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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Higher Psychology Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the Course Specification, the Course Assessment Specification and the Unit Specifications for the Units in the Course.
General guidance on the Course

Aims
This Course is designed to introduce learners to psychology as the scientific study of human behaviour. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of psychological explanations for human behaviour and develop research skills used in practical psychological research. Research skills include the skill of research as a review of literature and evidence, and research as a scientific method of enquiry.

The Higher Psychology Course is designed to develop learners’ understanding of the study of human behaviour through the application of psychological topics, concepts, theories and approaches. Learners will develop skills in investigating and evaluating existing evidence and also develop the ability to plan and carry out psychological research.

The Course aims to enable learners to develop:

✦ knowledge and understanding of psychological concepts, theories, approaches and terminology and the ability to use thinking skills when analysing, evaluating and applying knowledge and understanding of psychology
✦ understanding of the role of research evidence in explaining human behaviour
✦ investigation skills to select, organise, interpret and evaluate information
✦ ability to plan and carry out psychological research using appropriate methods and according to ethical and scientific standards
✦ communication and numeracy skills used in psychology

Learners use appropriate psychological concepts, theories, research methods and evidence to investigate and analyse internal and external influences on human behaviour in a range of different contexts.

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

✦ National 5 Psychology Course
✦ National 5 Biology Courses or relevant component Units
✦ Social Studies or Sciences Courses or relevant component Units at SCQF level 5

In addition a level of maturity and independent thought will be required for the Higher Psychology Course and it is recognised that life experience can be a valid preparation. Successful completion of a broad general education would prepare learners to further develop the skills required to investigate psychological approaches to investigating the human mind and social behaviour.
Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experience. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

**Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in the Course**

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the Psychology Course Support Notes.

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Note: teachers and lecturers should refer to the Course Assessment Specification for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course as the Course assessment will be based on this.

The Higher Psychology Course develops skills, knowledge and understanding which have a wide ranging application in learning, life and work contexts. The skills, knowledge and understanding may be developed in each of the Course Units, however greater emphasis will be given to developing some of the above points in particular Units. (See table overleaf.)
Plenty of opportunities within the Unit
Many opportunities within the Unit
Some opportunities within the Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills, knowledge and understanding</th>
<th>Research Unit</th>
<th>Individual Behaviour Unit</th>
<th>Social Behaviour Unit</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyse and evaluate psychological concepts, theories and approaches and evidence</td>
<td>Learners at Higher may be introduced to a range of different approaches before focusing on particular approaches and theories. Approaches that must be considered include the biological and cognitive approaches to explaining human behaviour. Developmental, humanistic, behaviourist or psychodynamic approaches offer interesting alternative explanations for the learner to consider. Approaches may be introduced in a way that provides a historical overview of the development of psychology as a science. Analysis and evaluation should focus on the features of approaches and their strengths and weaknesses. Concepts and terminology may be explained in the context of theoretical approaches where this is possible.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use investigation skills to select, organise, interpret, analyse and evaluate evidence in psychology</td>
<td>Because there is scope for personalisation and choice in this Course, it is possible to select topics of particular interest to the learner or appropriate to the local situation. The learner should initially be guided towards a range of resources and gradually encouraged to source their own resources for discussion. For classroom based activities these may include examples of behaviour from publications, websites, media reports and accounts of observed behaviour. Learners should be given guidance that when selecting evidence to use to explain behaviour the explanations must be supported by valid and reliable research evidence.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply knowledge and understanding of psychology to analyse and explain human behaviour</td>
<td>When explaining human behaviour learners will use their knowledge and understanding of psychology. Analysis involves giving a detailed account of the main features of an approach, concept, topic or issue including the relationship between the features; and identifying and comparing the strengths and weaknesses of the features. Evaluation involves the ability to examine in detail the value, quality and importance of an approach or theory in comparison with another to explain behaviour. Evaluation also includes identifying strengths, weaknesses, similarities and differences to form a conclusion.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Support Notes for Higher Psychology Course
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills, knowledge and understanding</th>
<th>Research Unit</th>
<th>Individual Behaviour Unit</th>
<th>Social Behaviour Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understand the research process, including the ability to evaluate methods and explain ethical and scientific standards</td>
<td>Teachers and lecturers have a key role in guiding learners to work in accordance with ethical and scientific standards. At Higher, learners will develop skills in planning and conducting research. Learning and teaching should reinforce the ethical principles of research as stated in the British Psychological Society guidelines.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use research evidence to explain human behaviour</td>
<td>Learners are supported to draw on classic and contemporary research evidence to explain behaviour.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret descriptive statistics in psychological research</td>
<td>Interpreting descriptive statistics should include learning about mode, median, mean, central tendency and range. Learners will develop skills in interpreting information from a variety of sources including charts and graphs.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use communication skills to present information, including a report on psychological research</td>
<td>Learners can consolidate and improve on communication methods where they are confident and also develop or try out new methods. Information can be presented in a variety of formats, for example summarising and presenting information as an information leaflet, poster or short video clip, or writing a longer piece such as an essay or report to develop the ability to structure and develop a piece of work. Learners will write a Psychological report in the Higher Course assignment. Oral communication skills may be developed through discussion or when presenting findings. Technology may be used to support communication skills.</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Progression from this Course**

This Course or its Units may provide progression to:

- qualifications in psychology, social science, social studies or related areas at SCQF level 7
- further study, training or employment

Other progression pathways are also possible including progression to other qualifications at the same or different levels.

Psychology also has applications in life such as contributing to wellbeing and in work related fields such as health and social welfare, commercial, professional and managerial jobs, marketing teaching and the media.

**Hierarchies**

*Hierarchy* is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

The Higher Psychology Course has been constructed to facilitate a hierarchical arrangement with the National 5 Psychology Course. While Units have the same titles and structures, the level of demand is progressive in the degree of difficulty and complexity from one level to the next.

A differentiated approach may assist teachers/lecturers to plan activities and experiences. Activities covering the Higher Psychology Course could be covered with National 5 learners receiving more teacher support; learners at Higher level should be able to take an active role in their learning.

Differentiation between levels could also be evident via support provided. At National 5 level, there may be a mix of group work/teacher-led sessions plus some individual learning. At Higher level, learners could be given individual tasks and take on more responsibility for their own learning. Learners might provide evidence relating to evaluating and drawing conclusions from learning. Learners working at different levels may benefit from access to differentiated learning materials to allow for independent work while the teacher is teaching/providing support to others within the class.

In Higher Psychology, learners will study topics in greater depth and work with more complex concepts and theories. At SCQF level 6, learners develop their knowledge of the stages of the research process and carry this out to demonstrate their understanding of the process and ethical standards for research.

Psychology deals with complex subject issues. At SCQF level 6, learners are challenged to recognise that there may be numerous and often varied
explanations for behaviour. The Higher Psychology Course offers opportunities to analyse and evaluate theories, approaches and research evidence. Developing skills of analysis and evaluation should be stimulating and satisfying for learners; however, learners will benefit from teacher guidance and support as they explore the complexity of human behaviour. The following table outlines the level.

### Higher Psychology Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychology: Research</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners should be able to evaluate the research process in psychology.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At SCQF level 6 this will involve explaining the stages of the research process, evaluating research and sampling methods and explaining the use of ethical guidelines. Data handling will involve calculating and presenting data using descriptive statistics.

There is scope for personalisation and choice when selecting research topics. Participation in research is expected to form part of the learning and teaching in this Unit. Teachers/lecturers should ensure that any research is carried out with appropriate permission and supervision and in accordance with British Psychological Society guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychology: Social Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners should be able to analyse topics relating to human social behaviour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At SCQF level 6 this will involve explaining concepts or theories associated with a topic and evaluating psychological research evidence that contributes to psychological understanding of the topic. Learners will be able to apply their understanding to explain everyday behaviour.

There is scope for personalisation and choice when selecting topics, approaches and related theories and concepts to explain social behaviour. For those doing the Course assessment, a minimum of two topics must be studied, one of which is **conformity and obedience**. Learners will be able to evaluate research evidence and refer to this when explaining everyday behaviour. The research studies for the topic of conformity and obedience are Mori, K, and Arai, M (2012) and Milgram, S (1963).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychology: Individual Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners should be able to analyse topics relating to individual behaviour.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At SCQF level 6 this will involve explaining a topic for individual behaviour using relevant concepts and theories, evaluating the use of approaches and their related theories and applying psychological knowledge and understanding to support wellbeing.

There is scope for personalisation and choice when selecting topics, approaches and related theories to explain individual behaviour. For those doing the Course assessment, two topics will be studied, one of which is mandatory. The mandatory topic is **sleep, dreams and sleep disorders**. Learners will be able to evaluate at least three different approaches, two of which are mandatory. The mandatory approaches to be applied to the topic of sleep, dreams and sleep disorders are the **biological and cognitive approaches**.

The research study for sleep, dreams and sleep disorders is Dement & Kleitman (1957) and Czeisler *et al.* (1990). See below.


Approaches to learning and teaching

Mode of delivery
There are three Units in the Higher Psychology Course. The level of demand in each Unit corresponds with the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework at level 6.

The three Units in the Course are:
- Psychology: Research (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)
- Psychology: Individual Behaviour (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)
- Psychology: Social Behaviour (Higher) (6 SCQF credit points)

The Course assessment also has a value of 6 SCQF credit points.

The learning and teaching for Units could be approached in a variety of ways. Units may be delivered in any order. They may be delivered sequentially or concurrently. The following diagram illustrates some alternative models to delivering the Units.

The first model introduces the research process at an early stage and enables understanding of the importance of psychological research to be consolidated and applied when moving on to the Individual Behaviour and Social Behaviour Units.

The second model introduces topics in Social Behaviour and then Individual Behaviour. Understanding of topics from social and individual psychology can be used to enable personalisation and choice of contexts for investigating behaviour within the Research Unit.

The third model allows understanding of the research process to be developed concurrently with learning from the other Units. Learning in the Research Unit is extended, offering learners a longer period of time to refine their research skills.
Teaching approaches should support Curriculum for Excellence’s four capacities to enable each learner to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

Psychology readily lends itself to a variety of learning and teaching methods, including candidate-centred problem-solving activities, pair and group discussion, analysis of research scenarios, analysis of real-life applications of theory, experimental demonstrations, questionnaire design, games and quizzes, web-based activities, as well as formal presentation. Stimulus materials such as visual aids and familiar situations may be used to stimulate interest and discussion.

Learners should be gradually encouraged, as far as possible, to be co-creators of their own learning by finding information to discuss in the library, online, in newspapers, magazines and journals and to generally show initiative, wherever appropriate. These resources can be used to stimulate discussion and to provide opportunities for teachers/lecturers to emphasise the importance of using valid and reliable psychological evidence to support explanations.

The integration of theory with practical activities reinforces and applies knowledge, understanding and skills in meaningful contexts. Care should be taken during each learning activity to ensure learners are aware of what they have learned and are encouraged to consider other applications for these skills, knowledge and understanding in learning, life and work.

The benefits of co-operative learning, peer support and peer feedback can be substantial and should be encouraged and can be supported by the use of technology (ICT).

Each of the Units in the Course offers opportunities for personalisation and choice. For learners preparing for Course assessment, there are mandatory topics that must be studied. The mandatory topics offer scope for links to be made with other topics that may be studied within the Unit or with topics in other Units. For example, in the Individual Behaviour Unit, the topic of sleep, dreams and sleep disorders may be linked to an optional topic such as memory or stress. It may also be linked with the mandatory topic of conformity and obedience in the Social Behaviour Unit. Topics selected can also provide a focus for learning and teaching within the research Unit.

Ethical practice is essential in psychology. Some topics may be sensitive for individual candidates, based on stages of development or personal experiences, and discretion should be used. Care should be taken in learning and teaching and sensitivity should be shown, for example, in discussions which may relate to health, relationships or emotions. Teachers and lecturers should be alert to any signs of discomfort or distress. Such concerns are particularly relevant to delivery methods involving classroom research demonstrations, and teachers/lecturers should be familiar with two sources of ethical guidance: the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct, at www.bps.org.uk; and the ATP Guide to Ethics for Teachers and Students of Psychology at Pre-Degree Level at www.theatp.org.

Table 2 provides further detail about the aims of the Higher Psychology Course.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate the learner’s interest in knowing and understanding</td>
<td>Learning in psychology encourages learners to investigate human aspects of behaviour and gain psychological knowledge, understanding and skills. This Course further enables learners to develop the ability to think objectively about human social and individual behaviour. Links between psychological knowledge and understanding and its application will enable learners to develop an understanding of the role of psychology in real-life contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psychological concepts, theories, approaches and terminology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and use thinking skills when analysing, evaluating and</td>
<td>Skills of analysis and evaluation will be developed to enable learners to analyse different approaches to explaining behaviour. Learners will also develop and understand the importance of considering strengths and weaknesses of evidence and explanations of behaviour used in psychology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applying knowledge and understanding of psychology.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop understanding of the role of research evidence in</td>
<td>Learners will develop an understanding of the need to support psychological explanations for human behaviour including using psychological research evidence. Learners will be encouraged to use best available evidence to support their explanations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explaining human behaviour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop investigation skills to select, organise, interpret and</td>
<td>As an evidence based subject, psychology requires the skills of selecting, interpreting and organising appropriate information. Teachers and lecturers can support learners to think through and make decisions about what is the most relevant information to consider for the psychological topic being studied. Learners will be guided towards suitable sources of information as they may not be aware that general interest articles and websites can be biased, inaccurate or incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluate information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the ability to plan and carry out psychological research</td>
<td>Developing responsible attitudes to research is aimed at safeguarding both the learner and others. This Course offers opportunities to plan and conduct research under supervision, in accordance with British Psychological Society standards Code of Ethics and Conduct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>using appropriate methods and according to ethical and scientific</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication and numeracy skills used in psychology.</td>
<td>Supporting the development of communication and numeracy skills through psychology can increase the learner's confidence in their own ability in these important skills. This may include interpreting qualitative and quantitative data. Learners also carry out some calculations that are useful in the study of psychology, for example the calculation of mean, median, mode and standard deviation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The Course Specification lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this Course. These are based on SQA’s Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work and must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course.

**Literacy**

1.2 Writing

**Numeracy**

2.3 Information handling

**Health and wellbeing**

3.1 Personal learning

**Thinking skills**

5.3 Applying

5.4 Analysing and evaluating

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work developed in the Higher are illustrated overleaf.
Approaches to assessment

The publication *Building the Curriculum 5* sets out a framework for assessment which offers guidance on approaches to recognising achievement, profiling and reporting. A shared understanding of Assessment Standards and expectations is essential. Research in assessment suggests that learners learn best, and attainment improves, when learners:

- understand clearly what they are trying to learn, and what is expected of them
- are given feedback about the quality of their work, and what they can do to make it better
- are given advice about how to go about making improvements
- are fully involved in deciding what needs to be done next, and know who can give them help if they need it

(http://scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/09/20105413/54156)

A holistic approach to assessment is recommended where possible. This will enrich the assessment process for the learners, avoid duplication of assessment and provide more time for learning and teaching. Additionally it will allow centres to manage the assessment process more efficiently.

Assessment practice tasks could be used as a valuable learning tool, not only to prepare learners for the mode of assessment required for assessment, but also to reinforce learning and inform remediation of less secure learning. Peer assessment is a good, active example of assessment as well as giving valuable experience of making value judgements.

Whatever the assessment approach used, it is important that the assessment encourages personalisation and choice. Any reporting back method can be done in a manner suitable for the learner — text based, audio/electronic presentation or video evidence. There are many sources of assistive technology software available to ease text-based tasks such as reading.

Assessment should meet the varying needs of all learners. It is important that learners receive regular feedback on their performance.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support or for preparation for Unit assessment, and towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well to confirm attainment in the Course and to provide a grade. The added
value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course rationale.

The Higher Psychology Course assessment has two components: a question paper and an assignment. Teachers and lecturers should refer to the Course Assessment Specification for details of mandatory Course content and assessment arrangements. Information on mandatory content should be shared with learners to enable preparation for Course assessment. Evidence generated through activities could provide opportunities for self-assessment, peer-assessment and teacher/lecturer feedback to give guidance and support improvement.

In this Course, added value will focus on the following:

- **Thinking skills** are important in psychology and learners at this level should develop their ability to analyse and evaluate approaches and theories in some detail and to refer to specific psychological evidence when explaining behaviour.

- The **question paper** will be carried out in controlled conditions within set time limits. Opportunities to practice writing responses to questions within time constraints will enable learners to understand the requirements of assessment.

- For Course assessment, learners are required to carry out their own primary research based on a topic they have studied and produce a psychological research report. SQA will provide Psychology research briefs, which candidates should review to guide them towards selection of a research topic. Detailed information can be obtained in the Course Assessment Specification.

- To prepare for the assignment, learners will require opportunities to understand what is involved in planning, conducting and reporting on a piece of psychological research. This involves being able to write concisely in an approved format and be able to provide references for sources used. The assignment may be introduced at any time during the Course; however, learners should be given time, guidance and support to develop skills, knowledge and understanding required, before compiling assessment evidence.
Teachers and lecturers should work with learners to think about possibilities for small-scale, classroom-based psychological research investigations when studying topics in the *Individual Behaviour* and *Social Behaviour* Units. This will help to make links between Units in the Course and help learners to prepare for Course assessment.

Research carried out as part of learning and teaching should reinforce ethical and scientific standards. The safety of learners and the general public is a fundamental part of ethical research.

**Combining assessment across Units**

Each of the Units in the Higher Psychology Course has a single Outcome with a set of coherent Assessment Standards designed to promote holistic assessment within Units. It would be possible to combine learning, teaching and assessment across Units, without duplicating the requirements of Course assessment.

Potential links between Outcomes and Assessment Standards of Units may be established, which will provide opportunities for learners to develop skills and use knowledge within one activity.

One approach would be to select an overall theme for the delivery of the Course with topics that relate to each of the Units in the Course. For example a theme such as ‘Psychology as Science’ is the idea that psychological knowledge should be acquired through observation in which research is undertaken to test ideas and hypothesis. This theme could be linked to topics in the *Individual Behaviour* and *Social Behaviour* Units whilst drawing on skills and knowledge from the *Research* Unit.

Other themes such as ‘Situational versus Individual explanations for behaviour’ may be of interest to learners.

A single assessment, such as a presentation, portfolio or extended piece of written work, could be developed to enable learners to attain Assessment Standards for all or some of the Units of the Course within this context. This may offer additional coherence to the Course and be most appropriate where learners have a particular career focus or interest.

Care must be taken to ensure that combined assessments provide appropriate evidence for all Outcomes which they claim to assess. Assessors should ensure that combining assessments does not increase the complexity of the assessment task.

The use of technology can play an important role in the design and delivery of the new National Courses by supporting integration and learner personalisation and choice. While it is important not to introduce new, additional ICT skills or knowledge, learners may be using ICT in working towards their assessment.

Learners can use skills developed in their broad general education to support learning in psychology. Developing ICT skills will be important for learners to benefit from a wide range of online resources and to enable them to use ICT in presenting information.
In some circumstances it will be possible for learners to work cooperatively with others to share experiences and information. This may be done using ICT and may be particularly useful in supporting learners to participate in planning and discussion which takes place in the Research Unit.

Communication skills are developed throughout the Course. The ability to follow a standard psychological report writing format will be developed, however learners should have the opportunity to develop other types of writing skills in this Course. For example, learners may develop a blog or use a wiki to contribute to planning and conducting research. Learners may contribute to a discussion forum to analyse a video clip of human behaviour. Learners may develop their ability to select important information and write this in a concise way to compile an academic poster or use electronic media to present information.

It is not necessary for Unit assessment or combined Unit assessments to test the mandatory topics that will be assessed in Course assessment. It is however important that the Outcomes and Assessment Standards are clearly met.

**Conditions of assessment**
When the teacher/lecturer does not have direct evidence that the work is the learner’s own, the teacher/lecturer will need to take steps to confirm that the learner’s evidence was genuinely produced by them.

**Authenticity**
There are a number of techniques and strategies for ensuring that learner’s work presented is their own. For more information, please refer to SQA’s Guide to Assessment.

For guidance on assessment and re-assessment please refer to SQA’s Guide to Assessment, available on SQA’s website.
Equality and inclusion

The following guidance should support assessors to ensure that any issues relating to equality and inclusion for learners undertaking the Psychology Course are addressed:

- Centres must take into account the needs of all learners who undertake the Course.
- There should be no unnecessary barrier for any learner studying this Course or its individual Units.

Centres could involve learners in negotiating the topics they wish to study on the Course. In this way, learners’ prior experience could be acknowledged and issues, such as culture, could be taken into account.

The following are reasonable responses to adapting assessments in Psychology:

- additional time allocation
- scribe or reader
- audio evidence
- assistive technology

Learners undertaking this Course will be required to write psychological reports, work with numerical data, and communicate psychological understanding.

If learners require support to overcome barriers, they may be supported by scribes when writing psychological reports, and/or this could be done electronically. Communication could be written, oral or diagrammatic.

Interpretation of numerical and statistical data/descriptive statistics is crucial to the study of Psychology. Calculators may be used.

The topics and approaches covered in this Course may touch on controversial or sensitive issues. For example, in discussions which may relate to health, relationships or emotions, teachers/lecturers should be alert to any signs of discomfort or distress. It is important that centres encourage an accepting, positive attitude, and strongly discourage the use of language which shows prejudice towards people who suffer from psychological disorders.

The activities and assessment in this Course are flexible. In order to fully support learners with additional support needs, centres should select from among the wide range of options, in order to find learning experiences which best suit the profile of their learners.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these Course Support Notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA’s assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs,
when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA’s website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.
Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA’s website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work
- Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment
- Course Specification
- Design Principles for National Courses
- Guide to Assessment
- Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- SCQF Handbook: User Guide and SCQF level descriptors
- SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
- Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool
- Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers
Appendix 2: Higher Psychology Glossary of terms

This glossary is intended to clarify the meaning of action terms used in the Assessment Standards of the Higher Psychology Course.

Please note that the meaning of terms differs across disciplines and levels. This Glossary is designed for use with Higher Psychology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action terms used in Assessment Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyse:</strong> Examine in detail in order to give a detailed account of the main features of a concept, topic or issue including the relationship between the features; identify and compare strengths and weaknesses of the features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apply:</strong> Make clear and appropriate use of detailed knowledge and understanding in order to make a considered judgement and demonstrate clear understanding of the concept, topic or issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Describe:</strong> A straightforward but clear and detailed account of the main features of the concept, topic or issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate:</strong> Examine in detail in order to judge the value, quality and importance of an item in comparison with another. Identify strengths, weaknesses, similarities and differences and form a conclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explain:</strong> Demonstrate detailed knowledge and understanding of the concept in the response using appropriate psychological terminology. Examples may be helpful to explain points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justify:</strong> Give a reasoned and clear account, supported by evidence, of why a particular choice was made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Ethical practice in student research — Psychology

The British Psychological Society (BPS) publishes a Code of Ethics and Conduct which can be found at www.bps.org.uk and the Association for the Teaching of Psychology (ATP) has published a Guide to Ethics for Teachers and Students of Psychology at Pre-Degree Level, which can be found at www.theatp.org/

These guidelines are designed to ensure ethical research in psychology. When a student undertakes research, the teacher, lecturer or supervisor takes responsibility for ensuring the ethical nature of the student research.

This paper gives brief guidance for teachers on ethical practice in psychology and suggestions for supervising learners. More in depth information can be found on the British Psychological Society's website.

Notes for teachers and lecturers

♦ Teachers and lecturers are required to supervise student’s work and make certain that it does not contravene the ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Society (BPS).
♦ The wellbeing of both students and research participants must be protected at all times.

No participant under the age of 16 should be used in the Course assessment, Research Investigation.
Brief outline of BPS ethical guidelines

Consent: Participants should give informed consent to take part in any study. If possible participants should be informed about the objectives of the research. If giving this information would have an impact on the study (through demand characteristics) then the participant should be advised of the objectives of the study at the earliest opportunity and additional safeguards should be put in place to maintain the participant’s welfare and dignity.

Informing participants means that the participants must know:

♦ the aim of the project
♦ the type of data being collected
♦ the method
♦ time commitment expected
♦ the right to decline or withdraw at any point
♦ opportunity to see final report and results

Deception: Participants should not be deceived. If any information is kept from the participant in order to avoid demand characteristics in the research, they should be given this information at the earliest opportunity.

Withdrawal: Participants should be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. This includes the participant being able to withdraw their data after the research has been completed.

Protection: Participants have the right to be safe and free from physical and mental harm and thus should not be endangered or harmed in any way, including psychological harm such as stress, self-doubt, embarrassment, humiliation or avoidable anxiety during the course of the research. The risk of harm should be no greater than encountered in their normal daily lives. Researchers should respect individual, cultural and role differences. Sensitive topics, e.g., illegal activities, violence, sexual behavior, abuse must be avoided.

Confidentiality: All information about participants obtained during the course of the research is strictly confidential unless written permission is obtained from the participant in advance and with their full understanding. The use of any information obtained must comply with the Data Protection Act. The anonymity of participants should be ensured whenever possible. If this is not possible for any reason, participants should be advised before they agree to participate in the research.

Debriefing: Participants should be provided with full information about the research as soon as possible and the researchers should discuss the participant’s experience of the research to ensure that there are no negative effects.
Suggested guidelines for good practice

♦ Discuss ethics and the need for ethical good practice before work begins. Some good and bad examples can be helpful.
♦ Check research plans before students start work on a project.
♦ Create a checklist for the students’ research plans. This has the added benefit of training learners in proper research protocol.
♦ Review student work regularly.
♦ Encourage discussion of ethical issues in the write up.
Appendix 4: Suggested resources

The following list offers suggestions for resources for use within this Course and will provide useful information and background as well as ideas for activities and topics for discussion.

♦ Association of Teachers of Psychology (ATP) [www.theatp.org](http://www.theatp.org)
♦ Board games: Taboo and Balderdash – available from High Street stores or Amazon.co.uk
♦ British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct: [www.bps.org.uk](http://www.bps.org.uk)
♦ National Assessment Resource (NAR) is now available at [https://www.narscotland.org.uk](https://www.narscotland.org.uk).
♦ Part 2: understanding research Video on Demand (VOD), ‘research in action’ and ‘research methods’ sections covers: introduction to research; research investigation (procedure/sampling/variables/methodology); data collection and analysis; ethics.
♦ Research Investigation Guidelines (SQA) available from SQA’s website: [www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk) enter search: ‘Psychology Research Investigation Guidelines’. Information available from several years gives a variety of research topics to consider
♦ [www.about.com](http://www.about.com) psychology research methods
♦ [www.learner.org/resources/series138.html](http://www.learner.org/resources/series138.html)
♦ [www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level → psychology → research methods](http://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level → psychology → research methods)
♦ [www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org)
♦ [www.uniview.co.uk/acatalog/psychology.html](http://www.uniview.co.uk/acatalog/psychology.html) → various research, DVDs plus video clips available
Administrative information

Published: September 2015 (version 1.2)

History of changes to Course Support Notes

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<td>1.1</td>
<td>Appendix 3: National 5 Psychology Ethical Practice in Student Research updated.</td>
<td>Qualifications Manager</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Page 16 — Role of SQA briefs clarified: ‘SQA will provide Psychology research briefs, which candidates should review to guide them towards selection of a research topic.’</td>
<td>Qualifications Manager</td>
<td>September 2015</td>
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Note: You are advised to check SQA’s website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.
Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Psychology: Individual Behaviour* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- the *Unit Specification*
- the *Course Specification*
- the *Course Assessment Specification*
- the *Course Support Notes*
- appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*. 
General guidance on the Unit

Aims
This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Higher Psychology Course and is also available as a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The Psychology: Individual Behaviour Unit is designed to enable learners to analyse individual behaviour. Learners will investigate topics and learn how these topics can be explained using psychological approaches and theories. Learners will evaluate approaches and theories and apply psychological knowledge to show how an understanding of psychology can be applied.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

1 Analyse topics relating to individual behaviour

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

♦ National 5 Psychology Course or relevant component Units
♦ National 5 Biology Course or relevant component Units
♦ social studies or sciences Courses or relevant component Units at SCQF level 5

A level of maturity and independent thought will be required for the Higher Psychology Course. It is recognised that life experience can be a valid preparation. Successful completion of a broad general education would prepare learners to further develop the skills required to conduct research in psychology.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding
Information about skills, knowledge and understanding for Higher Psychology is given in the Higher Psychology Course Support Notes.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Further information is set out in the Course Assessment Specification.
 Progression from this Unit
This Unit may provide progression to:

- qualifications in psychology, social science, social studies or related areas at SCQF level 7
- further study, training or employment

Psychology also has applications in life such as contributing to wellbeing and in work related fields such as health and social welfare, commercial, professional and managerial jobs, marketing, teaching and the media.

 Approaches to learning and teaching
This Unit is designed to provide flexibility and choice for both the learner and delivering centre. Approaches to learning and teaching should enhance opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential, whether working in a whole-class, small group or supported self-study situation.

It is good practice to use a variety of learning and teaching methods so that learners’ interest and motivation are maintained and individual preferences for different learning styles are promoted. Throughout learning and teaching activities, account should be taken of the prior knowledge that learners may have.

Tasks should be open to allow for personalisation and choice as well as enabling learners to work at a suitable pace with appropriate support. Discussion groups or personal investigation and research are excellent ways of promoting some independence in learning. Learners have the opportunity to study individual behaviour topics in this Unit, with scope for personalisation in the choice of topics.

At this level, secondary sources such as textbooks will be more suitable than original research articles. Many learners will be new to the terminology used in psychology, and should be guided towards suitable sources of information; they may not be aware that general-interest articles and websites are often biased, inaccurate or incomplete. As a general guideline, it should be possible to obtain a full research citation from the sources used.

Learners should be encouraged to contribute to their own learning and to present their work using a range of sources of evidence. There are many possible sources that can be referred to, including: textbooks, published articles and research-based web articles.

Topics selected for individual behaviour studied are a matter of choice; however, learners who are completing this Unit as part of the Higher Psychology Course will need to study:
three psychological approaches; including biological and cognitive approaches and one other approach

one mandatory topic, which is sleep, dreams and sleep disorders

The Course Assessment Specification sets out details of mandatory content and assessment.

Learning and teaching approaches should support Curriculum for Excellence’s four capacities to enable each learner to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.
Suggested learning and teaching activities could include learners:

- mind mapping of prior knowledge of the topic
- holding a group or class debate based on which approach is best at explaining a particular topic
- using Venn diagrams on paper to note down similarities/overlaps and differences between approaches
- undertaking a ‘taboo’ activity where approaches/topics must be explained without using certain key words
- being involved in role-play activities where learners play the role of a major theorist from an approach, and discuss current news issues
- creating a set of cards with approaches and behaviours which learner can pick from, and attempting to explain the behaviour/topic from the approach
- watching videos/documentaries on the origins of the approaches
- completing worksheets with gap-fills on the approaches/topics
- creating visual displays, eg academic posters or 3D displays on one or more approaches, showing the main researchers
- using textbooks or internet to find evidence for/against the approaches
- comparing the relative merits of the approaches in a presentation or essay
- maintaining a sleep and dream diary for discussion and possible linkages with known facts about sleep and dreams

**Mandatory knowledge and understanding**

This Unit develops an understanding of the different approaches to Psychology, two of which should be studied for each topic.

Suitable approaches may include: behaviourist; biological; cognitive; developmental; humanistic or psychodynamic. It may also be appropriate to explain to learners that approaches may complement one another and so a combination of approaches may be used, as in cognitive behaviour therapy. Explanations of approaches should be appropriate to SCQF level 6. **The biological and cognitive approaches are mandatory for the Higher Course.**

For the biological approach, learners need to know:

- key historical research in the approach
- the role of brain areas in behaviour
- factors that affect brain function; eg how chemical stimulants, depressants, or environmental factors such as noise
- example(s) of how the topic being studied with the approach has been used to improve wellbeing

For the cognitive approach, learners need to know:

- key historical research in the approach
- features of the cognitive approach including information processing, schemas and the computer analogy
- the role of thought processes, including irrational thoughts or beliefs
example(s) of how the topic being studied with the approach has been used to improve wellbeing

Other approaches studied in the Unit should include an overview as follows:

- basic principles of the approach
- key historical research in the approach
- terminology associated with the approach
- example(s) of how the approach has been used to improve wellbeing

The mandatory topic, which is **sleep, dreams and sleep disorders** must be studied for Course assessment.

Learning for the topic of sleep and dreams includes:

- explain the topic of sleep, dreams and sleep disorders using the biological approach
  - describe the role of the brain in sleeping, dreaming and disorders; factors that affect brain function in relation to sleep, dreams and disorders, eg chemical stimulants, depressants, or environmental factors such as noise
  - explain ways that understanding of biological approaches and their related theories can be used to enhance wellbeing for sleep, dreams and disorders

- explain the topic of sleep, dreams and disorders using the cognitive approach
  - describe to features of the cognitive approach including information processing, schemas and the computer analogy; the role of thought processes, including irrational thoughts or beliefs
  - explain ways that understanding of cognitive approaches and their related theories can be used to enhance wellbeing for sleep, dreams and disorders.

The mandatory research studies for sleep, dreams and sleep disorders are:

- Dement & Kleitman (1957)
- Czeisler (1990)

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Overview of sleep, dreams and sleep disorders:

Optional topics — a second topic for learning and teaching should be selected by the centre.
When choosing a topic relevant to the Individual Behaviour Unit, teachers/lecturers should check that the topic can meet all of the requirements of the Unit. Therefore, does the topic?

- provide scope for learners to achieve the Unit Outcome, ie ‘analyse aspects of individual behaviour’
- link to one or more psychological approaches
- have a real-world application relevant to wellbeing that is supported by research evidence

Optional topic suggestions:
- Happiness
- fixed/growth mind sets
- memory
- stress
- personality
- psychopathology
- intelligence
- addiction
- creativity
The following diagrams illustrate possible learning for some optional topics.

**Psychopathology**

- Identifying psychopathology
  - Definitions of abnormal
  - Diagnosing disorders using DSM
  - Signs and causes of OCD
  - Other anxiety disorders

- Anxiety disorders
  - Challenging/testing beliefs
  - Exposure treatments eg flooding
  - Homework and diaries

- Forms of therapy
  - Cognitive behavioural therapy
  - Medical therapies
Memory
- The nature of memory
- Organisation in memory
- Forgetting
- Applications of memory
- Encoding, storage and retrieval
- Biological aspects of memory
- The working memory model
- Eyewitness testimony
- Revision strategies
- Mnemonics
- Elaborative rehearsal
- Visual strategies

Stress
- Biological processes in stress
- Cognitive processes in stress
- Stress management
- The fight or flight response
- Effect of stress on physical health
- The transactional model of stress
- Effect of stress on mental health
- Individual differences in stress
- Stress reduction techniques
- Stress inoculation therapy
- Meditation
- Exercise
Research studies used in topics should include a mixture of contemporary and classic research.

Where appropriate links should be found between approaches and topics. Suggested links include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 1: Sleep, dreams and sleep disorders (mandatory)</th>
<th>Topic 2: Stress (optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive approach</td>
<td>Cognitive/behavioural approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological approach</td>
<td>Psychoanalytic approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although topics can be treated as stand-alone; centres are encouraged to highlight connections between the two topics studied, and connections with other parts of the Course. Links between topics will depend on the option topics selected by centres, an example is provided below:

The *Research* Unit may be delivered and assessed alongside this Unit to add relevance and avoid duplication. Learners will apply the knowledge and understanding from the Higher *Research* Unit to analyse the research evidence in the topic areas.
Approaches to assessment

There are a number of ways in which evidence for Unit assessment could be generated. This Unit has one Outcome with a set of coherent Assessment Standards designed to promote holistic assessment.

Approaches to the assessment of Units when they form part of a Course may differ from approach to assessing the same Unit when delivered free standing. Where Units are delivered on a stand-alone basis, teachers or lecturers will have more flexibility to develop approaches to delivering and assessing Units which are not related to Course assessment.

Evidence may be gathered in a variety of forms that best suit the needs of the learner and individual centres. Ideas for generating assessment evidence are recorded/oral responses; academic posters, individual or group presentations, information leaflets; traditional question papers or a portfolio of evidence.

All learners must have evidence that they have individually met the Assessment Standards to gain this Unit.

Example:
A learner may choose to do a presentation which could draw on one or more topics studied, and may include:

- an explanation of topic(s) studied
- explanation of how the two mandatory approaches have been used in the topic(s)
- an explanation of how the topic(s) have been applied in the real world
- reference to research evidence

Alternative assessment approaches include:

- open-book tests, eg providing a stimulus piece with associated questions
- closed-book tests, with questions requiring restricted responses, as preparation for Course assessment

Evidence could be able to be generated and held in a variety of formats that best suits the needs of the learner and centre. Assessors must choose an assessment format which takes into account the needs of all learners and implement the assessment at an appropriate stage in the Unit.

Authenticity
When the teacher/lecturer does not have this direct evidence, he/she will need to take steps to confirm that the learner’s evidence was genuinely produced by them.
There are a number of techniques and strategies for ensuring that learners present work which is their own. For more guidance, please refer to SQA’s Guide to Assessment.

Guidance on assessment and re-assessment is available in SQA’s Guide to Assessment available on SQA’s website.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Further information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit is given in the Higher Psychology Course Support Notes.
Equality and inclusion

The following guidance should support assessors to ensure that any issues relating to equality and inclusion for learners undertaking the Psychology Course are addressed:

- Centres must take into account the needs of all learners who undertake the Course.
- There should be no unnecessary barrier for any learner studying this Course or its individual Units.

Centres could involve learners in negotiating the topics they wish to study on the Course. In this way, learners’ prior experience could be acknowledged and issues, such as culture, could be taken into account.

The following are reasonable responses to adapting assessments in Psychology:

- additional time allocation
- scribe or reader
- audio evidence
- assistive technology

Learners undertaking this Course will be required to write psychological reports, work with numerical data, and communicate psychological understanding.

Where learners require support to overcome barriers, they may be supported by scribes when writing psychological reports, and/or this could be done electronically. Communication could be written, oral or diagrammatic.

Interpretation of numerical and statistical data/descriptive statistics is crucial to the study of Psychology. Calculators may be used.

The topics and approaches covered in this Course may touch on controversial or sensitive issues. For example, in discussions which may relate to health, relationships or emotions, teachers/lecturers should be alert to any signs of discomfort or distress. It is important that centres encourage an accepting, positive attitude, and strongly discourage the use of language which shows prejudice towards people who suffer from psychological disorders.

The activities and assessment in this Course are flexible. In order to fully support learners with additional support needs, centres should select from among the wide range of options, in order to find learning experiences which best suit the profile of their learners.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these Course Support Notes is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA’s assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs,
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♦ Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment
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♦ SCQF Handbook: User Guide and SCQF level descriptors
♦ SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
♦ Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool
♦ Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers
♦ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
♦ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
♦ SQA e-assessment web page
Administrative information

Published: September 2015 (version 1.1)

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

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<td>1.1</td>
<td>Individual Behaviour Unit section updated to reflect Course Assessment Specification — three approaches, not four are required and the Dement &amp; Kleitman and Czeisler studies are the mandatory studies to be used, not the Van der Werf.</td>
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Unit Support Notes — Psychology: Research (Higher)

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

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Psychology: Research* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- the *Unit Specification*
- the *Course Specification*
- the *Course Assessment Specification*
- the *Course Support Notes*
- appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification.*
General guidance on the Unit

Aims
This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Higher Psychology Course and is also available as a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The general aim of this Unit is to enable learners to understand the research process and research methods used in psychology. Learners will apply research skills required to conduct psychological research. Numerical skills used in psychology are also developed.

On completion of this Unit, learners will be able to evaluate the research process in psychology. This will enable learners to plan and carry out a piece of psychological research that is fit for purpose and in accordance with ethical standards.

Progression into this Unit
Numeracy skills are required in this Unit. Entry to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following or by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- National 5 Psychology Course or relevant component Units
- National 5 Biology Course or relevant component Units
- Social studies or sciences Courses or relevant component Units at SCQF level 5

A level of maturity and independent thought will be required for the Higher Psychology Course. It is recognised that life experience can be a valid preparation. Successful completion of a broad general education would prepare learners to further develop the skills required to conduct research in psychology.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding
Information about skills, knowledge and understanding for Higher Psychology is given in the Higher Psychology Course Support Notes.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Further information is set out in the Course Assessment Specification.
Progression from this Unit

This Unit may provide progression to:

♦ qualifications in psychology, social science, social studies or related areas at SCQF level 7
♦ further study, training or employment

Psychology also has applications in life such as contributing to wellbeing and in work related fields such as health and social welfare, commercial, professional and managerial jobs, marketing, teaching and the media.
Approaches to learning and teaching

This Unit is designed to provide flexibility and choice for both the learner and delivering centre. Approaches to learning and teaching should enhance opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential, whether working in a whole-class, small group or supported self-study situation.

It is good practice to use a variety of learning and teaching methods so that learners’ interest and motivation are maintained and individual preferences for different learning styles are promoted. Throughout learning and teaching activities account should be taken of the prior knowledge that learners may have.

Tasks should be open to allow for personalisation and choice as well as enabling learners to work at a suitable pace with appropriate support. The research topic can be taken from the Higher Psychology: Individual Behaviour Unit or the Higher Psychology: Social Behaviour Unit or another appropriate topic can be chosen.

Discussion groups or personal investigation and research are excellent ways of promoting some independence in learning. Learners have the opportunity to study individual behaviour topics in this Unit, with scope for personalisation in the choice of topics.

Teaching approaches should support Curriculum for Excellence’s four capacities to enable each learner to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

Learners will be expected to explain the stages of the research process used in psychology by covering the following points:

1. Choose topic
2. Form hypothesis
3. Design study
4. Collect data
5. Examine data
6. Reach conclusion
7. Review literature
8. Report findings

The research process
In order to evaluate experimental and non-experimental research methods, learners will be expected to explain what is meant by experimental methods, including independent, dependent and extraneous variables; validity and reliability; and to develop their knowledge and understanding about the need for the experimental research method if we want to show cause and effect. Laboratory experiments, field experiments and naturalistic experiments should be explained.

Learners will also develop knowledge and understanding of non-experimental research methods including:

- questionnaires/surveys
- interviews
- observation
- case studies
- correlational studies

Learners could be encouraged to debate the strengths and weaknesses of the research methods to gain a deeper understanding of issues to consider in evaluation of methods.
RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY

Sampling techniques
Different sampling methods and strengths and weaknesses of each

Why is research important in the scientific study of human behaviour?

Qualitative and quantitative data

Describe, analyse and evaluate experimental and non-experimental methods of investigation used in psychology

Advantages and weaknesses
Laboratory
Field
Natural
Experiments
Advantages and weaknesses

Advantages and weaknesses

Questionnaire and survey
Advantages and weaknesses

Interview
Advantages and weaknesses

Observation
Advantages and weaknesses

Case study
Advantages and weaknesses

Identify which research method would be the most appropriate to use in a given research scenario and justify this choice
**Ethics**
Ethical practice is essential in psychology. Some topics may be sensitive for individual candidates, based on stages of development or personal experiences, and discretion should be used. To this end, care should be taken in the delivery of material and sensitivity should be shown. Teachers should be alert to any signs of discomfort or distress. Such concerns are particularly relevant to delivery methods involving classroom research demonstrations.

Teachers should be familiar with current British Psychological Society ethical guidance.

Learners should be introduced to ethical guidelines and be able to discuss what makes a piece of research ethical or unethical, in terms of ethical guidelines. A focus on ethical practice in psychology is to be emphasised in this Unit.

**The research process**
Approaches to teaching and learning can include small-scale or class-based research activities. Learners may collaborate to develop ideas and consider ethical and methodological issues for research proposals. A small piece of research focused on a feature of social behaviour such as conformity or an aspect of individual behaviour such as memory may be carried out.

**Research methods: Sampling**
Learners could be encouraged to investigate how participants in research are obtained. Terms such as bias, target population and representativeness should be explained and discussed.

A group exercise could be used to allow learners to find out about sampling or by learners finding out about a method and reporting back to the class. Sampling methods that should be described and evaluated can include:

- opportunity sampling
- random sampling
- self-selection
- systematic sampling
- quota sampling
- stratified sampling

**Calculating and presenting data**
Learners should develop their knowledge and understanding of the use of descriptive statistics and demonstrate their ability to calculate mean, median, mode.

Teachers could present learners with simple number sets to practice calculations and follow with a discussion of the merits and disadvantages of the measures of central tendency. Learners should be aware of what is meant by the term ‘range’ and could be encouraged to perform standard deviations on the number sets to further encourage understanding of data.

As a way of consolidating the knowledge and understanding of the research process, learners could be given a variety of research scenarios and, working either in groups, in pairs, or individually, could design a research study using appropriate method, sampling and data collection and justifying their choices.
Learners could be presented with research scenarios and discuss ethical issues that may arise in the research scenarios. Learners could present their findings in a variety of ways: presentation, essay, academic poster. Such activities can enable learners to self-assess, peer assess and get feedback from teachers/lecturers on their progress.
Approaches to assessment

There are a number of ways in which evidence for Unit assessment could be generated. **This Unit has one Outcome with a set of coherent Assessment Standards designed to promote holistic assessment.**

Approaches to the assessment of Units when they form part of a Course may differ from approach to assessing the same Unit when delivered free standing. Where Units are delivered on a stand-alone basis, teachers or lecturers will have more flexibility to develop approaches to delivering and assessing Units which are not related to Course assessment.

Evidence may be gathered in a variety of forms that best suit the needs of the learner and individual centres. Ideas for generating assessment evidence are recorded/ oral responses; academic posters, individual or group presentations, information leaflets; traditional question papers or a portfolio of evidence.

Learning opportunities should enable learners to work on planning and conducting research collaboratively, but for Unit assessment learners should work independently.

**Example**

Learners could create a portfolio of evidence which includes:

- An explanation of the stages of the research process.
- An evaluation of experimental and non-experimental research methods.
- An explanation of ethical guidelines and their use in psychological research.
- An evaluation of methods of sampling.
- Calculations of sets of descriptive statistics.
- The application and justification of choice of, research methods to research scenarios.

**Alternative assessment approaches include:**

- open-book tests, eg providing a stimulus piece with associated questions
- closed-book tests, with questions requiring restricted responses, as preparation for Course assessment

Evidence could be able to be generated and held in a variety of formats that best suits the needs of the learner and centre. Assessors must choose an assessment format which takes into account the needs of all learners and implement the assessment at an appropriate stage in the Unit.

**Authenticity**

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There are a number of techniques and strategies for ensuring that learners present work which is their own. For more guidance, please refer to SQA's Guide to Assessment.

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**Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit, is given in the Psychology Course Support Notes.
Equality and inclusion

The following guidance should support assessors to ensure that any issues relating to equality and inclusion for learners undertaking the Psychology Course are addressed:

♦ Centres must take into account the needs of all learners who undertake the Course.
♦ There should be no unnecessary barrier for any learner studying this Course or its individual Units.

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The following are reasonable responses to adapting assessments in Psychology:

♦ additional time allocation
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♦ audio evidence
♦ assistive technology

Learners undertaking this Course will be required to write psychological reports, work with numerical data, and communicate psychological understanding.

If learners require support to overcome barriers, they may be supported by scribes when writing psychological reports, and/or this could be done electronically. Communication could be written, oral or diagrammatic.

Interpretation of numerical and statistical data/descriptive statistics is crucial to the study of Psychology. Calculators may be used.

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Note: You are advised to check SQA’s website ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.
Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Psychology: Social Behaviour* (Higher) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- the *Unit Specification*
- the *Course Specification*
- the *Course Assessment Specification*
- the *Course Support Notes*
- appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.
General guidance on the Unit

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the Higher Psychology Course and is also available as a free-standing Unit and is designed to meet the needs of a broad range of learners who may choose to study it.

The *Higher Psychology: Social Behaviour* is designed to enable learners to analyse how interaction with others shapes social behaviour. Learners will investigate psychological explanations for social behaviour and use research evidence to explain how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the social environment. Learners will apply psychological knowledge and understanding to explain examples of everyday social behaviour.

On completion of this Unit learners will be able to:

1. Analyse topics relating to human social behaviour

Progression into this Unit

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

- National 5 Psychology Course or relevant component Units
- National 5 Biology Course or relevant component Units
- social studies or sciences Courses or relevant component Units at SCQF level 5

A level of maturity and independent thought will be required for the Higher Psychology Course. It is recognised that life experience can be a valid preparation. Successful completion of a broad general education would prepare learners to further develop the skills required to conduct research in psychology.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding for Higher Psychology is given in the Higher Psychology *Course Support Notes*.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Further information is set out in the *Course Assessment Specification*. 
Progression from this Unit
This Unit may provide progression to:

- qualifications in psychology, social science, social studies or related areas at SCQF level 7
- further study, training or employment

Psychology also has applications in life such as contributing to wellbeing and in work related fields such as health and social welfare, commercial, professional and managerial jobs, marketing, teaching and the media.
Approaches to learning and teaching

This Unit is designed to provide flexibility and choice for both the learner and delivering centre. Approaches to learning and teaching should enhance opportunities for all learners to achieve their full potential, whether working in a whole-class, small group or supported self-study situation.

It is good practice to use a variety of learning and teaching methods so that learners’ interest and motivation are maintained and individual preferences for different learning styles are promoted. Throughout learning and teaching activities account should be taken of the prior knowledge that learners may have.

Tasks should be open to allow for personalisation and choice as well as enabling learners to work at a suitable pace with appropriate support. Discussion groups or personal investigation and research are excellent ways of promoting some independence in learning. Learners have the opportunity to study social behaviour topics in this Unit, with scope for personalisation in the choice of topics.

At this level, secondary sources such as textbooks will be more suitable than original research articles. Many learners will be new to the terminology used in psychology, and should be guided towards suitable sources of information; they may not be aware that general-interest articles and websites are often biased, inaccurate or incomplete. As a general guideline, it should be possible to obtain a full research citation from the sources used. Learners should be encouraged to contribute to their own learning and to present their work using a range of sources of evidence. There are many possible sources that can be referred to, including: textbooks, published articles and research-based web articles.

Topics selected for individual behaviour studied are a matter of choice; however, learners who are completing this Unit as part of the Higher Psychology Course will need to study:

♦ conformity and obedience (this is mandatory for Course assessment)

The Course Assessment Specification sets out details of mandatory content and assessment.

Teaching approaches should support Curriculum for Excellence’s four capacities to enable each learner to develop as a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor.

Mandatory knowledge and understanding for the Social Behaviour Unit:
Mandatory topic conformity and obedience

♦ provide different explanations of conformity including informational and normative social influence, compliance and internalisation
provide different explanations for obedience including situational and individual factors
evaluate and use relevant research evidence including Mori, K, and Arai, M (2010) and Milgram, S (1963)

**Optional topics — a second topic for learning and teaching should be selected by the centre**
When choosing a topic relevant to social behaviour, teachers/lecturers should check the topic can meet the requirements of the Unit. Does the topic?

provide scope for the learner to explain concepts and/or theories associated with the topic
have sufficient accessible psychological research evidence that contributes to understanding human behaviour for the topic
have real-world applications relevant to everyday behaviour

Optional topic suggestions:

- aggression
- love and attraction
- leadership and decision-making
- prejudice
- propaganda
- or another suitable topic that matches the interests of learners

For the optional topic of aggression, learners could explore:

- theories of aggression (psychoanalytic approach, ethological approach, frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory)
- aggression and the media
- research studies into the effects of media violence
- video games and aggression (Goodson and Pearson, 2011)
- personal and situational factors
- control and reduction of aggression

For the optional topic of love and attraction, learners could explore:

- theories of attraction (social exchange theories, reinforcement, evolutionary theories, matching hypothesis)
- factors affecting attraction (physical attractiveness, reciprocity, proximity, similarity, need complementarity)
- parasocial relationships
- research studies of love and attraction
- maintaining and ending relationships
- liking vs loving (Zick Rubin)
- compassionate and passionate love (Elaine Hatfield)
For the optional topic of leadership and decision-making, learners could explore:

- theories of leadership (great man theories, trait theories, situational theories, behavioural theories)
- leadership styles (authoritarian, delegative, participative) and decision-making
- group decision making
- jury decision making

For the optional topic of prejudice, learners could explore:

- stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination
- racism, sexism, nationalism, classism
- theories of prejudice (the authoritarian personality, social identity theory)
- reduction of prejudice (education, increasing contact)
- institutional racism

For the optional topic of propaganda, learners could explore:

- definition of propaganda
- types of propaganda techniques (assertion, bandwagon, card stacking)
- media for transmitting propaganda messages (news reports, government reports, historical revision, junk science, books, leaflets, films, radio, television, posters)
- theories (fundamental attribution error, communication theory)
- war propaganda, public health propaganda, advertising propaganda

Centres may use a thematic approach in learning and teaching to link two topics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Mandatory topic</th>
<th>Selected topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fascism/advertising</td>
<td>Conformity and obedience</td>
<td>Propaganda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fascism/bullying</td>
<td>Conformity and obedience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>Conformity and obedience</td>
<td>Love and attraction</td>
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</table>

The *Research* Unit may be delivered and assessed alongside this Unit to add relevance and avoid duplication. Learners will apply the knowledge and understanding from the Higher *Research* Unit to analyse the research evidence in the topic areas.
Examples of possible learning and teaching approaches for topics are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mind mapping of prior knowledge topics.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The recording of work completed within collaborative learning exercises, for example an academic poster, a mind map, an essay, answers to short questions, a short video or an electronic presentation.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Being involved in role-play activities where learners play the role of a major theorist from a topic.</th>
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<th>Discussion of current news issues relevant to topics.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Collecting notes from video programmes or class exercises with the intention of putting the information into an essay or report in preparation for the question paper and assignment components of Course assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Individual and group presentations on topics.</th>
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<tr>
<th>An online discussion on a topic that is moderated by the teacher/lecturer.</th>
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Evidence may be gathered in a variety of forms that best suit the needs of the learner and individual centres. Ideas for generating assessment evidence are recorded/oral responses; academic posters, individual or group presentations, information leaflets; traditional question papers or a portfolio of evidence.

All learners must have evidence that they have individually met the Assessment Standards to gain this Unit.

**Example**

One way of assessing this Unit may be to provide the learners with an example of behaviour in a real-life situation:

- eg a girl being bullied at school (to apply knowledge and understanding of conformity and prejudice)

This real-life situation could be used to provide learners with the opportunity to explain the bullying behaviour by applying their knowledge and understanding of:

- the different types of conformity
- individual, cultural and situational factors
- gender differences in conformity
- explanations of prejudice
- stereotyping
- how social psychology can contribute to enhancing the wellbeing of victims of bullying
- reference to appropriate research studies

Other possible real-life situations could be:

- UK riots in 2011 (to apply knowledge and understanding of conformity and obedience and propaganda or aggression)
- Biases in juries (to apply knowledge and understanding of conformity and obedience and leadership and decision-making)
- Growing obesity in teenagers (to apply knowledge and understanding of conformity and obedience and propaganda)
- Video games (to apply knowledge and understanding of aggression and propaganda)
The real-life situation given to learners will vary according to the topics chosen; centres may choose to give two different real-life situations if they are delivering the topics discretely.

### Alternative assessment approaches include:

- open-book tests, eg providing a stimulus piece with associated questions
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Evidence could be able to be generated and held in a variety of formats that best suits the needs of the learner and centre. Assessors must choose an assessment format which takes into account the needs of all learners and implement the assessment at an appropriate stage in the Unit.

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