

## Qualification changes: A Level Psychology

What will be assessed in 2022?

Students MUST focus on all of the content below. Any content not included in the list could be in a synoptic question so they will need some knowledge on these areas.

### Paper 1

#### Social Influence

- Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority, and situational variables affecting obedience including proximity and location, as investigated by Milgram, and uniform. Dispositional explanation for obedience: the Authoritarian Personality.
- Explanations of resistance to social influence, including social support and locus of control.
- Minority influence including reference to consistency, commitment and flexibility.

#### 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.
- Improving the accuracy of eyewitness testimony, including the use of the cognitive interview.

#### 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.
- Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. Romanian orphan studies: effects of institutionalisation.
- The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model.

#### Psychopathology

- Definitions of abnormality, including deviation from social norms, failure to function adequately, statistical infrequency and deviation from ideal 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 biological approach to explaining and treating OCD: genetic and neural explanations; drug therapy.

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## **Paper 2**

### **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, modelling, vicarious reinforcement, the role of mediational processes and Bandura's research.
- 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.
- Humanistic Psychology: free will, self-actualisation and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, focus on the self, congruence, the role of conditions of worth. The influence on counselling Psychology.

### **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.
- 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 (ERPs); postmortem examinations.

### **Research Methods**

STUDENTS MUST LEARN ALL OF THE RESEARCH METHODS CONTENT!

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### **Paper 3**

#### **Issues and debates**

- Free will and determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism; biological, environmental and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations.
- Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation.
- Ethical implications of research studies and theory, including reference to social sensitivity.

#### **Gender**

- The role of chromosomes and hormones (testosterone, oestrogen and oxytocin) in sex and gender. Atypical sex chromosome patterns: Klinefelter's syndrome and Turner's syndrome.
- Cognitive explanations of gender development, Kohlberg's theory, gender identity, gender stability and gender constancy; gender schema theory.

#### **Schizophrenia**

- 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. Token economies as used in the management of schizophrenia.
- The importance of an interactionist approach in explaining and treating schizophrenia; the diathesis-stress model.

#### **Addiction**

- Risk factors in the development of addiction, including genetic vulnerability, stress, personality, family influences and peers.
- The application of the following theories of behaviour change to addictive behaviour; the theory of planned behaviour and Prochaska's six-stage model of behaviour change.