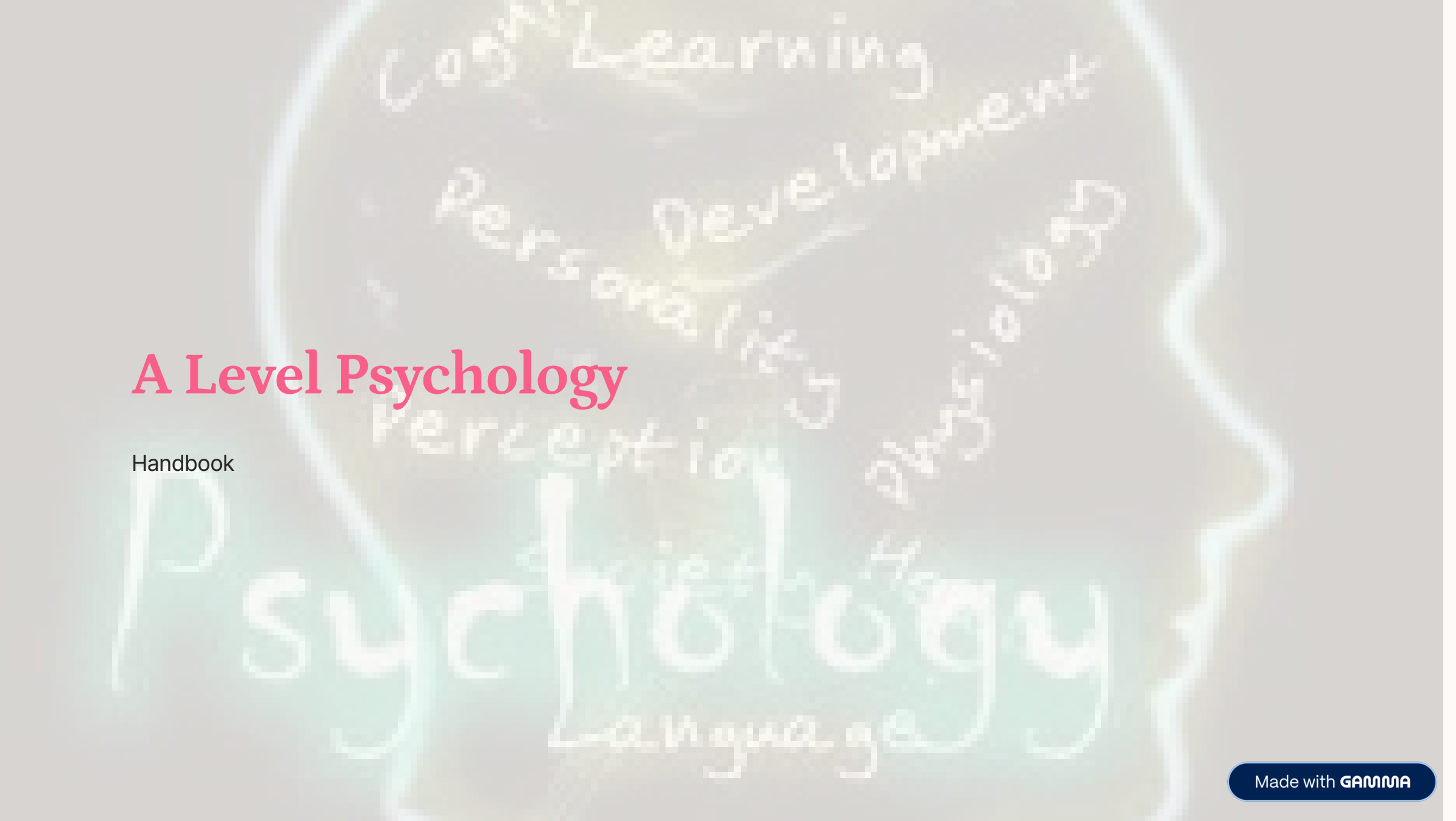




A Level Psychology

Handbook

Why choose to study Psychology?

Psychology provides an insight into human behaviour and the reasons why we act in the way that we do. It enables us to understand what controls our behaviour and how our life experiences can shape our adult personalities. It is a fabulous course for any student who is considering a career that involves working with people as well as providing opportunities to go on to study the course at university and ultimately pursue careers such as counselling, social work, health care careers, psychologists, criminal profiling to name a few!

Whatever your vision, an A level in Psychology is a valuable first step in achieving your ambition.

Entry Requirements

We will review suitability based on GCSE results and summer task completion. Our A level requirements are 5 Grade 5s at GCSE (including English Maths and Science).

The Summer Task must be completed and handed in on sign up day in September 2025. If this hasn't been completed your place on the course will be at risk.

All students will be given a 'suitability' Test before the October half term to ensure that they are progressing and achieving the standards expected at A level. Failing the test could prevent you from continuing the course.

Key teacher contacts:

- Mrs Flaxton jflaxton@torbridge.net
- Miss Foulkes- efoulkes@torbridge.net

What will you study in Year 12 and 13? How & when will you be examined?

A-level Subject content across the two year course

Year 12

- [Social influence](#)
- [Memory](#)
- [Attachment](#)
- [Psychopathology](#)

Paper 1 – 7182/1

Assessed:

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total

33.3% of A-level

Exam in Summer of year 13

- [Approaches in Psychology](#)
- [Biopsychology](#)
- [Research methods](#)

Paper 2 – 7182/2

Assessed:

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total

33.3% of A-level

Exam in Summer of year 13

Year 13

These topics may be subject to some change

1. Issues and debates in Psychology
2. Addiction
3. Schizophrenia
4. Cognition and Development

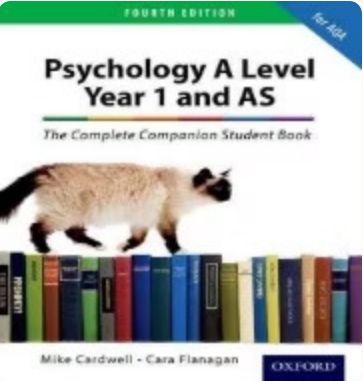
Assessed:

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 96 marks in total
- 33.3% of A-level Exam in Summer of year 13

Useful Resources and revision guides

You will benefit from purchasing a core text book to support you through your Psychology course.

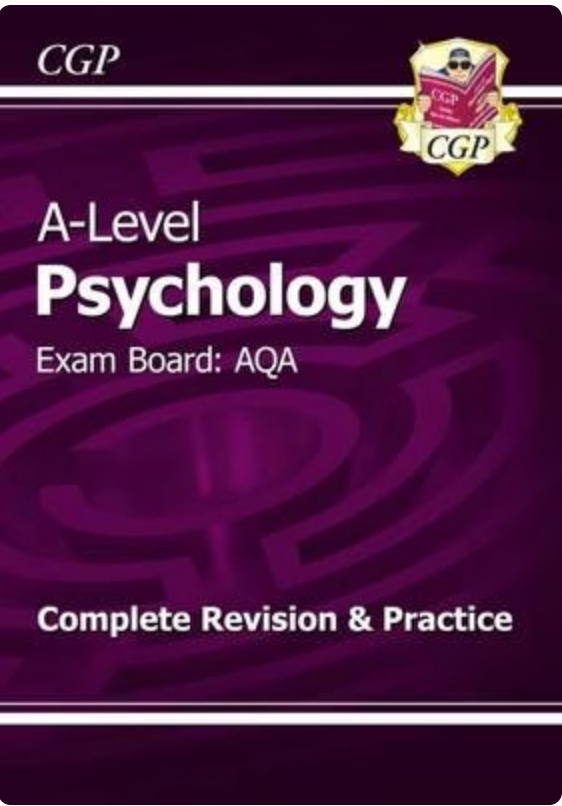
The Complete Companions: AQA Psychology Year 1 and AS Student Book by Mike Cardwell, Cara Flanagan. Oxford University Press. ISBN-13 9780198338642



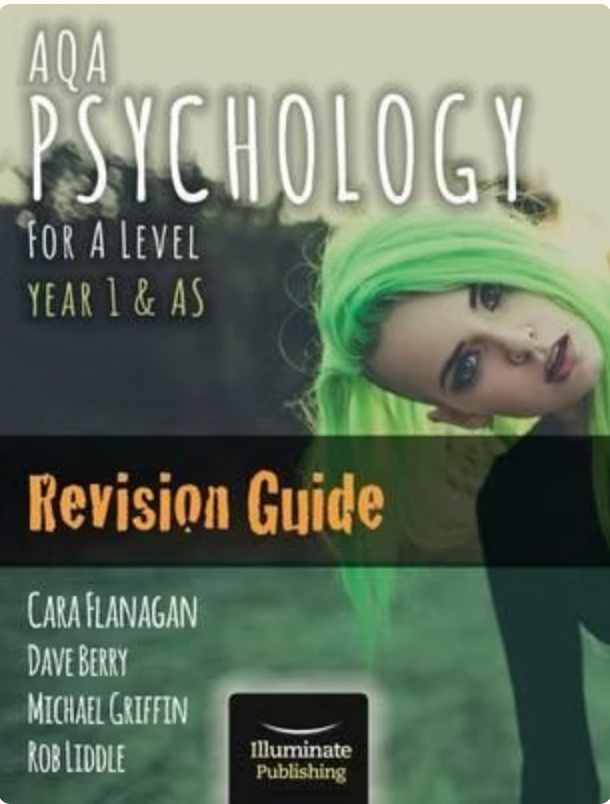
Other useful resources are:

Revision

New A-Level Psychology: AQA Year 1 & 2 Complete Revision & Practice (Paperback). ISBN: 9781782943303

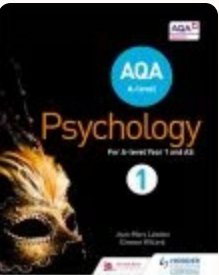


AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS - Revision Guide by Cara Flanagan , Dave Berry , By Michael Griffin , Rob Liddle. ISBN13 9781908682444



Other relevant alternative text books

AQA A-level Psychology Year 1/AS Authors: Jean-Marc Lawton and Eleanor Willard. Publisher: [Hodder Education](#) ISBN: 9781471834882



AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS - Student Book by Cara Flanagan and Dave Berry. ISBN13 9781908682406



Unfortunately, students cannot rely on just using these text books as examiners expect to see a broad range of knowledge, from a range of texts & up to date psychological examples.

Essential Websites and Other Resources

Essential websites to use:

British psychological society	www.bps.org.uk
	http://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/
Revision website for psychology.	http://www.revision-notes.co.uk/IB/Psychology/index.html
Revision website for psychology	http://cranepsych.com/Psych/Index.html
The Guardian	www.guardian.co.uk
The Times	www.thetimes.co.uk

Other Resources – Newspapers & Journals

All psychology students should be reading quality newspapers on a weekly basis to gain up to date knowledge. Listed below is a useful magazine to support students with their studies:

A-Level psychology Review	Philip Allan Updates	Market Place, Deddington, Oxfordshire, OX15 0SE
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Enrichment Opportunities

We have fabulous links with the Psychology, Health Care and Social Work departments at Plymouth University who provide a variety of excellent opportunities for students throughout the course.

Equipment Required for the Course

Organisation is central to success. Please ensure to bring the following equipment to your first lesson:

- Highlighters
- Folder
- Dividers
- A4 Revision Cards (coloured)
- Sticky Notes
- Note Pad for a Glossary / Key terms
- Plastic Wallets

Combine this course with:

Oxford University states that 'Psychology' is a subject with which almost any combination of A level subjects are appropriate. A Level Psychology is regarded in the same light as any other A level subject, and is considered by many universities to be a science A level. Ideally, you will combine psychology with one essay based subject (Sociology, Law, Health and Social Care, Philosophy and Ethics) and one logic based subject (Maths, Biology).

Some ideal background subjects are useful if you wish to pursue Psychology further, for example elements of Biology feature in the Psychology specification at A level and at degree level. There are also elements of Sociology, Philosophy, Health and Social Care and Mathematics throughout the course, so studying any of these subjects together with Psychology would be advantageous.

A Good Course if you would like a career in;

Personnel, Police Force, Health Care Careers, Social Work, Law, Psychologist, Occupational Therapy, Counselling, Psychiatry, Pharmacology, Educational Psychology, Teaching, Occupational Therapy, Probation and many more!

Research Tasks to complete during the Summer & to be prepared ready for the start of the Psychology Course

There are many useful internet websites that can help you.

Make sure that you put the information that you gather into your own words.

1. Researching the approaches in Psychology:

1. What are the key aspects of the cognitive approach in explaining human behaviour?
2. What are the key aspects of the behaviourist approach in explaining human behaviour?
3. What are the key aspects of Social Learning Theory in explaining human behaviour?
4. What are the key aspects of the biological approach in explaining human behaviour?
5. What are the key aspects of the psychodynamic approach in explaining human behaviour?
6. What are the key aspects of the humanistic approach in explaining human behaviour?
7. What are the key aspects of biopsychology in explaining human behaviour?

2. Abnormality

1. What is normal? Try to come up with your own definition
2. What causes schizophrenia? Identify 3 explanations for this mental health problem.
3. How are mental health disorders treated? Explain some of the types of treatment

3. Research methods

1. What is an independent variable?
2. How do you calculate a mean?
3. What is the difference between a bar chart and a histogram?
4. What do the terms reliability and validity mean (in the context of Psychology)?
5. What is a directional hypothesis?

Task 2: Research Methods & Memory research

Loftus & Palmer – Languages & memory research

This task focuses on exposing you to some of the level of detail and report writing covered in academic and research psychology.

Task: You need to read over the journal article/ research articles by Loftus and Palmer. This is a key piece of psychological research that we will study in the topic of memory, but it has important links to research methods. You need to answer the following questions, using the article and your own knowledge of research methods.

1. What is a leading question?

Experiment 1

1. What is the independent variable? (IV – variable that changes)
2. What is the dependent variable? (DV – variable you measure)
3. Describe the procedure/ method of the research. (Include number of participants/ sample size, what did they have to do?)
4. What can you conclude from the research/ results? Use table 1 in your answer
5. Why were the participants only asked one question? E.g. the smashed, bumped, collided, hit or contacted question?

Experiment 2

1. What is the independent variable? (IV – variable that changes)
2. What is the dependent variable? (DV – variable you measure)
3. Describe the procedure/ method of the research. (Include number of participants/ sample size, what did they have to do?)
4. What can you conclude from experiment 2? Use Table 2 in your answer.
5. It is important for Psychologists to be ethical in their research, we have to get the participants full and informed consent to take part, we are not allowed to harm them either physically or emotionally. Furthermore, they cannot be deceived or have information withheld from them, and they must be given the right to leave the experiment at any time"

In both/ either experiments, how might the researchers have covered/ dealt with these ethical issues:

- Informed consent?
 - Protected participants from psychological and/ or physical harm?
 - Deception?
 - Given them to right to withdraw from the research?
1. Write a leading question and a non-leading question for a scenario of your own.
 2. "Psychologists have to consider if their research is relevant to everyday life. We want to make sure that what happens in our studies is as realistic as possible. Consider how the procedures of this research might not be the same as when someone is a witness to a real car accident"
 3. Why might the police or courts need to be aware of this research?

Task 3

Classical Studies in psychology.

Use the www.simplypsychology.org website to read through the following pieces of classic research:

- Pavlov (1902) Classical conditioning- Pavlov's Dogs
- Bandura (1961) Social Learning Theory- Bobo doll study
- Harlow (1958) Attachment- Harlow's monkeys

You will then need to create a study summary, set out in the format below, so that you can review your research when each study is looked at in class. This will be marked according to level of detail, accuracy, correct use of psychological terminology and putting the research into your own words to show understanding.

Cover the following:

- Aims: What was it trying to find out?
- Procedures: What did the researchers actually do?
- Findings: What were the results?
- Conclusions: Do the findings support the original aims of the experiment?
- Evaluation: What were the strengths and weaknesses of the study? Has the study been replicated?