



National 5
Course
Specification



National 5 Psychology Course Specification (C763 75)

Valid from August 2013

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Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

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Course outline

Course title:	National 5 Psychology
SCQF:	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	C763 75

Mandatory Units

H260 75	Psychology: Research (National 5)	6 SCQF credit points
H261 75	Psychology: Individual Behaviour (National 5)	6 SCQF credit points
H262 75	Psychology: Social Behaviour (National 5)	6 SCQF credit points

Course assessment **6 SCQF credit points**

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Biology Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ Social studies or social sciences Courses at SCQF level 4 or relevant component Units

Progression

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- ◆ Higher Psychology Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ other qualifications in social studies, social sciences or related areas
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting

assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information, please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

Rationale

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities, as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

Learning in Psychology draws on the principles and practice paper for health and wellbeing¹ as well as on learning in the social studies and science curriculum areas.

This Course develops learners' knowledge and understanding of psychological explanations for individual and social behaviour. Psychology provides learners with opportunities to find out some of the ways that thoughts and emotions can affect how we feel and behave. Psychological knowledge of individual and social behaviour can support learners in personal and professional relationships and enable them to understand some of the factors that influence behaviour. Learning in psychology therefore offers a suitable context for finding out about factors that are important to being a confident individual and a successful learner.

There is personalisation and choice in the topics and approaches that learners can select to investigate and explain human behaviour. As learners develop research skills in psychology, they will learn about the ethical implications of research and what this means for them as responsible citizens.²

Explanations for behaviour will promote thinking, reasoning and communication skills. Learners will also develop numeracy skills, which are important to research. These skills will enhance learners' ability to engage in society.

¹ Health and wellbeing principles and practice paper
www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/curriculumareas/healthandwellbeing/principlesandpractice/index.asp

² *Overview of qualifications in the health and wellbeing curriculum area* (BE5544 July 2010) 'Broad aims of learning in health and wellbeing' page 2
www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/42549.2794.html

The Course will enable learners to make more effective contributions to their own learning and to their social interactions. It will also help to prepare them for life and work.

Purpose and aims of the Course

The main purposes of the Course are to enable learners to develop an understanding of the human mind and behaviour and to enhance their interest in psychology.

The Course develops learners' understanding of psychology as the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. Psychology is a research-based subject, and it provides the opportunity for learners to develop an understanding of the research process and how it is used. Learners will use appropriate psychological approaches, concepts, theories and evidence to describe and explain human behaviour.

The aims of the Course are to enable learners to develop:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, approaches and terminology
- ◆ the ability to use thinking skills when explaining and applying knowledge and understanding of psychology
- ◆ awareness of the role of research evidence in explaining human behaviour
- ◆ basic investigation skills to select, organise and interpret information
- ◆ awareness of ethical and scientific standards in psychological research
- ◆ basic communication and numeracy skills in psychology

Learners use appropriate psychological concepts, theories, research methods and evidence to investigate and explain human behaviour in a range of contexts.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

The Course is suitable for all learners with an interest in finding out more about the human mind and behaviour. Learners will probably have little or no prior experience of studying psychology, but an interest in human behaviour and life experience will provide a good foundation for them to progress to this qualification.

Learners should be interested in developing their knowledge and understanding of human behaviour, either to pursue study and career options related to psychology or to broaden their learning experience.

Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

This Course sits within a hierarchical structure, progressing from the National 5 Psychology Course to Higher Psychology.

This Course aims to develop skills that will enable learners to gain an understanding of psychological approaches to explaining the human mind and behaviour.

The central theme of the Course is to enable learners to investigate psychological knowledge and research, which will promote their understanding of individual and social behaviour. Learners will explain concepts, theories and approaches and draw on research evidence to explain human behaviour.

Options within Units offer personalisation and choice of approaches and topics in psychology, psychological research and their applications. Classic and contemporary research studies and themes can provide crossover points with other Units, and opportunities for integration of Units and assessment.

The Units are designed to stand alone or be taught in any sequence.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a number of ways.

Psychology: Research (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to introduce learners to the research process, research methods and ethics used in psychology. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of factors to consider when planning and carrying out psychological research. They will also develop numerical skills and an understanding of psychological terminology.

Psychology: Individual Behaviour (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to use psychology to explain individual behaviour. Learners will investigate topics and learn how these topics can be explained using psychological approaches and theories. Learners will also consider the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches and theories investigated.

Psychology: Social Behaviour (National 5)

The general aim of this Unit is to explain how interaction with others shapes social behaviour. Learners will investigate social psychological topics, and use relevant concepts and research evidence to explain how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are developed through interaction with others and within the social environment. Learners will use psychological knowledge and understanding to explain examples of everyday behaviour.

Conditions of award

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Further information on the assessment of the skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course is given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course is given in this section. This covers:

- ◆ explaining psychological concepts, theories, approaches and terminology
- ◆ using basic investigation skills to select, organise and interpret information in psychology
- ◆ applying knowledge and understanding of psychology to explain human behaviour
- ◆ understanding the basic research process in psychology, including the ability to explain strengths and weaknesses of methods and to describe ethical and scientific standards
- ◆ using research evidence to explain human behaviour
- ◆ interpreting basic descriptive statistics in psychological research
- ◆ using communication skills appropriate to psychology

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course is included in the *Course Assessment Specification*, which provides full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

Unit assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*.

They can be assessed on an individual Unit basis or by using other approaches which combine the assessment for more than one Unit.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

Psychology: Research (National 5)

For this Unit the learner will describe the research process in psychology. This will involve describing the stages of the research process, explaining experimental and non-experimental methods of research and describing ethical guidelines. The learner will explain sampling methods and will identify measures of central tendency from straightforward data.

Psychology: Individual Behaviour (National 5)

For this Unit, the learner will explain topics relating to individual behaviour. This will involve describing a topic and explaining behaviour using selected approaches and their related theories. The learner will also explain the strengths and weaknesses of theoretical approaches when explaining behaviour.

Psychology: Social Behaviour (National 5)

For this Unit, the learner will explain topics relating to human social behaviour. This will involve describing a topic and explaining concepts and research evidence that contributes to understanding behaviour for the topic. Learners will also apply their understanding of social psychology to explain everyday examples of behaviour for the topic.

Course assessment

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)³. In the National 5 Psychology Course and the Higher Psychology Course the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge or application.

³ Jargon Buster can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

In the National 5 Psychology Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ application

The learner will be assessed through a [question paper](#)⁴ and an [assignment](#)⁵

The question paper will sample psychological knowledge and understanding from Course Units. Learners must be able to apply knowledge and understanding to explain human behaviour.

The assignment will require learners to use their skills, knowledge and understanding to investigate a topic in psychology.

⁴ Jargon Buster can be found here: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/58409.html

⁵ See link above for definition.

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and are drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

1.2 Writing

2 Numeracy

2.3 Information handling

3 Health and wellbeing

3.1 Personal Learning

5 Thinking skills

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Administrative information

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History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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