

Psychology

The Qualifications Team

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Diet 2018

Course reports

Please read the annual course reports for Psychology. We produce these reports following the exam diet and they provide information on how candidates performed in course assessment for National Qualifications.

The course reports include a summary of areas candidates performed well in and areas candidates found demanding. They also contain advice on preparing future candidates and statistical data relating to grade boundaries. Course reports are available from the [Psychology subject pages](#) of our website.

Coursework

Conditions of assessment for coursework

To ensure fairness for all candidates, it is essential that you apply the specified assessment conditions for coursework. During the 2018 diet, we saw an increase in incidences of potential malpractice, where some centres had not followed the required conditions of assessment.

Please ensure you refer to the following documents when conducting coursework with your candidates. These documents detail the specific conditions of assessment that must be applied for each assessment:

- course specification
- coursework assessment task

You must also refer to our [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#), which provides important information on the time and volume of assessment, the use of resources, and the supervision, control and authentication of assessment — including examples.

Submitting coursework

Please ensure your candidates use the current, published coursework assessment tasks.

Higher

Online resources to help you prepare for Higher assessment

As part of our Understanding Standards programme, we are providing a range of online resources to help you develop your understanding of the standards required in the revised course assessments for Higher. We have tailored this to each subject. Resources may include:

- **Presentations with audio** — a subject-specific presentation with an audio narration, to talk you through the requirements of the Higher assessment.
- **Candidate evidence and commentaries** — examples of candidate assessment evidence with a written commentary, to explain why the evidence has or has not met the required standards for the revised assessment.

You can access these materials via the 'Understanding Standards' tab on the Higher subject page.

Find out more about the Understanding Standards programme at www.sqa.org.uk/understandingstandards.

Units that were previously part of the Higher course

The units that were previously part of the Higher course are now available as freestanding units at SCQF level 6. These units no longer contribute to the Higher course.

We have removed references to Higher courses from the freestanding unit specifications, which are available from the freestanding units web page for each subject. There is a link to the freestanding units page from the 'see also' section on the [Psychology subject landing page](#).

Further information and guidance

Revised Higher documents and assessment support

Course specification

In April 2018, we published a revised course specification which provided detailed information about the Higher course and course assessment, including the conditions of assessment that must be followed. In July 2018 course support notes were added to the course specification as an appendix.

Centres delivering Higher Psychology are reminded that psychological approaches have been removed from the Higher course, as have sleep disorders from the 'sleep and dreams' topic, and strategies for resisting social pressure from the 'conformity and obedience' topic.

The Higher Psychology course specification is available on the [Higher Psychology subject page](#).

Specimen question paper

The question paper for Higher Psychology has increased from 60 to 80 marks. The time allowed for the question paper has also increased and is now 2 hours and 40 minutes. The question paper now has two sections:

- Section 1: individual behaviour (40 marks)
- Section 2: social behaviour (40 marks)

In section 1 there are four questions:

- Question 1 relates to the mandatory topic (sleep and dreams) and must be answered by all candidates.
- Questions 2, 3 and 4 relate to the optional topics for 'individual behaviour' (depression, memory, and stress). Candidates choose one topic to respond to.

In section 2 there are four questions:

- Question 5 relates to the mandatory topic (conformity and obedience) and must be answered by all candidates.
- Questions 6, 7 and 8 relate to the optional topics for 'social behaviour' (prejudice, social relationships, and aggression). Candidates choose one topic to respond to.

Each question in the specimen question paper is worth 20 marks, and each question part can be worth from 2 to 20 marks.

A revised specimen question paper was developed for Higher Psychology and can be found on the [Higher Psychology subject page](#).

Coursework assessment task

The course assessment retains an assignment worth 40 marks. Minor changes have been made in relation to the Higher Psychology assignment, for example, the way in which marks are awarded has changed in both the 'method' and 'results' sections.

A revised coursework assessment task can be found on the [Higher Psychology subject page](#).

Ethics

Although the quantity of ethical breaches in both the National 5 and Higher assignment plans and reports was reduced from the 2016–17 session, there is still an unacceptably high number of plans and reports submitted by candidates which involve procedures that are

unethical with regard to the implementation of British Psychological Society (BPS) guidelines and SQA ethical guidance.

Correspondence has been issued to all centres that deliver National 5 and/or Higher Psychology to make staff aware of these ethical breaches so these can be avoided in future.

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