

August 2008

To: SQA Co-ordinator (secondary schools, FE colleges)
Directors of Education
SCIS
Customer Account Managers

**For the attention of all staff responsible for the
delivery of National Qualifications in Psychology**

Action by Recipient
Response required
✓ Note and pass on
Note — update/information only

Contact: Tom Stannage at Glasgow
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Dear Colleague

National Qualifications in Psychology

The contents of this letter should be passed to the member of staff responsible for National Qualifications in Psychology.

Further to the changes introduced to the Course content and external assessment in Psychology in session 2007–2008, and in accordance with SQA's policy of reviewing all qualifications on a regular basis, a Psychology Review Group was set up in October 2007 to consider whether further changes were required. The Review Group has also taken account of feedback from the sector since the inception of the revised Courses in 2005. The changes implemented last session had a very positive effect on results at all levels in the 2008 Diet. In order to sustain this, the Review Group was keen to consolidate these changes and to further amend some of the content at each level.

As was intimated in the subject update letter sent to all centres in February of this year, it is our intention to implement these further changes in August 2009 for first examinations in June 2010. However, we do acknowledge that some centres deliver these Courses over a two year period and that such classes will now be running. To enable teachers and lecturers in this situation to teach to these revisions, enclosed with this letter is the final draft of the changes. You will note that in the main content has been either reduced or 'repackaged'. No changes have been made to the Unit *Psychology: Investigating Behaviour* at any of the levels. It is crucial that all teachers of Psychology look carefully at the proposed amendments and consider whether these will have any impact on how the Course is taught.

We are certain that the proposed revisions are in the best interests of both students and their teachers as well as the subject and are keen to implement them as soon as we can. It is our intention to hold launch seminars in November where full versions of the Arrangements documents, specimen question papers and National Assessment Bank

packs will be available. It is also hoped that these documents will be available on the Psychology page of SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) in advance of the seminars.

I hope that you find the above information useful. If you would like to discuss any matter in more detail, please do not hesitate to telephone me on 0845 213 5502 or e-mail tom.stannage@sqa.org.uk.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Stannage". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Tom Stannage
Qualifications Manager
NQ Social Sciences and Care

Enc.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Higher)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Two of the six core Domains are covered from a choice of three: Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Physiological Psychology; the focus is on individual processes. **Two** topics are studied in depth; **one** specified topic from **each** chosen Domain. Each topic has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary.

1 Domain: Developmental Psychology

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **developmental psychology**: definition of development; types of psychological development (physical-motor, cognitive, emotional, social, etc); traditional emphasis on child development has given way to the contemporary lifespan approach; an area of psychology where a wide range of explanations from different theoretical perspectives are offered.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: early socialisation

- ◆ Nature of attachment and its role in early socialisation; behaviourist and psychoanalytic explanations of attachment; the Bowlby-Ainsworth paradigm; stages and types of attachment; multiple attachments.
- ◆ Deprivation: the nature of separation, deprivation; evidence from studies with animals and humans; long-term implications for adjustment and mental health.
- ◆ Day Care issues: negative and positive aspects.

2 Domain: Cognitive Psychology

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **cognitive psychology**: definition of cognition, the scope of cognitive psychology (ie attention, perception, memory, language, problem-solving, etc.), its place in the historical development of psychology, the current, dominant, information-processing approach.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: memory

- ◆ The nature of memory, including its stages, capacity, duration, encoding.
- ◆ Models of memory, including the multi-store model and working memory.
- ◆ Theories of forgetting, including trace decay, displacement, interference, cue-dependent forgetting.
- ◆ Eyewitness testimony, Loftus and Palmer (1974)

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Higher)

APPENDIX: Content and context (cont)

3 Domain: Physiological Psychology

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **physiological (or biological) psychology**: the role of the brain and nervous system in influencing thoughts, feelings and behaviour, the influence of genetic factors on behaviour, and the origins of adaptive behaviours in the evolutionary development of species; emphasis on 'nature' influences, in the context of the nature/nurture issue; area of psychology most closely related to the natural sciences (biology, chemistry).

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: stress

- ◆ Biological processes in stress, including General Adaptation Syndrome; sympathetic/parasympathetic arousal of the autonomic nervous system, and fight-or-flight syndrome.
- ◆ Origins and sources of stress: transactional nature of stress; environmental sources of stress; individual differences in stress susceptibility.
- ◆ Stress management strategies and their effectiveness: short and long term effects on physical and mental health; physiological techniques; individual coping strategies; social support and time management.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Higher)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Two of the six core Domains are covered: Social Psychology and the Psychology of Individual Differences. The focus is on psychological processes in the context of social interaction. **Two** topics are studied: **one** topic from **each** of the Domains. Each topic will be studied in depth, and has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary.

1 Domain: Social Psychology

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of social psychology: definition of social psychology; scope of the Domain (ie the topic areas covered here, plus group processes, leadership etc; draws on developmental and cognitive approaches; area of psychology that is most closely related to sociology; an approach that has immediate relevance to major societal issues and problems (eg discrimination and relationship breakdown) and numerous applications in these areas, as well as extensive research and applications in organisational behaviour.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: prejudice

- ◆ Nature of prejudice including stereotyping and discrimination; cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects.
- ◆ Theories of prejudice, including authoritarian personality, and social identity theory.
- ◆ Prejudice reduction: education/socialisation, contact and equal status contact, and super-ordinate goals.

Topic: conformity and obedience

- ◆ Nature of conformity: normative and informational social influence; compliance and internalisation; studies of conformity; individual and situational factors in conformity.
- ◆ Nature of obedience: obedience studies; factors in obedience behaviour, including, perceived legitimate authority, socialisation, autonomous and agentic levels of behaviour.
- ◆ Strategies for resisting social pressure/coercion: responsibility for own actions; moral reasoning and awareness of own values; questioning motives of others including advertisers and peer groups.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Higher)

APPENDIX: Content and context (cont)

Topic: social relationships

- ◆ Nature of affiliation and attraction; familiarity; similarity; proximity; matching hypothesis.
- ◆ Learning theory; economic theories; evolutionary/sociobiological theories.
- ◆ Alternative Relationships: same sex relationships, mediated relationships (eg. relationships formed from the internet)

2 Domain: Psychology of Individual Differences

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of the psychology of individual differences: Definitions and examples of individual differences; scope of the Domain; dominance of psychometric approach in the fields of personality and intelligence, and its applications (eg in education and the workplace); contrast between idiographic and nomothetic approaches; the area of psychology within which the study of atypical/abnormal behaviour and psychological disorder is located, and which, therefore, gives rise to wide application in therapy; influence of individual differences in virtually every other area of psychology, eg developmental, physiological, cognitive processes.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: Atypical behaviour

- ◆ Range of definitions of atypical behaviour.
- ◆ Range of approaches to explaining disorders including the medical model, cognitive – behaviourist and one from psychodynamic or humanistic approaches.
- ◆ Therapeutic approaches to depression and eating disorders including medical therapies, cognitive-behavioural therapy, and one from psychodynamic or humanistic approaches.

Topic: intelligence

- ◆ Nature-nurture debate in intelligence: genetic relatedness and IQ, twins and adoption studies; effects of early deprivation and environmental enrichment; interactionist approaches.
- ◆ Nature of intelligence including factor and information processing theories.
- ◆ Uses of IQ testing: educational selection; recruitment in employment and military organisations; effect of cultural biases on validity/reliability of IQ tests.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Intermediate 2)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

This Unit has the same content as *Psychology: Understanding the Individual* (Intermediate 1); however, the Units are differentiated by Outcomes, Performance Criteria and Evidence Requirements. It follows that in a bi-level class, while candidates will cover the same content, those entering at Intermediate 2 level will be expected to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and understanding than those entered at Intermediate 1, and in addition, analytical and evaluative skills are required at Intermediate 2.

Three of the six core Domains are covered within each topic: Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Physiological Psychology; the focus is on understanding individual processes. **Two** topics are studied and each topic has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary. The nature/nurture debate should underpin the teaching of this Unit.

Candidates should be briefly introduced to the three Domains; Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Physiological Psychology.

1. Developmental Psychology;

definition of development; types of psychological development (physical-motor, cognitive, emotional, social, etc); traditional emphasis on child development has given way to the contemporary lifespan approach.

2. Cognitive Psychology;

definition of cognition; the scope of cognitive psychology (ie attention, perception, memory, language, problem-solving, etc); its importance for learning processes eg memory and problem-solving, the current information-processing approach. Both cognitive and behavioural aspects of learning are considered. Themes to be highlighted are the contrast between the behaviourist emphasis on observable behaviour and cognitive emphasis on internal mental processes; 'nature' influences in cognitive-developmental approach, 'nurture' influences in cognitive and behaviourist approaches.

3. Physiological Psychology;

the role of the brain, nervous system and endocrine system in influencing thoughts, feelings and behaviour, the influence of evolutionary and genetic factors on behaviour. Examples of processes studied in physiological psychology, such as emotion, motivation, sleep and dreams, and some forms of Atypical behaviour.

These introductions will not feature in assessments.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Intermediate 2)

APPENDIX ONE: Content and context (cont)

Topic: self-concept

- ◆ The nature and components of the self-concept: self-image, self-esteem, ideal self, self-efficacy, social identification.
- ◆ Development of the components of the self-concept: research studies of self-concept development in early childhood: self recognition, such as rouge test (animal or human); egocentrism, studies demonstrating decentring or adaptation of schema (Piaget).
- ◆ Factors affecting development of the self-concept in adolescence: peers, media, parents (including Coopersmith and Erikson).

Topic: learning theories

- ◆ Classical and Operant conditioning: the work of Pavlov and Watson; classical conditioning process of learning by association, the work of Skinner; process of learning through consequences of actions, ie reinforcement or punishment; the effectiveness of reinforcement and punishment.
- ◆ Social learning theory (SLT): the research studies of Bandura; processes of observational learning, imitation and identification, role of cognition in these processes; SLT as an explanation of aggression and cultural gender roles.
- ◆ Illustrations of reinforcement, punishment and SLT processes from everyday life.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Intermediate 2)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

This Unit has the same content as *Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context* (Intermediate 1); however, the Units are differentiated by Outcomes, Performance Criteria and Evidence Requirements. It follows that in a bi-level class, while candidates will cover the same content, those entering at Intermediate 2 level will be expected to demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and understanding than those entered at Intermediate 1, and in addition, analytical and evaluative skills are required at Intermediate 2.

Two of the six core Domains are covered: Social Psychology and the Psychology of Individual Differences. The focus is on psychological processes in the context of social interaction. **Two** topics are studied: one mandatory topic from Individual Differences, and one other topic from Social Psychology. Each topic has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary.

1. Domain: Individual Differences

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **Individual Differences**: definitions and examples of individual differences; scope of the Domain; dominance of psychometric approach in the field of personality, and its applications (eg in education and the workplace); the area of psychology within which the study of atypical/abnormal behaviour and psychological disorder is located, and which, therefore, gives rise to wide application in therapy; influence of individual differences in virtually every other area of psychology, eg developmental, physiological, cognitive processes.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: personality (mandatory topic)

- ◆ Historical theory of personality: Freud's psychoanalytical approach; development of personality structuring in terms of the id, ego, superego. Psychosexual stages of development should be explained: oral, anal, phallic, latent, genital.
- ◆ Emphasis should be placed on the link between fixation at any stage and personality development, eg oral fixation, anal retention, etc.
- ◆ Multitrait theories of personality: Eysenck; introversion-extroversion and neuroticism-stability. Costa and McCrae the Big 5;(OCEAN) **O**penness, **C**onscientiousness, **E**xtraversion, **A**greeableness, **N**euroticism
- ◆ Types and uses of personality tests: the importance of validity and reliability.

**Full explanations of the different types of reliability and validity are not required. Rather, the focus should be on basic principles, ie the need for a test to be consistent in its results, and to measure what it is claimed to measure.*

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Intermediate 2)

APPENDIX: Content and context (cont)

2. Domain: Social Psychology (one topic to be studied from a choice of three)

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **Social Psychology**: social psychology deals with the impact of the social environment on individual experience and behaviour; social psychology addresses processes of interpersonal and intergroup perception, interaction and influence. Many aspects of social psychology have immediate relevance to major societal issues and problems (eg racism, anti-social behaviour, relationship breakdown) and numerous applications in these areas, as well as extensive research and applications in organisational behaviour.

This introduction to the Domain will not feature in assessments.

Topic: group processes

- ◆ Definition of groups; maintenance of group norms through conformity; factors affecting group cohesiveness; characteristics of formal and informal groups.
- ◆ Group developmental processes: Tuckman's five stages; forming; storming; norming; performing; and adjourning.
- ◆ Factors in group decision-making; evidence of group polarisation (Stoner, 1961) and groupthink (Janus, 1932).

Topic: non-verbal communication (NVC)

- ◆ Types of NVC — facial expressions, posture, gesture, paralanguage, proximity, etc; differences between verbal and non-verbal communication; functions of NVC, eg to aid speech, to replace speech (gestures), to signal attitudes (size of pupils), to signal emotional states (Hess).
- ◆ Nature and nurture factors in the origins and development of NVC: evidence of innate factors in universal facial expressions of emotion (Ekman).
- ◆ Awareness of cultural differences, including gender differences in NVC.

Topic: altruism

- ◆ Definition of altruism; research studies into bystander behaviour in emergencies to include Latane & Darley's studies on Bystander Apathy; diffusion of responsibility and pluralistic ignorance; victim characteristics should refer to Piliavin's 'Good Samaritan' study
- ◆ Theories of altruistic behaviour: biological approach with emphasis on kinship selection; psychological theories, including cost-reward analysis and empathy-altruism
- ◆ Strategies for encouraging altruism, eg reinforcement and modelling.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Intermediate 1)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards, and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

This Unit has the same content as *Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Intermediate 2)*; however, the Units are differentiated by Outcomes, Performance Criteria and Evidence Requirements. It follows that in a bi-level class, while candidates will cover the same content, Intermediate 1 candidates will not be expected to master it to the same depth of knowledge and understanding as Intermediate 2 candidates. Analytical and evaluative skills are **not** required at Intermediate 1 level.

Three of the six core Domains are covered within each topic: Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Physiological Psychology; the focus is on understanding individual processes. **Two** topics are studied and each topic has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary. The nature/nurture debate should underpin the teaching of this Unit.

Candidates should be briefly introduced to the three Domains; Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology and Physiological Psychology. **These introductions will not feature in assessments.**

1. Developmental Psychology;

- ◆ definition of development; types of psychological development (physical-motor, cognitive, emotional, social, etc); traditional emphasis on child development has given way to the contemporary lifespan approach.

2. Cognitive Psychology;

- ◆ definition of cognition; the scope of cognitive psychology (ie attention, perception, memory, language, problem-solving, etc); its importance for learning processes, eg memory and problem-solving, the current information-processing approach. Both cognitive and behavioural aspects of learning are considered. Themes to be highlighted are: the contrast between the behaviourist emphasis on observable behaviour and cognitive emphasis on internal mental processes; ‘nature’ influences in cognitive-developmental approach, ‘nurture’ influences in cognitive and behaviourist approaches.

3. Physiological Psychology;

- ◆ the role of the brain, nervous system and endocrine system in influencing thoughts, feelings and behaviour, the influence of evolutionary and genetic factors on behaviour. Examples of processes studied in physiological psychology, such as emotion, motivation, sleep and dreams, and some forms of Atypical behaviour.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: Understanding the Individual (Intermediate 1)

APPENDIX ONE: Content and context

Topic: self-concept

- ◆ The nature and components of the self-concept: self-image, self-esteem, ideal self, self-efficacy, social identification.
- ◆ Development of the components of the self-concept: research studies of self-concept development in early childhood: self recognition, such as rouge test (animal or human); egocentrism, studies demonstrating decentring or adaptation of schema (Piaget).
- ◆ Factors affecting development of the self-concept in adolescence: peers, media, parents (including Coopersmith and Erikson).

Topic: learning theories

- ◆ Classical and Operant conditioning: the work of Pavlov and Watson; classical conditioning process of learning by association, the work of Skinner; process of learning through consequences of actions, ie reinforcement or punishment; the effectiveness of reinforcement and punishment.
- ◆ Social learning theory (SLT): the research studies of Bandura; processes of observational learning, imitation and identification, role of cognition in these processes; SLT as an explanation of aggression and cultural gender roles.
- ◆ Illustrations of reinforcement, punishment and SLT processes from everyday life.

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Intermediate 1)

APPENDIX: Content and context

This Appendix is within the statement of standards, and demonstrates the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

This Unit has the same content as *Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Intermediate 2)*; however, the Units are differentiated by Outcomes, Performance Criteria and Evidence Requirements. It follows that in a bi-level class, while candidates will cover the same content, Intermediate 1 candidates will not be expected to master it to the same depth of knowledge and understanding as Intermediate 2 candidates. Analytical and evaluative skills are **not** required at Intermediate 1 level.

Two of the six core Domains are covered: Social Psychology and the Psychology of Individual Differences. The focus is on psychological processes in the context of social interaction. **Two** topics are studied: one mandatory topic from Individual Differences, and **one** other topic from Social Psychology. Each topic has several specified areas, at least one of which is an applied aspect of the topic. All areas of each topic include theory, concepts, and research evidence. The amount of content in each area of the topic will vary.

1. Domain: Individual Differences

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of individual differences: definitions and examples of individual differences; scope of the Domain; dominance of psychometric approach in the fields of Personality and intelligence, and its applications (eg in education and the workplace); the area of Psychology within which the study of atypical/abnormal behaviour and psychological disorder is located, and which, therefore, gives rise to wide application in therapy; influence of individual differences in virtually every other area of psychology, eg developmental, physiological, cognitive processes. This introduction to the Domain will **not** feature in assessments.

Topic: personality (mandatory topic)

- ◆ Historical theory of personality: Freud's psychoanalytical approach; development of personality structuring in terms of the id, ego, superego. Psychosexual stages of development should be explained; oral, anal, phallic, latent, genital. Emphasis should be placed on the link between **fixation** at any stage and personality development, eg oral fixation, anal retention, etc.
- ◆ Multitrait theories of personality. Eysenck: introversion-extraversion and neuroticism-stability. Costa and McCrae: the Big 5 (OCEAN) **O**penness, **C**onscientiousness, **E**xtraversion, **A**greeableness, **N**euroticism.
- ◆ Types and uses of personality tests: the importance of validity and reliability*.

**Full explanations of the different types of reliability and validity are not required. Rather, the focus should be on basic principles, ie the need for a test to be consistent in its results, and to measure what it is claimed to measure.*

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)

UNIT Psychology: The Individual in the Social Context (Intermediate 1)

APPENDIX: Content and context (cont)

2. Domain: Social Psychology (one topic to be studied from this Domain)

Candidates should be introduced to the Domain of **social psychology**. Social psychology deals with the impact of the social environment on individual experience and behaviour; social psychology addresses processes of interpersonal and intergroup perception, interaction and influence.

- ◆ Many aspects of social psychology have immediate relevance to major societal issues and problems (eg racism, anti-social behaviour, relationship breakdown) and numerous applications in these areas, as well as extensive research and applications in organisational behaviour. This introduction to the Domain will **not** feature in assessments.

Topic: group processes

- ◆ Definition of groups; maintenance of group norms through conformity; factors affecting group cohesiveness; characteristics of formal and informal groups.
- ◆ Group developmental processes: Tuckman's five stages; forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.
- ◆ Factors in group decision-making; evidence of group polarisation (Stoner, 1961) and groupthink (Janus, 1932).

Topic: non-verbal communication (NVC)

- ◆ Types of NVC — facial expressions, posture, gesture, paralanguage, proximity, etc; differences between verbal and non-verbal communication; functions of NVC, eg to aid speech, to replace speech (gestures), to signal attitudes (size of pupils), to signal emotional states (Hess).
- ◆ Nature and nurture factors in the origins and development of NVC: evidence of innate factors in universal facial expressions of emotion (Ekman).
- ◆ Awareness of cultural differences, including gender differences in NVC.

Topic: altruism

- ◆ Definition of altruism. Research studies into bystander behaviour in emergencies to include Latane & Darley's studies on Bystander Apathy; diffusion of responsibility and pluralistic ignorance; victim characteristics should refer to Piliavin's 'Good Samaritan' study.
- ◆ Theories of altruistic behaviour: biological approach with emphasis on kin selection; psychological theories, including cost-reward analysis and empathy-altruism
- ◆ Strategies for encouraging altruism, eg reinforcement and modelling.