

PSYCHOLOGY UNIT CONTEXT SHEET - Biopsychology (Paper 2)



Learning about this topic is important because:

Much behaviour has its origin in biological processes and is linked to the biological approach in psychology. Part of the topic reviews topics covered in GCSE Biology and consolidates the important structures and processes involved including the role of the nervous system, hormones, neurotransmitters, neurons, synaptic transmission and the fight or flight response. You will learn about the different parts of the brain (known as lobes) and whether we take a holistic approach (looking at the brain as a network) or whether we take a reductionist approach (only certain parts of the brain are responsible for specific functions). We also learn how the brain has the ability to rewire itself after a trauma – your brain is a magical machine!

Common misconceptions within this topic:

- There are **TWO** hemispheres and **FOUR** lobes of the brain
- Broca's area is responsible for **speech production**. Wernicke's area is responsible for **language comprehension**.
- **Excitatory neurotransmitters** (e.g. noradrenaline) make the post-synaptic cell **MORE** likely to fire, whereas **inhibitory neurotransmitters** (e.g. GABA) make them **LESS** likely to fire.

We will learn: (specification)	We will develop/practise skills including AO1, AO2 and AO3:
• 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 of flight response including the role of adrenaline. • 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. • Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques, including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI); electroencephalogram (EEGs) and event-related potentials (ERP's); post-mortem examinations.	• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified Paper 2 content • Apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified Paper 2 content in a range of contexts • Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified Paper 2 content • Evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness. • Knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills through the study of the ethical practical research activities • Manage associated risks and use ICT

You will be assessed on this topic using: • Self assessment – eg Uplearn • Peer assessment – eg retrieval practice of key terminology • Targeted questions • Group work • Applying terminology/concepts to stem material • Multi- choice questions • Short answer questions • Essay questions • End of topic assessment • Mock exam	You could learn more about this topic by: • Completing extension tasks from textbook • Access Tutor2U for a variety of resources including topic companion • Read associated articles from BPS research digest (posted on GC) • Access associated TED talks • Access original research papers (abstracts available) from google scholar • Wider reading – psychology section in library inc Psychology Review • Access ‘The Psychologist’ journal in S1` • Access past papers/mark schemes/examiners reports from AQA • Access summary videos on YouTube by Psych Boost/webinars by Tutor2U • Watch related programmes/documentaries • Listen to related podcasts • Share resources with each other on GC • Apply to real life behaviour and debate with peers!
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Key terminology that you will learn – definitions (add other relevant terminology not listed too)

Nervous system	
Central nervous system	
Peripheral nervous system	
Somatic nervous system	
Autonomic nervous system	
Endocrine system	

Gland	
Hormones	
Adrenaline	
Fight of flight response	
Neuron	
Sensory neuron	
Relay neuron	
Motor neuron	
Synaptic transmission	
Neurotransmitters	
Excitation	
Inhibition	
Localisation of brain function	
Visual cortex	
Somatosensory area	
Motor area	
Broca's area	
Wernicke's area	
Hemispheric Lateralisation	

Plasticity	
fMRI	
EEG	
ERP	
Post-Mortem	

PSYCHOLOGY UNIT CONTEXT SHEET – Schizophrenia



Learning about this topic is important because:

This fascinating topic considers the psychopathology of a psychosis – Schizophrenia, a serious mental disorder that affects approximately 1% of the population. Along with problems of classification & diagnosis of this disorder, you will be able to apply the approaches we have looked at together with application of research methods. Each of these different approaches has its own view of the causes and treatments of, as well as how to conduct psychological research into this complex disorder.

Common misconceptions within this topic include:

- Positive symptoms are 'in addition to' / Negative symptoms take away
- When referring to drug therapy in the exam, make this specific to the topic of schizophrenia. Remember, if you can pick up the phrase and place it in any response, it's too generic!

We will learn: (specification) • Positive symptoms of schizophrenia, including hallucinations and delusions. Negative symptoms of schizophrenia, including speech poverty and avolition. Issues in diagnosis: co-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. • 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.	We will develop/practise skills including AO1, AO2 and AO3: • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified content (Research Method questions appear on all three papers) • Apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified content in a range of contexts • The Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified content • Evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness. • Knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills through the study of the ethical practical research activities • Manage associated risks and use ICT
This builds on: Approaches /Research methods/psychology in context/psychopathology/features of science/Issues & Debates.	

You will be assessed on this topic using – Self assessment – eg Uplearn Peer assessment – eg retrieval practice of key terminology Uplearn Targeted questions Group work Applying terminology/concepts to stem material Multi- choice questions Short answer questions Essay questions End of topic assessment Mock exam	You could learn more about this topic by: Completing extension tasks from textbook Access Tutor2U for a variety of resources including topic companion Read associated articles from BPS research digest (posted on GC) Access associated TED talks Access original research papers (abstracts available) from google scholar Critically evaluating research methodology reported in daily broadsheet newspapers Wider reading – psychology section in library inc Psychology Review Access 'The Psychologist' journal in S1` Access past papers/mark schemes/examiners reports from AQA Access summary videos on YouTube by Psych Boost/webinars by Tutor2U Watch related programmes/documentaries Listen to related podcasts Share resources with each other on GC Apply to real life behaviour and debate with peers! Consolidate by using Uplearn
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Specialist terminology that you will learn – complete the definitions (and add other relevant terminology not listed too)

Schizophrenia	
Classification of mental disorder	
Positive symptoms of schizophrenia	
Hallucinations	
Delusions	
Negative symptoms of schizophrenia	
Speech poverty	
Avolition	
Co-morbidity	
Symptom overlap	
Criterion validity	

Genetics	
Dopamine	
Hyperdopaminergia	
Hypodopaminergia	
Neural correlates	
Genome- wide studies	
Antipsychotics	
Typical antipsychotics	
Atypical antipsychotics	
Chemical cosh	
Family dysfunction	
Schizophrenogenic mother	
Double-bind theory	
Expressed emotion	
Cognitive explanations	
Dysfunctional thought processing	
Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)	
Family therapy	
Token economies	
The interactionist approach	
The diathesis- stress model	

PSYCHOLOGY UNIT CONTEXT SHEET – Forensic (Paper 3)



Learning about this topic is important because:

Forensic psychology is a branch of psychology that applies psychological theories and principles to different stages of the criminal justice system, including understanding causes of crime (biological and psychological) and deciding on ways to deal with offenders. In this topic, you will cover the possible causes of crime, and how as a society we deal with crime once it has occurred. We also concentrate on the problem of recidivism (re-offending rates) and how we can provide possible preventative solutions going forward as a society.

Common misconceptions within this topic include:

- The typological approach is American / the data driven approach to offender profiling is British.
- There are only two cognitive distortions named on the specification – minimalisation and hostile attribution bias.

We will learn: (specification) • Offender profiling: the typology approach, including organised and disorganised types; the data-driven approach, including investigative Psychology; geographical profiling. • Biological explanations of offending behaviour: genetics and neural explanations. • Psychological explanations of offending behaviour: Eysenck's theory of the criminal personality; cognitive explanations; level of moral reasoning and cognitive distortions, including hostile attribution bias and minimalisation; differential association theory. • Dealing with offending behaviour: the aims of custodial sentencing and the psychological effects of custodial sentencing. Behaviour modification in custody. Anger management and restorative justice programmes.	We will develop/practise skills including AO1, AO2 and AO3: • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified Paper 3 content. • Apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified Paper 3 content in a range of contexts. • Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified Paper 3 content. • Evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness. • Knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills through the study of the ethical practical research activities. • Manage associated risks and use ICT.
This builds on: Approaches/Research Methods/Attachment/Social Influence/Psychology in context/Real world understanding and application of psychology	

You will be assessed on this topic using – Self assessment – eg Uplearn Peer assessment – eg retrieval practice of key terminology Targeted questions Group work Applying terminology/concepts to stem material Multi- choice questions Short answer questions Essay questions End of topic assessment Mock exam	You could learn more about this topic by: Completing extension tasks from textbook Access Tutor2U for a variety of resources including topic companion Read associated articles from BPS research digest (posted on GC) Access associated TED talks Access original research papers (abstracts available) from google scholar Wider reading – psychology section in library inc Psychology Review Access ‘The Psychologist’ journal in S1` Access past papers/mark schemes/examiners reports from AQA Access summary videos on YouTube by Psych Boost/webinars by Tutor2U Watch related programmes/documentaries Listen to related podcasts Share resources with each other on GC Apply to real life behaviour and debate with peers!
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Key terminology you will learn – definitions (add other relevant terminology not listed too)

Custodial sentencing	
Recidivism	
Anger management	
Restorative Justice	
Token economy	
Warrior Gene	
Pre-frontal cortex	

Genetic explanation	
Neural explanation	
Criminal personality	
Levels of moral reasoning	
Cognitive distortions	
Minimalisation	
Hostile attribution bias	
Differential association theory	
The typological approach	
The data driven approach	
Investigative psychology	
Geographical profiling	
David Canter	
Organised offenders	
Disorganised offenders	

UNIT CONTEXT SHEET Cognition & Development

(Paper 3)



Learning about this topic is important because:

Cognition means thinking and the cognition and development topic in Psychology involves looking at how children's thinking changes (develops) as they mature. Schemas are cognitive frameworks that help us to organise and interpret information. They are developed through experience and can affect our cognitive processing. According to Vygotsky, a child's zone of proximal development is where development takes place: it is the gap between the child's current competence level (what they can already do independently) and their potential development level (what they could do with guidance from someone else). All topics within cognition and development help us understand individual differences within learning and education.

Common misconceptions in this topic include:

- There are several researchers within this topic – do not confuse their names and apply them to different theories!

We will learn:

- Piaget's theory of cognitive development: schemas, assimilation, accommodation, equilibration, stages of intellectual development. Characteristics of these stages, including object permanence, conservation, egocentrism and class inclusion.
- Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development, including the zone of proximal development and scaffolding.
- Baillargeon's explanation of early infant abilities, including knowledge of the physical world; violation of expectation research.
- The development of social cognition: Selman's levels of perspective-taking; theory of mind; the Sally-Anne study. The role of the mirror neuron system in social cognition.

We will develop/practise skills including AO1, AO2 and AO3:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified Paper 3 content
- Apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified Paper 3 content in a range of contexts
- Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified Paper 3 content
- Evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness.
- Knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills through the study of the ethical practical research activities
- Manage associated risks and use ICT

This builds on:

Approaches Yr1/Research methods/Psychology in context/Psychopathology/Social psychology/Biopsychology/Issues & Debates

This leads to: Paper 1 content – Memory, attachment, social influence, psychopathology Paper 2 content – Approaches, research methods, biopsychology Paper 3 content – Issues & Debates inc. -socially sensitive research/idiographic and nomothetic approach/nature vs nurture debate/holism vs reductionism/gender bias/free will vs determinism, schizophrenia & forensic psychology	
Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes: Schemas Object Permeance Zone of Proximal Development Scaffolding Theory of Mind Mirror Neurons Egocentrism Conservation Inclusion	You could learn more about this topic by: Completing extension tasks from textbook UPLEARN Access Tutor2U for a variety of resources including topic companion Read associated articles from BPS research digest (posted on GC) Access associated TED talks Access original research papers (only abstracts available) from google scholar Wider reading – psychology section in library inc Psychology Review Access past papers/mark schemes/examiners reports from AQA Access summary videos on YouTube by Psych Boost Apply to real life behaviour and debate with peers!

PSYCHOLOGY UNIT CONTEXT SHEET – Issues and Debates (Paper 3)



Learning about this topic is important because:

The issues and debates in psychology consider some of the important arguments in relation to conducting research and explaining behaviour. Previously, psychologists would focus on one stance in a debate or research methods as a deterministic point of view. Now, as psychology has progressed, we consider if explaining the human mind and behaviour works best when looking at a variety of explanations and research tools. Issues and debates feature as a topic in the exam on paper 3 but is also useful for effective evaluation throughout all papers.

Common misconceptions within this topic:

- Gender and Culture bias are **ISSUES** within psychology – we acknowledge there is a problem and the need to address it. **DEBATES** discuss the relative contributions of approaches to human behaviour.
- Determinism and Reductionism are different explanations for behaviour. Determinism is the view that free will is an illusion, and that our behaviour is governed by internal or external forces over which we have no control **whereas** reductionism is a philosophical and scientific approach that explains complex systems, behaviours, or phenomena by breaking them down into their simplest, most fundamental parts.

We will learn: (specification)

- 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.
- Ethical implications of research studies and theory, including reference to social sensitivity.

We will develop/practise skills including AO1, AO2 and AO3:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, research studies, research methods and ethical issues in relation to the specified Paper 3 content.
- Apply psychological knowledge and understanding of the specified Paper 3 content in a range of contexts.
- Analyse, interpret and evaluate psychological concepts, theories, research studies and research methods in relation to the specified Paper 3 content.
- Evaluate therapies and treatments including in terms of their appropriateness and effectiveness.
- Knowledge and understanding of research methods, practical research skills and mathematical skills through the study of the ethical practical research activities.
- Manage associated risks and use ICT.

This builds on: Approaches/Social influence/Memory/Attachment/Biopsychology/Forensic/Gender/Schizophrenia/Research Methods/Psychology in context/Real world understanding and application of psychology	
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Key terminology that you will learn – definitions (add other relevant terminology not listed too)

Gender Bias	
Alpha Bias	
Beta Bias	

Culture Bias	
Universality	
Ethnocentrism	
Androcentrism	
Cultural relativism	
Biological determinism	
Environmental determinism	
Causal explanations	
Psychic determinism	
Free will	
Reductionism	
Environmental reductionism	
Psychic reductionism	
Biological reductionism	
Levels of explanation	
Idiographic	
Nomothetic	
Socially sensitive research	
Ethical implications	

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