

Google search: Eberhardt TED talk

Watch the TED talk by Jennifer Eberhardt about racial bias and how to recognise and stop it.

Explain in your own words why it is important to study prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes within psychology.

What impact does racial bias have on the criminal justice system? Can you think of any real-life examples of where racial bias has impacted the everyday lives of people? Can you explain why psychologists need to study these incidents?

Other research into racial stratification includes a study by Mamie Phipps Clark. Research the 'black doll, white doll' study and summarise in your own words what was found.

Thank you for completing your transition into Psychology booklet. Have a great summer and we are looking forward to seeing you in September! 😊

Bring this booklet to your first lesson 😊