Key Stage 5

A-level Psychology - Curriculum Map

Year	Term	Topic Overview	Focus	Teacher A – Research methods content	Assessment
Year 12	Autumn 1	**Teacher A:** Attachment (Paper 1) Research Methods (Paper 2 – One lesson a fortnight) **Teacher B:** Approaches (Paper 2)	**Teacher A – Attachment:** • Animal studies of attachment: Lorenz and Harlow. • Explanations of attachment: learning theory and Bowlby's monotropic theory. The concepts of a critical period and an internal working model. • Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation'. Types of attachment: secure, insecure-avoidant and insecure-resistant. Cultural variations in attachment, including van Ijzendoorn. **Teacher B – Approaches:** • Learning approaches: i) the behaviourist approach, including classical conditioning and Pavlov's research, operant conditioning, types of reinforcement and Skinner's research; ii) social learning theory including imitation, identification, vicarious reinforcement, the role of mediational processes and Bandura's research. • The cognitive approach: the study of internal mental processes, the role of schema, the use of models to explain and make inferences about mental processes. • The biological approach: the genetic basis of behaviour: genotype, phenotype and evolution. Influence of biological structures and neurochemistry on behaviour. Cognitive neuroscience.	**Scientific processes** • Aims: stating aims, the difference between aims and hypotheses. • Hypotheses: directional and non-directional. • Sampling: the difference between population and sample; sampling methods including: random, systematic, stratified, opportunity and volunteer; implications of sampling methods, including bias and generalisation. • Pilot studies and the aims of piloting. • Experimental designs: repeated measures, independent groups, matched pairs. • Observational design: behavioural categories; event sampling; time sampling.	• Early checkpoint assessment: Late September/Early October 16 mark question on Approaches Book/Folder checks and secondary in-class assessments using a range of exam-style questions.

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				• Questionnaire construction, including use of open and closed questions; design of interviews. • Variables: manipulation and control of variables, including independent, dependent, extraneous	
	Autumn 2	**Teacher A:** Finishing Attachment topic (Paper 1) and beginning Memory topic (Paper 1) Research Methods (Paper 2 – one lesson a fortnight) **Teacher B:** Approaches (Paper 2)	**Teacher A – Attachment:** • Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. Effects of institutionalisation, including the English and Romanian Adoptees project. • The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model. **Teacher A – Memory:** • The multi-store model of memory: sensory register, short-term memory and long-term memory. Features of each store: coding, capacity and duration. • The working memory model: central executive, phonological loop, visuo-spatial sketchpad and episodic buffer. Features of the model: coding and capacity. **Teacher B – Approaches:** • The psychodynamic approach: the role of the unconscious, the structure of personality, that is Id, Ego and Superego, defence mechanisms including repression, denial and displacement, psychosexual stages.	**Scientific processes** • Control: random allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation, standardisation and control groups. • Demand characteristics and investigator effects. • Ethics, including the role of the British Psychological Society's code of ethics; ethical issues in the design and conduct of psychological studies; dealing with ethical issues in research. • The role of peer	• In-class assessments and post-half term checkpoint. Focus on 16 mark questions.

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			• Humanistic Psychology: free will, self-actualisation and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, congruence, the role of conditions of worth. • Comparison of approaches.	review in the scientific process. • The implications of psychological research for the economy. • Reliability across all methods of investigation. Ways of measuring reliability: test-retest and inter-observer; improving reliability. • Types of validity across all methods of investigation: face validity, concurrent validity, ecological validity and temporal validity. Measurement of validity. Improving validity. • Features of science: objectivity and the empirical method; replicability and falsifiability; theory construction and hypothesis testing; paradigms and paradigm shifts. • Reporting psychological investigations.	

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				Sections of a scientific report: abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion and referencing.	
	Spring 1	**Teacher A:** Finish Memory topic (Paper 1) and begin Clinical Psychology and Mental health (Paper 1) Research methods (Paper 2 – One lesson a fortnight) **Teacher B:** Social influence (Paper 1)	**Teacher A – Memory:** • Explanations for forgetting: proactive and retroactive interference and retrieval failure due to absence of cues. • Factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony: leading questions, post-event discussion, and anxiety; the use of the cognitive interview. **Teacher A – Clinical Psychology and Mental Health:** • Definitions in the field of mental health; deviation from ideal mental health, deviation from social/cultural norms, failure to function adequately and statistical infrequency. • The behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of phobias, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). **Teacher B – Social influence:** • Types of conformity: internalisation, and compliance. Explanations for conformity: informational social influence and normative social influence, and variables affecting conformity including group size, unanimity and task difficulty as investigated by Asch. • Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority, and situational variables affecting obedience including proximity and location, as investigated by	**Data handling and Analysis** • Quantitative and qualitative data; the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. • Primary and secondary data, including meta-analysis. • Descriptive statistics: measures of central tendency – mean, median, mode; calculation of mean, median and mode; measures of dispersion; range and standard deviation; calculation of range; calculation of percentages; positive, negative and zero correlations. • Presentation and display of quantitative data: graphs, tables, scattergrams, bar charts, histograms. • Distributions: normal and	• In-class assessments, book and folder checks. Focus on 16 mark questions.

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			Milgram, and uniform. Dispositional explanation for obedience: the Authoritarian Personality.	skewed distributions; characteristics of normal and skewed distributions. • Analysis and interpretation of correlation, including correlation coefficients. • Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval. • Coding in content analysis.	
	Spring 2	**Teacher A:** Finishing Clinical Psychology and Mental health (Paper 1) **Teacher B:** Continue and finish Social influence (Paper 1)	**Teacher A – Clinical Psychology and Mental Health:** • The behavioural approach to explaining and treating phobias: the two-process model, including classical and operant conditioning; systematic desensitisation, including relaxation and use of hierarchy; flooding. • The cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression: Beck's negative triad and Ellis's ABC model; cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), including challenging irrational thoughts. • The biological approach to explaining and treating OCD: genetic and neural explanations; drug therapy. **Teacher B: Social influence** • Explanations of resistance to social influence, including social support and locus of control. • Minority influence including reference to consistency, commitment and flexibility.	**Statistical testing** • Introduction to statistical testing; the sign test. When to use the sign test; calculation of the sign test. • Probability and significance: use of statistical tables and critical values in interpretation of significance; Type I and Type II errors. • Factors affecting the choice of statistical test, including level of measurement and experimental design. When to use the following tests: Spearman's rho, Pearson's r, Wilcoxon, Mann-Whitney, related t-test, unrelated t-test and Chi-Squared test.	• Mid-term examinations A 'Full-paper 1' examination with the full range of exam questions and lengths.

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	Summer 1	**Teachers A and B:** Finishing respective units and moving onto split of Issues and Debates content (Paper 3)	**Teachers A and B:** • Gender and culture in Psychology – universality and bias. Gender bias including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias; cultural bias, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. • Free will and determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism; biological, environmental and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations. • The nature-nurture debate: the relative importance of heredity and environment in determining behaviour; the interactionist approach. • Holism and reductionism: levels of explanation in Psychology. Biological reductionism and environmental (stimulus-response) reductionism. • Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation. • Social sensitivity in psychological research.		• In-class assessments, book and folder checks. Focus on 16 mark questions.
	Summer 2	**Teachers A and B:** Issues and debates content continued and revision for End of year examinations.	**Teachers A and B:** Revision of respective content		• End of year examinations A full length paper covering all content taught over the year – variety of questions and lengths.
Year 13	**Autumn 1**	**Teacher A:** Aggression (Paper 3) Issues and Debates (Paper 3) One lesson a fortnight until finished. **Teacher B:**	**Teacher A – Aggression:** • Neural and hormonal mechanisms in aggression, including the roles of the limbic system, serotonin and testosterone. Genetic factors in aggression, including the MAOA gene. • The ethological explanation of aggression,	Revision of Research methods content and Issues and debates content (One lesson a fortnight)	• In-class assessments. A range of question lengths but focus on timed 16 markers.

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		Biopsychology (Paper 2)	including reference to innate releasing mechanisms and fixed action patterns. Evolutionary explanations of human aggression. • Social psychological explanations of human aggression, including the frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory as applied to human aggression, and de-individuation. **Teacher B – Biopsychology:** • The divisions of the nervous system: central and peripheral (somatic and autonomic). • The structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons. The process of synaptic transmission, including reference to neurotransmitters, excitation and inhibition. • The function of the endocrine system: glands and hormones. • The fight or flight response including the role of adrenaline.		
	Autumn 2	**Teacher A:** Finish Aggression (Paper 3) and begin Gender (Paper 3) Issues and Debates (Paper 3) One lesson a fortnight until finished. **Teacher B:** Finish Biopsychology and begin mocks revision	**Teacher A – Aggression:** • Institutional aggression in the context of prisons: dispositional and situational explanations. • Media influences on aggression, including the effects of computer games. The role of desensitisation, disinhibition and cognitive priming. **Teacher A – Gender:** • The role of chromosomes and hormones (testosterone, oestrogen and oxytocin) in biological sex. Diversity in sex development, including androgen insensitivity syndrome, Klinefelter's syndrome and Turner syndrome.	Revision of Research methods content and Issues and debates content (One lesson a fortnight)	• Mock examinations – All taught content covered. 'Paper 1' 16 mark questions for each of the following units: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Clinical Psychology and Mental health. 'Paper 2' a range of question lengths for topics: Approaches, Biopsychology and Aggression.

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			• Gender identities, including binary, non-binary and gender fluid. How gender has been measured using the Bem Sex Role Inventory. **Teacher B – Biopsychology:** • Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques, including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI); electroencephalogram (EEGs) and event-related potentials (ERPs); post-mortem examinations. • Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation: motor, somatosensory, visual, auditory and language centres; Broca's and Wernicke's areas, split brain research. Plasticity and functional recovery of the brain after trauma.		
	Spring 1	**Teacher A:** Gender (Paper 3) and Issues and Debates (Paper 3) One lesson a fortnight until finished. **Teacher B:** Schizophrenia (Paper 3)	**Teacher A – Gender:** • Biological explanations of gender development, including chromosomes and hormones. • Cognitive explanations of gender development, Kohlberg's theory, gender identity, gender stability and gender constancy; Martin and Halverson's gender schema theory. • Social learning theory as applied to gender development. The influence of culture and media on gender roles. • Gender incongruence: biological and social/cultural explanations. **Teacher B – Schizophrenia:** • Positive symptoms of schizophrenia, including hallucinations and delusions. Negative symptoms of schizophrenia, including speech poverty and avolition. Issues in diagnosis: co-	Revision of Research methods content and Issues and debates content (One lesson a fortnight)	• In-class assessments; range of question lengths. • Specific timed assessment 'mini-paper' on research methods exclusively.

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			morbidity, culture and gender bias and symptom overlap. • Biological explanations for schizophrenia: genetics and neural correlates, including the dopamine hypothesis. • Psychological explanations for schizophrenia: family dysfunction and cognitive explanations, including dysfunctional thought processing.		
	Spring 2	**Teacher A and Teacher B:** Finish off Schizophrenia (Paper 3) Content revision	**Teachers A and B:** Respective content revision and exam preparation **Teacher B – Schizophrenia:** Drug therapy: typical and atypical antipsychotics. Cognitive behaviour therapy and family therapy as used in the treatment of schizophrenia. The importance of an interactionist approach in explaining and treating schizophrenia; the diathesis-stress model.	Revision of Research methods content and Issues and debates content (One lesson a fortnight)	• In-class assessments; a range of question lengths.
	Summer 1	**Teacher A and Teacher B:** Content revision and exam preparation	**Teachers A and B:** Respective content revision and exam preparation	Revision of Research methods content and Issues and debates content (One lesson a fortnight)	• A level papers commence.