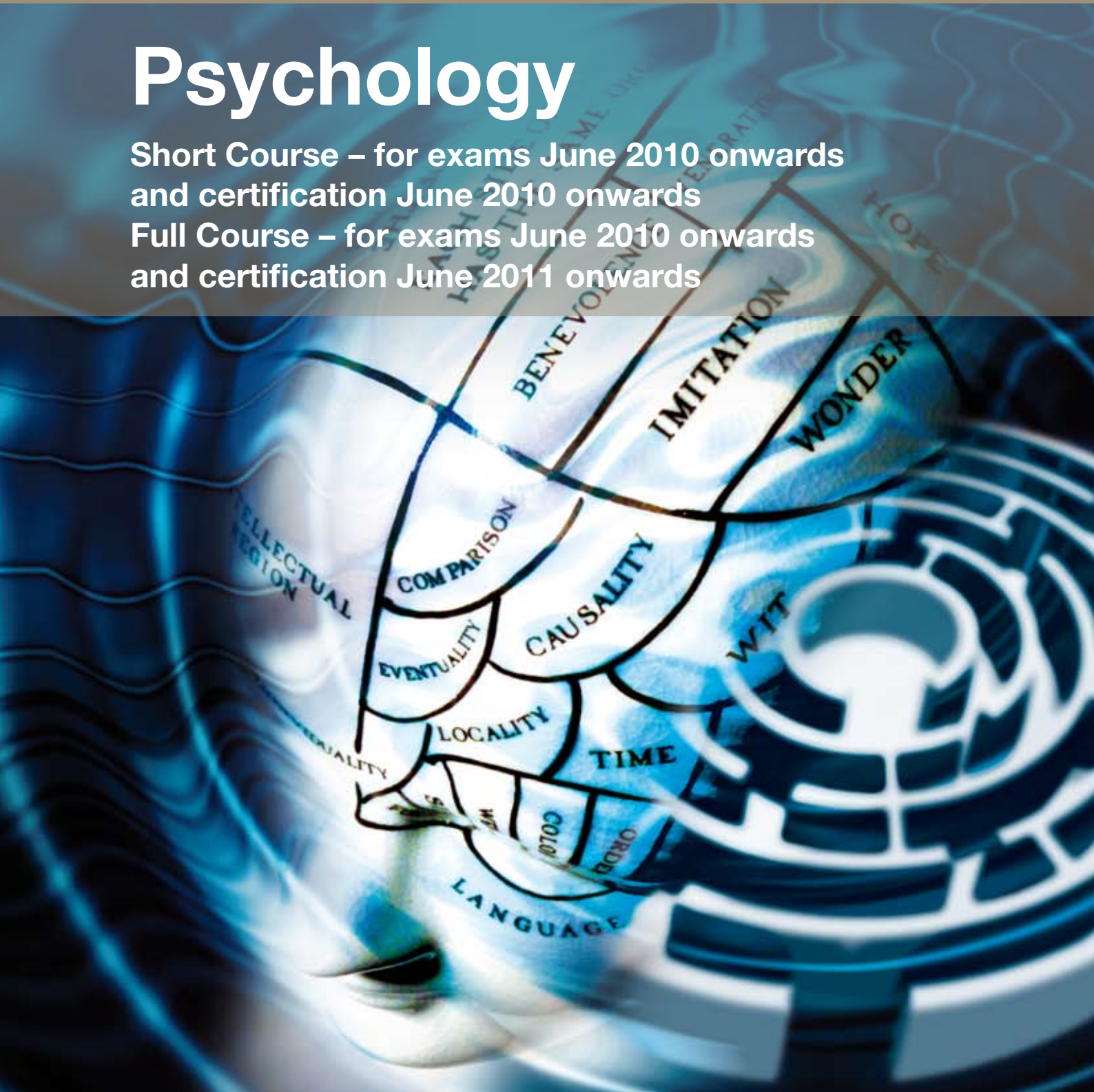


GCSE

Specification

Psychology

Short Course – for exams June 2010 onwards
and certification June 2010 onwards
Full Course – for exams June 2010 onwards
and certification June 2011 onwards



This specification will be published annually on our website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk>). We will notify centres in writing of any changes to this specification. We will also publish changes on our website. The version of the specification on our website will always be the most up-to-date version, although it may be different from printed versions.

You can get further copies of this specification from:

AQA Logistics Centre (Manchester)
Unit 2
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Ashburton Park
Trafford Park
Manchester
M17 1EH

or you can download it from our website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk>)

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Dr Michael Cresswell Director General.

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1 Introduction

1

1.1 Why choose AQA?

AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why is AQA so popular?

AQA understands the different requirements of each subject by working in partnership with teachers. Our GCSEs:

- enable students to realise their full potential
- contain engaging content
- are manageable for schools and colleges
- are accessible to students of all levels of ability
- lead to accurate results, delivered on time
- are affordable and value for money.

AQA provides a comprehensive range of support services for teachers:

- access to subject departments
- training for teachers including practical teaching strategies and approaches that really work presented by senior examiners
- 24-hour support through our website and online *Ask AQA*
- past question papers and mark schemes
- comprehensive printed and electronic resources for teachers and students

AQA is an educational charity focused on the needs of the learner. All our income goes towards operating and improving the quality of our specifications, examinations and support services. We don't aim to profit from education – we want you to.

If you are an existing customer then we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of moving to AQA then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.2 Why choose Psychology?

- The revised specification will provide students with a sound understanding of the various methods and approaches in psychology at an introductory level.
- Knowledge of methods and approaches will be illustrated through various topic areas representing the core areas of social, cognitive, developmental, biological and individual differences.
- The topic areas have been chosen because of their importance and prominence within the core area and their relevance to everyday life.
- The specification requires candidates to understand ethical issues that must be considered when conducting research in psychology.
- New content has been introduced, while less popular topics have been removed.
- Due to its unitised nature, this specification offers opportunities for flexible delivery. The unitised format provides centres with an opportunity to break away from a rigid programme and deliver the course to suit their individual needs.
- Unit 1 of this specification can be delivered as a Short Course.
- GCSE psychology is no longer tiered; therefore the question papers have been designed to be accessible to candidates of all abilities.

1.3 How do I start using this specification?

Already using the existing AQA Psychology specification?

- Register to receive further information, such as mark schemes, past question papers, details of teacher support meetings, etc, at **<http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php>**
Information will be available electronically or in print, for your convenience.
- Tell us that you intend to enter candidates. Then we can make sure that you receive all the material you need for the examinations. You can let us know by completing the appropriate Intention to Enter and Estimated Entry forms. We will send copies to your Exams Officer and they are also available on our website (**http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_entries.php**).

Not using the AQA specification currently?

- Almost all centres in England and Wales use AQA or have used AQA in the past and are approved AQA centres. A small minority are not. If your centre is new to AQA, please contact our centre approval team at **centreapproval@aqa.org.uk**

1.4 How can I find out more?

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions at **<http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php>**

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query for our team. Our target response time is one day.

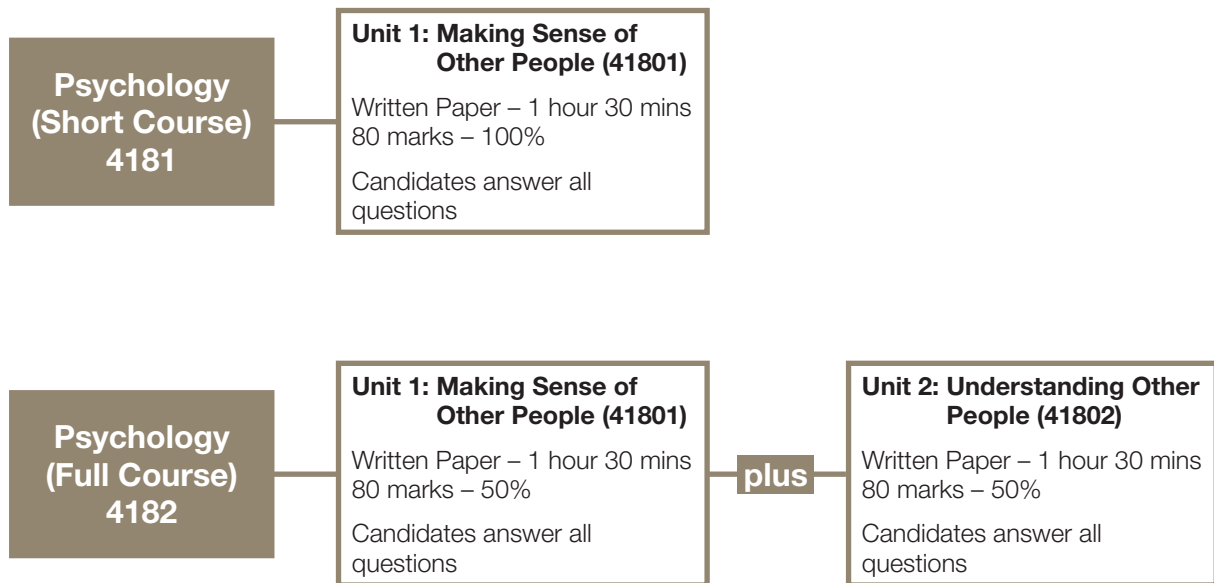
Teacher Support

Details of the full range of current Teacher Support meetings are available on our website at **<http://www.aqa.org.uk/support/teachers.php>**

There is also a link to our fast and convenient online booking system for Teacher Support meetings at **<http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking>**

If you need to contact the Teacher Support team, you can call us on 01483 477860 or email us at **teachersupport@aqa.org.uk**

2 Specification at a Glance



Available for first teaching in September 2009.

The Short Course examination will be available in June 2010.

Only Unit 1 of the Full Course will be available in June 2010.

Both Unit 1 and Unit 2 will be available every June from 2011.

3 Subject Content

Students should have experience of designing and conducting informal classroom research using a variety of methods. They will be expected to analyse data collected in investigations at a descriptive level and draw conclusions based on research findings. They will be required to draw on these experiences to answer questions in the examination for these units. In the delivery of these units, it is expected that teachers will seek out contemporary examples of theories and research to develop their candidates' understanding of the subject content.

3.1 Unit 1 Making Sense of Other People

Memory

Processes of encoding, storage and retrieval.

The multi-store, reconstructive and levels of processing explanations of memory.

Description and evaluation of studies to investigate explanations of memory.

Explanations and studies of forgetting including interference, context and brain damage (retrograde and anterograde amnesia).

Eyewitness testimony.

description and evaluation of studies of factors which affect the reliability of eyewitnesses' accounts of people and incidents, including the research by Loftus (1974), Bruce and Young (1998).

Contemporary practical applications derived from the explanations of memory and forgetting and their benefits and drawbacks.

Non-Verbal Communication

Distinctions between non-verbal communication and verbal communication, including paralinguistics (the vocal features that accompany speech, including tone of voice, emphasis and intonation).

Types of non-verbal communication, including;

functions of eye contact (Argyle 1975); regulating the flow of information in conversation, providing feedback and expressing emotions, including pupil dilation.

facial expression; categories of facial expression (surprise, happiness, fear, anger, sadness, interest, disgust). Facial expressions and the hemispheres of the brain Sackeim (1978).

body language; posture (including postural echo, open and closed postures), gestures, touch.

Description and evaluation of studies of non-verbal communication and verbal communication, for example the work of Argyle, Alkema and Gilmour (1971).

Personal space: factors which affect personal space, including cultural norms, sex differences, individual differences and status.

Description and evaluation of studies of factors which affect personal space.

Contemporary practical implications of studies of non-verbal communication and their benefits and drawbacks.

Development of Personality

Definition of personality, including temperament.

Description and evaluation of studies of temperament, including the work of Thomas (1977), Buss & Plomin (1984), and Kagan (1991).

Eysenck's type theory (1952); extraversion, introversion, neuroticism.

Personality scales, including EPI (1964) & EPQ (1975).

Evaluation of Eysenck's type theory.

Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD); characteristics of APD (DSMIV 2008) causes of APD;

biological: the role of the amygdala, including the work of Raine (2000).

situational: including the work of Farrington (1995), and Elander (2000).

Description and evaluation of studies of the causes of APD.

Implications of research into APD.

Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination

Definitions of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination.

Stereotyping as oversimplification, leading to positive and negative evaluations.

Description and evaluation of studies of prejudice and of discrimination, including the work of Adorno (authoritarian personality, including the F-scale), Tajfel (In-groups and Out-groups) and Sherif (Robbers' Cave) and inter-group conflict.

Explanations of prejudice and discrimination.

Ways of reducing prejudice and discrimination, using evidence from studies including the work of Sherif (1961), Aronson (1978), Elliott (1977) and Harwood (2003).

Evaluation of these ways of reducing prejudice and discrimination.

Contemporary practical implications of research into stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination and their benefits and drawbacks.

Research Methods

This section will be examined through questions focusing on the specification content. It is not to be seen as an entirely separate area of the specification. Centres are advised that methods of investigation should be taught at appropriate places in the course, with particular topics being selected to illustrate not only the theoretical material but also methodology.

Methods of Investigation

The use of scientific methods and techniques which aim for objectivity.

Formulation of testable hypotheses to promote enquiry.

Procedures for the experimental method of investigation: independent and dependent variables.

Advantages and disadvantages of this method of investigation (including ecological validity).

Methods of Control, Data Analysis and Data Presentation

Experimental designs:

independent groups, repeated measures, matched pairs.

Advantages and disadvantages of each experimental design.

Target populations, samples and sampling methods:

random;

opportunity;

systematic;

stratified.

Advantages and limitations of each sampling method.

The use of standardised procedures, identification and control of extraneous variables, instructions to participants.

Random allocation, counterbalancing and randomisation.

Calculations, including mean, mode, median, range and percentages. Anomalous results and their possible effects.

Graphical representations, including bar charts.

Research in natural and experimental settings, including advantages and limitations of each.

Ethical Considerations

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- ethical issues in psychological research as outlined in the British Psychological Society guidelines
- ways of dealing with each of these issues.

3

3.2 Unit 2 Understanding Other People

Learning

Principles of classical conditioning:

unconditioned stimulus; unconditioned response; conditioned stimulus; conditioned response; extinction; spontaneous recovery; generalisation; discrimination; the contributions of Pavlov.

Principles of operant conditioning:

Thorndike's Law of Effect and the contributions of Skinner. Behaviour shaping; the distinction between positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement and punishment.

Descriptions and evaluation of attempts to apply conditioning procedures to the treatment of phobias (including, flooding and systematic desensitisation) and to change unwanted behaviour (including aversion therapy and token economy). The ethical implications of such attempts.

Social Influence

Definitions of conformity, obedience, social loafing and deindividuation.

Description and evaluation of studies of conformity, obedience, social loafing and deindividuation.

Explanation of factors affecting conformity, obedience, social loafing and deindividuation.

Explanation of factors affecting bystander intervention.

Description and evaluation of studies of bystander intervention, including those of Latané and Darley (1968), Bateson (1983), Piliavin (1969), and Schroeder (1995).

Contemporary practical implications of studies of social influence and their benefits and drawbacks.

Sex and Gender

Definitions of sex identity and gender identity. The biological differences between females and males (chromosomes and hormones).

The distinction between the concepts of sex identity and gender identity.

Three theories of gender development:

- psychodynamic theory, including the Oedipus and Electra complexes;

- social learning theory, including imitation, modelling and vicarious reinforcement.

- gender schema theory.

Evaluation of these three theories of gender development.

Aggression

Explanations of aggression:

- biological, including the role of hormones, brain disease and chromosomal abnormality.

- psychodynamic, including the frustration-aggression hypothesis.

- social learning, including modelling, punishment and monitoring.

Description and evaluation of studies of the development of aggressive behaviour.

Ways of reducing aggression, based on these explanations.

Evaluation of these ways of reducing aggression.

Research Methods

This section will be examined through questions focusing on the specification content. It is not to be seen as a separate area of the specification. Centres are advised that methods of investigation should be taught at appropriate places in the course, with particular topics being selected to illustrate not only the theoretical material but also methodology.

Methods of Investigation

The use of scientific methods and techniques which aim for objectivity.

Procedures for each method of investigation:

survey methods; questionnaires (including closed and open questions) and interviews (including structured and unstructured).

observation, including categories of behaviour, and inter-observer reliability;

case study;

Advantages and disadvantages of each method of investigation (including ecological validity).

Methods of Control, Data Analysis and Data Presentation

Target populations, samples and sampling methods:

random;

opportunity;

systematic;

stratified.

Correlation, including an understanding of association between two variables, and of correlation relationship (without computation of formulae). Advantages and limitations of using correlations.

Calculations, including mean, mode, median, range and percentages. Anomalous results and their possible effects.

Graphical representations, including bar charts and scatter graphs

Ethical Considerations

Candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- ethical issues in psychological research as outlined in the British Psychological Society guidelines
- ways of dealing with each of these issues.

4 Scheme of Assessment

4.1 Aims and learning outcomes

GCSE specifications in psychology must encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and to gain an insight into related sectors, such as science. They should encourage learners to develop a personal interest in, and enthusiasm for, psychology and prepare them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

GCSE courses based on this specification should encourage candidates to:

- engage in the process of psychological enquiry to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- develop an awareness of why psychology matters
- acquire knowledge and understanding of how psychology works and its essential role in society
- develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and social, cultural, scientific and contemporary issues and its impact on everyday life
- develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology
- develop an understanding of the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity
- develop a critical approach to scientific evidence and methods.

4.2 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

The assessment units will assess the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills set out in Section 3 (Subject Content).

Assessment Objectives		% Weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works	35
AO2	Apply skills, knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works	35
AO3	Interpret, evaluate and analyse psychological data and practice	30

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

GCSE specifications which require candidates to produce written material in English must:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complex subject matter
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.

In this specification, QWC will be assessed in certain designated questions on each paper.

Weighting of Assessment Objectives for GCSE Short Course/GCSE Award

The table below shows the approximate weighting of each of the Assessment Objectives in the GCSE Short Course/GCSE Full Course units.

Assessment Objectives	Component Weightings (%) (Short Course)	Component Weightings (%) (Full Course)		Overall Weightings of AOs (%) (Full Course)
	Unit 1	Unit 1	Unit 2	
AO1	35	17.5	17.5	35
AO2	35	17.5	17.5	35
AO3	30	15	15	30
Overall weighting of components	100	50	50	100

4.3 National criteria

This specification complies with the following.

- The Subject Criteria for Psychology
- Code of Practice
- The GCSE Qualification Criteria
- The Arrangements for the Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: Common Criteria
- The requirements for qualifications to provide access to Levels 1 and 2 of the National Qualification Framework.

4.4 Prior learning

There are no prior learning requirements.

However, any requirements set for entry to a course following this specification are at the discretion of centres.

4.5 Access to assessment: diversity and inclusion

GCSEs often require assessment of a broader range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any candidates regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation. If this was the case, the situation was

reviewed again to ensure such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with groups who represented the interests of a diverse range of candidates.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Further details are given in Section 5.4.

5 Administration

5.1 Availability of assessment units and certification

Examinations and certification for this specification are available as follows:

	Availability of Units		Availability of Certification	
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Short Course	GCSE award
June 2010	✓		✓	
June 2011 onwards	✓	✓	✓	✓

5.2 Entries

Please refer to the current version of *Entry Procedures and Codes* for up to date entry procedures. You should use the following entry codes for the units and for certification.

Unit 1 Making Sense of Other People – 41801

Unit 2 Understanding Other People – 41802

GCSE Short Course certification – 4181

GCSE certification – 4182

QCA's 40% terminal rule means that 40% of the assessment must be taken in the examination series in which the qualification is awarded. This rule is not dependent on the size of the qualification. Therefore, all GCSE candidates, whether taking short course, single and double awards, must have 40% of their assessment taken at the end.

5.3 Private candidates

This specification is available to private candidates. Private candidates should write to AQA for a copy of *Supplementary Guidance for Private Candidates*.

5.4 Access arrangements and special consideration

We have taken note of equality and discrimination legislation and the interests of minority groups in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration: General and Vocational Qualifications*. This is published on the JCQ website (<http://www.jcq.org.uk>) or you can follow the link from our website (<http://www.aqa.org.uk>).

Access arrangements

We can make arrangements so that candidates with special needs can access the assessment. These arrangements must be made **before** the examination. For example, we can produce a Braille paper for a candidate with a visual impairment.

Special consideration

We can give special consideration to candidates who have had a temporary illness, injury or indisposition at the time of the examination. Where we do this, it is given **after** the examination.

Applications for access arrangements and special consideration should be submitted to AQA by the Examinations Officer at the centre.

5.5 Language of examinations

We will provide units for this specification in English only.

5.6 Qualification titles

Qualifications based on this specification are:

- AQA GCSE Short Course in Psychology
- AQA GCSE in Psychology

5.7 Awarding grades and reporting results

The GCSE and GCSE Short Course qualifications will be graded on an eight-grade scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, F and G. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade G will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

We will publish the minimum raw mark for each grade, for each unit, when we issue candidates' results. We will report a candidate's unit results to centres in terms of uniform marks and qualification results in terms of uniform marks and grades.

For each unit, the uniform mark corresponds to a grade as follows.

Each unit (maximum uniform mark = 100)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	90–100
A	80–89
B	70–79
C	60–69
D	50–59
E	40–49
F	30–39
G	20–29
U	0–19

We calculate a candidate's total uniform mark by adding together the uniform marks for the relevant units. We convert this total uniform mark to a grade as follows.

Short Course (maximum uniform mark = 100)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	90–100
A	80–89
B	70–79
C	60–69
D	50–59
E	40–49
F	30–39
G	20–29
U	0–19

Full Course (maximum uniform mark = 200)

Grade	Uniform Mark Range
A*	180–200
A	160–179
B	140–159
C	120–139
D	100–119
E	80–99
F	60–79
G	40–59
U	0–39

5.8 Re-sits and shelf-life of unit results

Unit results remain available to count towards certification within the shelf life of the specification whether or not they have already been used.

Candidates may re-sit a unit once only. The better result for each unit will count towards the final qualification provided that the 40% rule is satisfied. Candidates may re-sit the qualification an unlimited number of times.

Candidates will be graded on the basis of the work submitted for assessment.

Candidates must take units comprising at least 40% of the total assessment in the series in which they enter for certification.

Appendices

A Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives (see Section 4) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the candidates' performance may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate relevant knowledge to produce substantiated analyses and explanations of a variety of structures, models or processes of psychology, including contemporary contexts. They show precise understanding of, and apply accurately, appropriate concepts, terms and theories. They analyse links between structures, processes and issues. They recognise and explain appropriate issues or debates, and substantiate these with evidence and reach valid conclusions. They identify and use appropriate methods, sources, information and data for a particular purpose and justify their selection. They interpret information and data presented in a variety of forms, critically evaluate its reference in relation to the arguments and reach substantiated conclusions. They use concepts, terminology and conventions accurately and appropriately.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate their knowledge to describe and give a partial analysis of a variety of structures, models or processes of psychology, including contemporary contexts. They show understanding of, and apply a variety of, concepts, terms and theories. They recognise and describe relevant issues or debates and select appropriate arguments in relation to the issues, theories and evidence. They make straightforward links between structures, processes and issues. They use a range of methods, sources, information and data to find out about issues or topics and can indicate why they were chosen. They handle and evaluate information and data to make reasonable judgements, and present plausible conclusions that are supported by relevant evidence. They use concepts, terminology and conventions appropriately.

Grade F

Candidates recall and recognise some structures, models or processes outlined in the specification and a partial description of them. They show a basic understanding of, and apply in a superficial way, a few concepts, terms and theories. They recognise and describe relevant issues or debates. They use a limited range of methods, sources, information and data uncritically and in a simple manner to find out about issues or topics. They demonstrate a limited ability to interpret information, make judgements and reach conclusions.

B Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Legislative, Sustainable Development, Economic and Cultural Issues, and Health and Safety Considerations

AQA has taken great care to ensure that any wider issues, including those particularly relevant to the education of students at Key Stage 4, have been identified and taken into account in the preparation of this specification. They will only form part of the assessment requirements where they relate directly to the specific content of the specification and have been identified in Section 3: Content.

European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Environmental Education

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community and the Report “Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education” 1993 in preparing this specification and associated specimen units.

Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification and specimen units to avoid bias of any kind.

C Overlaps with other Qualifications

GCSE Science

D Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing Opportunities for Generating Evidence

Introduction

The Key Skills Qualification requires candidates to demonstrate levels of achievement in the Key Skills of Communication, Application of Number and Information and Communication Technology.

The Wider Key Skills of Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving are also available. The acquisition and demonstration of ability in these 'wider' Key Skills is deemed highly desirable for all candidates.

Copies of the Key Skills Standards may be downloaded from QCA's website:

http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_6444.aspx

The units for each Key Skill comprise three sections:

- What you need to know
- What you must do
- Guidance.

Candidates following a course of study based on this specification for Psychology can be offered opportunities to develop and generate evidence of attainment in aspects of the Key Skills of:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information and Communication Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving own Learning and Performance
- Problem Solving.

Areas of study and learning that can be used to encourage the acquisition and use of Key Skills, and to provide opportunities to generate evidence for Part B of units, are provided in the Teachers' Resource Bank for this specification.

The above information is given in the context of the knowledge that Key Skills at levels 1 and 2 will be available until 2010 with last certification in 2012.



GCSE Psychology Teaching from 2009 onwards

Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/4435/7 and 500/4599/4 (Short Course)

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 4850.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

To obtain free specification updates and support material or to ask us a question register with Ask AQA:

www.aqa.org.uk/ask-aqa/register

Free launch meetings are available in 2008 followed by further support meetings through the life of the specification. Further information is available at:

<http://events.aqa.org.uk/ebooking>

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