

Route map through learning, teaching and assessment

Course: Psychology

Level: Higher

This route map is intended to assist staff in planning and delivering the overall vision for Curriculum for Excellence. It has been developed to signpost the relevant support materials available to assist staff in the planning of learning, teaching and assessment of Higher Psychology.

The vision for the new qualifications is to create assessment opportunities that follow and support learning and teaching. This follows the principles laid out in *Building the Curriculum 5* and makes assessment a natural part of learning and teaching.

Education Scotland has published support materials to help staff develop programmes of learning drawn from three sources: course materials commissioned by Education Scotland, other support materials produced by staff seconded to Education Scotland and course materials provided by staff through their education authorities. Further materials will be added as they become available.

These support materials are not intended to constrain staff, hence they are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. They provide suggestions on approaches to learning and teaching that will promote development of the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills for Higher Psychology. Staff are encouraged to draw on these materials, and existing materials, to develop their own programmes of learning which are appropriate to the needs of learners within their own context.

The link to Education Scotland's support materials can be found below together with a number of other subject-specific links staff may find helpful as they **develop programmes of learning** for Higher Psychology. These links are followed by a sequential list of the key guidelines, advice and support for the Higher Psychology **qualification**. This information is intended to support staff in deciding the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and assess learners.

Useful links for learning and teaching in Higher Psychology

Education Scotland NQ Course Materials site accessed via Glow (login and password required)

A wide range of learning and teaching resources to help staff develop programmes of learning.

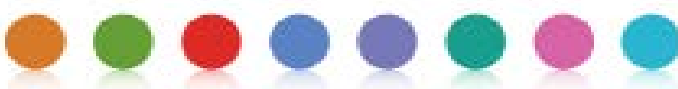
<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/nqcoursematerials/subjects/psychology/coursematerials.asp>

(copy and paste this link into your browser)

Scholar

The popular Scholar website has psychology materials.

<http://scholar.hw.ac.uk/Scotland/>



BBC Science

This BBC website explores psychology topics.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/index_surveys.shtml

Sharing website for psychology teachers (linked to previous website psychexchange)

(this link will take you to a generic page, but if you enter 'psychology' as a search on this page a range of resources will become available – though this will require registration)

www.resourcd.com

Times Educational Supplement materials.

Website including teacher materials (requires registration).

<http://www.tes.co.uk/psychology-secondary-teaching-resources/>

S-Cool

A level revision website, but contains many topic areas which are relevant to the Higher.

<http://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/psychology>

Psychteacher

This is also an A' level revision site but useful Higher topics there too.

<http://www.psychteacher.co.uk/>

Revision sites

<http://www.simplypsychology.org/>

<http://www.virtualpsychology.co.uk/index.php>

Psychology Higher course content

The main SQA psychology page is found at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/66765.html>, with pages specifically related to Higher at <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/47902.html>. Staff should also regularly check the updates and announcements section of this page.

The course specification can be found at

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseSpecification_Higher_HealthandWellbeing_Psychology.pdf

There are three units: Psychology: Research, Psychology: Individual Behaviour and Psychology: Social Behaviour. In these units, which are open and flexible, personalisation and choice is enabled through the ability to make use of a variety of contexts/topics. The mandatory content relates to course assessment and candidates must cover the mandatory course content in preparation for course assessment.

Psychology: Research

Key topics include introduction to the research process, research methods and ethics, factors involved in planning and carrying out psychological research, numerical skills and psychological terminology. Also experimental and non-experimental methods, sampling and measures of central tendency. This unit will develop skills involved in psychological research, as well as numerical skills and an understanding of psychological terminology. The skills focus here is on knowledge and understanding of approaches, theories and research studies, skills in evaluating these, and using them to explain and analyse individual behaviour.

**Psychology: Individual Behaviour**

The mandatory topic is sleep, dreams and disorders. The optional topic is at the discretion of centres and must be studied using two approaches. Suggestions about appropriate optional topics can be found in the course support notes. This unit will develop skills in the ability to use approaches and theories to explain individual behaviour. The skills focus here is on knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and research studies, skills in evaluating these, and using them to explain and analyse individual behaviour

Psychology: Social Behaviour

The mandatory topic is conformity and obedience. The optional topic is at the discretion of centres and suggestions about appropriate optional topics can be found in the course support notes. This unit will develop skills in the ability to use psychological concepts and research evidence to explain social behaviour. Note: within the mandatory topic conformity learners must be able to describe and explain Milgram (1963) and Mori and Arai (2010). The skills focus here is on knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and research studies, skills in evaluating these, and using them to explain and analyse social behaviour.

Further mandatory information on course coverage is found on pages 7 and 8 of the course assessment specification. This breaks each unit down into sections and topics.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_Higher_HealthandWellbeing_Psychology.pdf

More detail on course coverage can be found in the course support notes.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseUnitSupportNotes_Higher_HealthandWellbeing_Psychology.pdf

The following document contains useful information on points of change and areas of stability across National 5 and new CfE Higher.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/H_Psychology_Course_comparison.pdf

Course assessment

At Higher, added value will be assessed in a course assessment, which consists of a question paper and an assignment. The course will be graded A–D.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_CourseAssessSpec_Higher_HealthandWellbeing_Psychology.pdf

Question paper

There will be a question paper of 2 hours, which will be carried out under exam conditions and marked by SQA. It will contain three questions, each worth 20 marks in total. It will test skills, knowledge and understanding.

A specimen question paper and marking scheme is available at:

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/PsychologySQPH.pdf.

Assignment

The assignment for Psychology Higher is worth 40 marks and involves a report of between 2000 and 2500 words excluding appendices. The assignment's purpose is to test learners' use of investigation and communication skills appropriate to psychology and will be marked by SQA. The assignment will be conducted under some supervision and control. The assignment involves planning, carrying out and writing a report of a psychological investigation. This investigation will be chosen from a bank of primary research briefs provided by the SQA.

Assignment general assessment information is available at:

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/GAInfoHigherPsychology.pdf.

Unit assessment

Units are mandatory when taken as part of the Psychology Higher course but they can be taken independently. Unit support notes follow on from the course support notes.

Each individual unit also has a Higher unit specification. Each unit specification gives details of the outcomes and assessment standards.

Psychology: Research

- http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_Psychology_PsychologyResearch.pdf

Psychology: Individual Behaviour

- http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_Psychology_IndividualBehaviour.pdf

Psychology: Social Behaviour

- http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/CfE_Unit_H_Psychology_PsychologySocialBehaviou.pdf

Learners must meet all the outcomes and assessment standards, and staff should read the documentation carefully.

Evidence should be generated during the course of learning and teaching. Assessment evidence can be drawn from a variety of activities and presented in a variety of formats. All of the evidence does not have to be generated from one activity but can be from several tasks and assessments carried out throughout the course. Learners should have access to resources to complete the assessment task and no time restrictions should be imposed. Staff should use their professional judgment when looking at the assessment evidence and ensure that minimum competency is met. They should undertake quality assurance regularly.

Three different ways of gathering evidence have been provided by SQA. One approach is unit-by-unit (Pack 1). Another approach is the combined approach, which links knowledge and understanding from two units together (Pack 3). There is also the portfolio approach. Here evidence is gathered from everyday learning using key classroom tasks (Pack 2). Unit assessment support is kept on the SQA Secure website, access to which is generally controlled by SQA co-ordinators within centres.

Verification

The verification process is meant to be supportive and not onerous.

Internal verification is the process of ensuring standards are applied uniformly and consistently within a centre in line with national standards. External verification is the process of ensuring that national standards are maintained consistently across all centres and carried out by SQA. Evidence required for external verification events can be found at:

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Evidence_required_for_verificationevents.pdf.

Quality assurance information is available at: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58448.html>.

SQA has also produced documentation concerning key messages arising from verification round 1, which gives centres further guidance on issues related to the verification process.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/Psychology_VKM_Round_1.pdf



Prior verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Prior%20Verification%20Centre%20Guidance%20FINAL.pdf

Staff who devise their own assessments can send them to SQA for prior verification, free of charge. This is only necessary where significant changes have been made to the unit assessment provided. It gives departments confidence that their proposed assessment is fit for purpose and meets national standards.

Internal verification

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/InternalVerificationGuideforSQAcentres.pdf

As a matter of course staff should be quality assuring their assessments by carrying out activities that they have used previously. For example, a sample of learners' work should be marked by more than one staff member in a department, and in single-person departments an arrangement should be made with another presenting centre to cross mark.

External verification

In psychology, schools will submit a sample of learner evidence for scrutiny by subject-specialist qualification verifiers. SQA intend that every school will be verified over the first few years. Verification will take place in November, February and May. Twelve samples will be asked for.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Evidence_required_for_verificationevents.pdf

Centres must retain the evidence until 31 July of each academic year.

Results services

http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/FA6669_SQA_Results_Services_A5_8pp_brochure_web.pdf

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/65427.html>

SQA offer two services to replace the appeals service:

- Exceptional Circumstances Consideration Service (details to be provided to SQA within ten days of the learner sitting the external assessment)
- Post-results Service – this consists of either a clerical check and/or a marking review if the centre has concerns about the results of an individual or group.