

GCSE Subject Level Guidance for Psychology

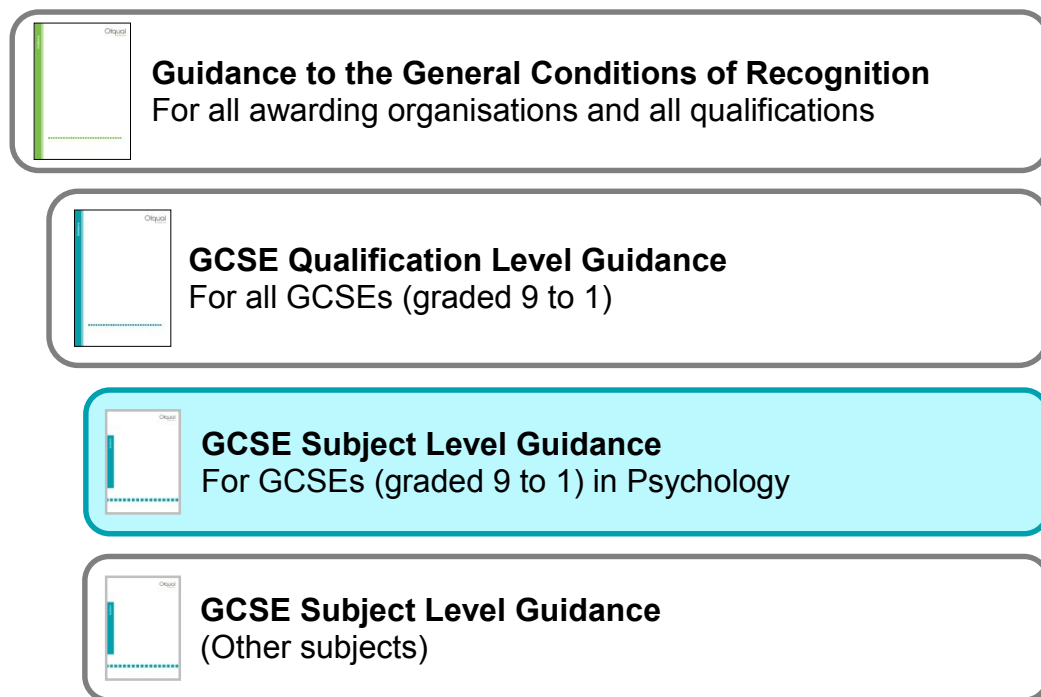
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Introduction

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1).



This document sets out guidance which applies to all GCSE Qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Psychology. It supports the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Psychology*.¹

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act') and Condition GCSE(Psychology)¹.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance, where relevant, in relation to each GCSE Qualification in Psychology that it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition GCSE(Psychology)¹ imposes the same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under that Condition.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-Psychology

An awarding organisation should use the guidance in this document to help it understand how to comply with the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Psychology*.

Guidance set out in this document

This document provides guidance in relation to assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications (graded 9 to 1) in Psychology.

Guidance on assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Psychology

Condition GCSE(Psychology)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Psychology.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Psychology*, and reproduce them in the table below.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures to make judgements and draw conclusions	30%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Psychology)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective that questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCSE(Psychology)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate knowledge of psychological ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments² (but not in every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a to 1d in their assessment strategies. ■ No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation.³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psychological ideas are aspects of the subject content. They include the subject-specific requirements as set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Psychology GCSE subject content’, document reference DFE-00213-2015 (the ‘Content Document’) – for example, concepts, theories and models. ■ Psychological processes and procedures encompasses, but is broader than, knowledge and understanding of research methods.
	1b – Demonstrate knowledge of psychological processes and procedures.		
	1c – Demonstrate understanding of psychological ideas.		
	1d – Demonstrate understanding of psychological processes and procedures.		

² For the purposes of this guidance, a ‘set of assessments’ means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Psychology. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

³ Marks which ‘reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation’ means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a – Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psychological ideas are aspects of subject content. They include the subject-specific requirements as set out in the Content Document – for example, concepts, theories and models. ■ Psychological processes and procedures encompasses, but is broader than, knowledge and understanding of research methods. In the context of this assessment objective, it involves applying such knowledge and understanding to a given context. ■ Learners should be expected to apply their knowledge and understanding to stimulus and source material to provide meaning and explanations in particular contexts. This application should relate principally to developing further material that is covered in the specification by – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ exploring contexts and situations that are not explicitly indicated in the specification; □ making links between types of material which are not explicitly indicated in the specification. ■ Application of knowledge should also involve determining how to make sense of connections and linkages within data, information and detail – although not to the extent of drawing conclusions or making judgements.
	1b - Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological processes and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a and 1b in their assessment strategies. 	

AO3: Analyse and evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures to make judgements and draw conclusions			30%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a – Analyse psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Psychological ideas are aspects of the subject content. They include the subject-specific requirements as set out in the Content Document – for example, concepts, theories and models. ■ Psychological processes and procedures in psychological research encompasses, but is broader than, research methods. In the context of this assessment objective, questions/tasks should take an analytical form such as suggesting the limitations of a particular method. ■ In the context of this assessment objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Analyse means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning; □ Evaluate means appraising and/or ascribing value to information and/or issues. ■ The emphasis here is on the outcome that Learners produce through the analysis and evaluation of information – for instance, the judgement, conclusion or development/refinement of psychological procedures that stems from their reasoning and synthesis of skills. ■ Questions/tasks should address a range of sources here – for example, written, numerical, theoretical, practical, ethical and social.
	1b – Evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements 1a to 1c in their assessment strategies. 	
	1c – Make judgements and draw conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Element 1c should be assessed in combination with one or more of elements 1a and 1b. 	

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