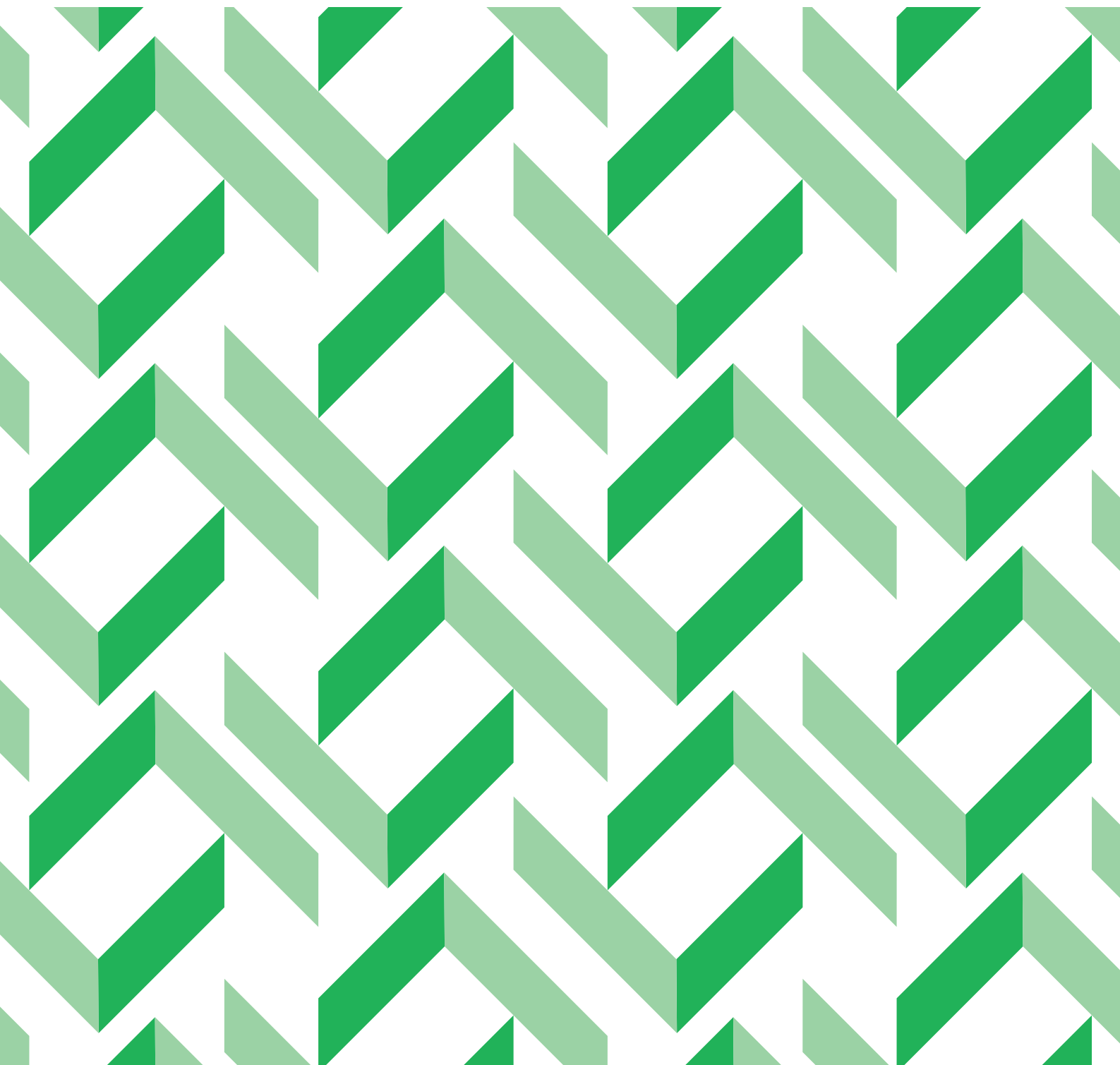




# **GCSE**

## **Specifications for teaching from 2009**

Psychology



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**WJEC GCSE in PSYCHOLOGY**  
**For Teaching from 2009**  
**For Award from 2011**

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## PSYCHOLOGY

### SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT (UNITISED)

<b>Unit 1: Social, Biological and Developmental Psychology</b> <b>Written Paper: 1 hour 30 minutes (50 %)</b> <b>80 Raw Marks 100 UMS</b>
<p>One paper which is targeted at the full range of GCSE grades. Compulsory, short-answer questions based on the three areas identified in the content and on stimulus material at the start of the question. Some of these questions will require extended writing and will assess the quality of written communication.</p>
<b>Unit 2: Cognitive Psychology; Individual Differences; and Ethics and Research Issues in Psychology</b> <b>Written Paper: 1 hour 30 minutes 50 %</b> <b>80 Raw Marks 100 UMS</b>
<p>One paper which is targeted at the full range of GCSE grades. Compulsory, short-answer questions based on the three areas identified in the content, and on stimulus material at the start of the question. Some of these questions will require extended writing and will assess the quality of written communication.</p>

#### AVAILABILITY OF ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION

	Entry Code		June 2010	June 2011 and each year thereafter
	Subject	Option*		
<b>Unit 1</b>	4431	01 or W1	✓	✓
<b>Unit 2</b>	4432	01 or W1		✓
<b>Subject Award</b>	4430	SA or GU		✓

**\* Option Codes**

English Medium 01, Welsh Medium W1 - for units  
 English Medium SA, Welsh Medium GU - for subject award

**Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/4570/2**

# PSYCHOLOGY

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Rationale

This specification provides a basis for the study of Psychology and related subjects, including health and social care, and has been designed to provide a suitable foundation for the study of Psychology or a related area of study at GCE level.

Both assessment units require the candidate to exhibit essential skills developed through Psychology i.e. the ability to identify, understand and evaluate key critical concepts and issues from psychological theory and methodology. Specifically, there is an emphasis on:

- the implications of psychology for society
- explaining, theorising and modelling in psychology
- procedural knowledge of ethical practice in psychology.

Psychology is a subject that by its very nature requires candidates to consider individual, moral, ethical, social, cultural and contemporary issues. The specification provides a framework for explanation of such issues; for example, the applications of Psychology. In addition, candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues in relation to carrying out research.

### 1.2 Aims and Learning Outcomes

This specification will enable students to:

- be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study;
- gain an insight into related sectors, such as science;
- develop a personal interest and enthusiasm for psychology;
- make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices;
- engage in the process of psychological enquiry to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds;
- develop an awareness of why psychology matters;
- acquire knowledge and understanding of how psychology works and its essential role in society;
- develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and social, cultural, scientific and contemporary issues and its impact on everyday life;
- develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology;
- develop an understanding of the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity;
- develop a critical approach to scientific evidence and methods.

### 1.3 Prior Learning and Progression

There is no specific requirement for prior learning with this specification. It builds upon the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired at Key Stages 1-3 in a wide range of subjects. The subjects will include those studied as part of the National Curriculum such as Science, Mathematics and English.

This specification may be followed by any candidate, irrespective of their gender, ethnic, religious or cultural background. This specification is not age specific and, as such, provides opportunities for candidates to extend their life-long learning.

Candidates who follow this specification will have the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills needed to progress to the more demanding AS Psychology.

### 1.4 Equality and Fair Assessment

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria have been reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

In the case of GCSE Psychology no potential barriers were identified in the subject criteria and this qualification has been reviewed to ensure that no additional barriers have been included.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in the Joint Council for Qualifications document *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are eligible for Adjustments in Examinations*. This document is available on the JCQ website ([www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)).

Candidates who are still unable to access a significant part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award. They would be given a grade on the parts of the assessment they have taken and there would be an indication on their certificate that not all of the competences have been addressed. This will be kept under review and may be amended in future.

## 1.5 Classification Codes

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 4850.

Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the institution to which they wish to progress before embarking on their programmes.

# 2

## SPECIFICATION CONTENT

The specification is intended to provide all candidates (regardless of whether they intend to progress to GCE Psychology) with a sound overview of the nature of psychology and psychological enquiry.

Candidates will cover core areas of Psychology through two units:

Unit 1: Social, Biological and Developmental Psychology.

Unit 2: Cognitive Psychology; Individual Differences; and Ethics and Research Issues in Psychology.

The specific content in each unit should be taught in the context of the assessment objectives. The order in which the specification content is presented does not imply a prescribed teaching order.

### **Unit 1: Social, Biological and Developmental Psychology**

Candidates should be able to:

- show knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works in all three core areas.
- apply skills of psychology and how psychology works.
- interpret, evaluate and analyse psychological data and practice.

#### **Topic 1: Biological psychology**

##### **Stress**

- Define stress and give examples of what happens in the body when reacting to a stressor (e.g. adrenalin released, heart rate increased, raised blood pressure).
- Understand ways in which stress can be measured, including Holmes and Rahe's Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) and DeLongis (Daily Hassles measurement).
- Demonstrate knowledge of research into links between stress and illness, including the health issues caused by stress, including Friedman & Rosenman (1959, 1974, 1996).
- Evaluate the research into links between stress and illness.

##### **Sensory Organs**

- Describe the functions of the five basic sense organs
- Understand what is meant by ESP, including being able to define the terms: telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis.
- Evaluate the arguments in favour and against ESP

**Brain**

- Understand the function of the neuron, including being able to label the following on a diagram: axon, dendrite, cell body and synapse.
- Recognise and label a given diagram of the brain to show: cerebrum (frontal lobes, parietal lobes, temporal lobes and occipital lobes), hypothalamus and relevant gland (pituitary).
- Understand functions of the parts of the brain and relevant gland.
- Demonstrate knowledge of studies of brain-damaged individuals, including HM, Phineas Gage and how these have increased understanding of brain function.
- Demonstrate knowledge of techniques used to examine the structures and activity in the conscious brain including positron emission tomography (PET scan), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and event related potentials (ERP).

**Topic 2: Social psychology****Prejudice**

- Define prejudice and stereotyping.
- Define discrimination, including examples of sexism, racism, ageism and homophobia.
- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and findings of research into what causes prejudice, including Elliott (1977) - brown eyes, blue eyes and Steele (1997).
- Advantages and disadvantages of the above research.
- Understand ways of overcoming prejudice.

**Conformity**

- Define and give examples of conformity and social roles.
- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and findings of research into conformity including Sherif (1935) autokinetic effect, and Asch (1951) the line judgement.
- Knowledge of how people conform to social roles including Zimbardo's (1971) prison simulation experiment.
- Apply and evaluate the above research.

**Attraction**

- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and findings of research into the significance of physical attractiveness in relationship formation, including Walster et al (1966).
- Understand the social exchange theory of relationships.
- Understand the three factor theory of love.
- Evaluate the above research and theories.

### **Topic 3: Developmental Psychology**

#### **Learning**

- Social Learning Theory and conditioning including classical and operant.
- Theories including Watson and Rayner (1920) and Skinner (1974).
- Learning styles (audio, visual and kinaesthetic).
- Knowledge of applications of learning styles.
- Advantages and disadvantages of learning styles as a tool in education.

#### **Animal behaviour (comparative psychology)**

- Demonstrate knowledge of procedures and findings into attachment including Lorenz (1935) and Harlow and Harlow (1965).
- Advantages and disadvantages why psychologists study animal behaviour.
- Ethical issues of using animals in research.

#### **Gender development**

- Define sex and gender.
- Biological and behavioural approaches to the acquisition of gender identity, including Diamond & Sigmundson (1997).
- Understand the nature/nurture debate in terms of gender development.

## **Unit 2: Cognitive Psychology; Individual Differences; and Ethics and Research Issues in Psychology**

Candidates should be able to:

- show knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works in all three core areas.
- apply skills of psychology and how psychology works.
- interpret, evaluate and analyse psychological data and practice.

### **Topic 1: Cognitive Psychology**

#### **Memory**

- Understand the importance of Eyewitness Testimony (EWT) in adults, including Loftus and Palmer's (1974) study and in children (Ceci 1993).
- Recall factors affecting EWT and evaluation of the theory.
- Understand schemas and application of how schemas lead to stereotypes.

#### **Perception**

- Understand the function of parts of the eye, including being able to label a diagram of the eye, including iris, pupil, lens, retina, optic nerve and cornea.
- Understand factors affecting visual perception including the application of Gestalt principles and visual illusions.

#### **Cognitive development**

- Recall stages and characteristics of cognitive development proposed by Piaget.
- Understand the Zone of Proximal Development as proposed by Vygotsky.
- Recall the modes of representation/scaffolding as proposed by Bruner.
- Application of the theories of Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky.
- Evaluate the above theories of cognitive development.

### **Topic 2: Individual differences**

#### **Types of mental illness**

- Definitions of statistical infrequency and deviation from social norms.
- Limitations of these definitions.
- Compare symptoms of mental illness including depression (uni-polar and bi-polar), phobias, schizophrenia and ADHD.

#### **Treating mental illness**

Understanding and knowledge of:

- the biological approach to treating mental illness, including chemotherapy, psychosurgery and ECT.
- the behavioural approach to treating mental illness, including systematic desensitisation and implosion/flooding.
- the effectiveness of treatments for mental illness.

### **Topic 3: Ethics and Research Issues in Psychology**

#### **Psychological Methods of Investigation**

- Write a suitable aim and hypothesis for an investigation.
- Identify Independent and Dependent variables.
- Knowledge and understanding of the experimental and non experimental methods of investigation including experiments, observation, surveys, case studies and correlation
- Advantages and disadvantages of each method of investigation.

#### **Design of investigations**

- Knowledge and understanding of sampling techniques including systematic, random, opportunity and volunteer.
- Advantages and disadvantages of each sampling technique.
- Knowledge and understanding of types of experimental design, including repeated measures, independent groups and matched pairs.

#### **Data analysis and presentation**

- Calculate measures of central tendency, including mean, median and mode.
- Create graphical representations from data given, including bar charts and scattergraphs.
- Draw conclusions from bar charts and scattergraphs.

#### **Ethical considerations**

- Knowledge and understanding of ethical issues, as contained in the BPS guidelines, including confidentiality, deception, protection from harm and consent.
- Ways of dealing with these ethical issues.

# 3

## ASSESSMENT

### 3.1 Scheme of Assessment

Assessment for GCSE Psychology is untiered, i.e. both units cater for the full range of ability and allow access to grades A\*-G for the subject award. This is a unitised specification which allows for an element of staged assessment. One unit must be taken at the end of the course, to satisfy the requirement for at least 40% terminal assessment. Unit 1 will be available from the summer 2010 series; Unit 2, and first certification of the subject award, will be available from the summer 2011 series.

The scheme of assessment will consist of two written papers, of equal weighting.

#### Unit 1: Social, Biological and Developmental Psychology

This paper (50%) will be 1½ hours' duration and will consist of short-answer questions based on stimulus material presented at the start of the question. TOTAL: 80 raw marks.

Some questions will require extended writing and will assess the quality of written communication. These questions will be specified on the front of the examination paper which will take the form of a question-and-answer booklet.

#### Unit 2: Cognitive Psychology; Individual Differences; and Ethics and Research Issues

This paper (50%) will be 1½ hours' duration and will consist of short-answer questions based on stimulus material presented at the start of the question. TOTAL: 80 raw marks.

Some questions will require extended writing and will assess the quality of written communication. These questions will be specified on the front of the examination paper which will take the form of a question-and-answer booklet.

<b>Summary</b>		2 x 1½ hour examination	
<b>Unit 1</b>		<b>Unit 2</b>	
Biological		Cognitive	
Social		Individual differences	
Developmental		Ethics and Research methods	

### 3.2 Assessment Objectives

Candidates will be required to demonstrate their ability to:

AO1 recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works;

AO2 apply skills, knowledge and understanding of psychology and how psychology works;

AO3 interpret, evaluate and analyse psychological data and practice.

The weighting of assessment objectives across examination components is as follows ( $\pm 5\%$ ).

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Total Weighting</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3.3 Quality of Written Communication

In both units candidates will be assessed on the quality of their written communication within the overall assessment of that component. Such questions will be specified on the front of the question-and-answer booklet.

Mark schemes for these units include the following specific criteria for the assessment of written communication:

- legibility of text; accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar; clarity of meaning;
- selection of a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and to complexity of subject matter;
- organisation of information clearly and coherently; use of specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**4****AWARDING, REPORTING AND RE-SITTING**

GCSE qualifications are reported on an eight point scale from A\* to G, where A\* is the highest grade. The attainment of pupils who do not succeed in reaching the lowest possible standard to achieve a grade is recorded as U (unclassified) and they do not receive a certificate.

This is a unitised specification which allows for an element of staged assessment. One unit must be taken at the end of the course, to satisfy the requirement for at least 40% terminal assessment. Unit 1 will be available from the summer 2010 series; Unit 2, and first certification of the subject award, will be available from the summer 2011 series.

Results for a unit have a shelf-life limited only by the shelf-life of the specification. A candidate may retake the whole qualification more than once.

Individual unit results are reported on a uniform mark scale (UMS) with the following grade equivalences:

GRADE	MAX.	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Units 1 and 2	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20
Qualification	200	180	160	140	120	100	80	60	40

## **5** **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

### **Grade A**

Candidates recall, select and communicate relevant knowledge to produce substantiated analyses and explanations of a variety of structures, models or processes of psychology, including contemporary contexts.

They show precise understanding of, and apply accurately, appropriate concepts, terms and theories. They analyse links between structures, processes and issues. They recognise and explain appropriate issues or debates, and substantiate these with evidence and reach valid conclusions.

They identify and use appropriate methods, sources, information and data for a particular purpose and justify their selection. They interpret information and data presented in a variety of forms, critically evaluate its relevance in relation to the arguments and reach substantiated conclusions. They use concepts, terminology and conventions accurately and appropriately.

### **Grade C**

Candidates recall, select and communicate knowledge to describe and give a partial analysis of a variety of structures, models or processes of psychology, including contemporary contexts.

They show understanding of, and apply a variety of, concepts, terms and theories. They recognise and describe relevant issues or debates and select appropriate arguments in relation to the issues, theories and evidence. They make straightforward links between structures, processes and issues.

They use a range of methods, sources, information and data to find out about issues or topics and can indicate why they were chosen. They handle and evaluate information and data to make reasonable judgements, and present plausible conclusions that are supported by relevant evidence. They use concepts, terminology and conventions appropriately.

### **Grade F**

Candidates recall and recognise some structures, models or processes outlined in the specification and give a partial description of them.

They show a basic understanding of, and apply in a superficial way, a few concepts, terms and theories. They recognise and describe relevant issues or debates.

They use a limited range of methods, sources, information and data uncritically and in a simple manner to find out about issues or topics. They demonstrate a limited ability to interpret information, make judgements and reach conclusions.

# 6

## THE WIDER CURRICULUM

### Key Skills

Key Skills are integral to the study of GCSE Psychology and may be assessed through the course content and the related scheme of assessment as defined in the specification. The following key skills can be developed through this specification at levels 1 and 2:

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Information and Communication Technology
- Working with Others
- Improving Own Learning and Performance

Mapping of opportunities for the development of these skills against Key Skills evidence requirement is provided in 'Exemplification of Key Skills for Psychology, available on WJEC website.

### Opportunities for use of technology

There are many opportunities to use ICT in this specification.

Candidates may use word processing to complete homework exercises.

Small-scale research projects can be set and the information gathered can then be presented in a number of different ways such as tables, bar graphs and scattergraphs.

A number of useful websites are listed in Teachers' Notes for Guidance and these can be used to gather information.

### Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues

Psychology is a subject that by its nature requires candidates to consider spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. The specification provides a framework for exploration of such issues and includes specific content through which individual courses may address these issues. For example, the effects of stress; awareness of discrimination; the development of gender identity; the effects of different learning styles; and the effectiveness of treatments for mental illness. In addition, candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues in relation to carrying out research.

## **Citizenship**

In this specification candidates will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of individuals in topics such as stress, prejudice, cognitive development and mental illness.

## **Environmental Issues**

Candidates will need to be aware that Psychology as a discipline is constrained by environmental issues that exist in such places as hospitals, industrial organisations and schools.

## **Health and Safety Consideration**

Candidates will need to be aware that research in Psychology is informed and constrained by health and safety issues. The BPS guidelines explicitly discuss these issues.