

CAMBRIDGE IGCSE

Psychology 0266

Syllabus Overview

Examinations 2027, 2028 and 2029

Understanding the whole syllabus

Psychology uses theory and research to explain behaviour and experience. A theory proposes an explanation; a study supplies evidence that can support or challenge it. The syllabus connects these ideas with research methods, ethical considerations and applications to unfamiliar situations.

For Psychology 0266, the content map below follows the approved subject briefing and the official syllabus. Labels group related areas for orientation; the detailed syllabus remains the authority for individual learning requirements.

Content map

Syllabus area or component	What the area covers
Six compulsory psychology topics	The syllabus contains six compulsory psychology topics.
Memory, sleep, prosocial behaviour, perception, motivation and language	You will investigate memory and forgetting, including how information is stored and why it may be lost. You will explore sleep and dreams, prosocial behaviour, visual perception, human motivation and needs, and the development of language.
Theories and compulsory named studies	Each topic introduces psychological theories and explanations, arguments for and against them, and three compulsory named studies used as supporting evidence. You are expected to understand the findings and conclusions of these studies, but you do not need to read the original research papers or evaluate each study individually.
Experimental and non-experimental methods	Research methods form another essential part of the course. You will study experiments as well as non-experimental methods such as observations, questionnaires, interviews and case studies. You will learn about variables, sampling, data, reliability, validity, ethics and the planning of psychological investigations.

These areas should be read as a connected course. Begin with the foundational knowledge identified in the first part of the map, then build towards the applications and explanations that depend on it. Connect each topic with its evidence and research methods. Build concise comparisons that explain both what was found and what can reasonably be concluded from the methods used. Where a row describes a choice of topics or components, study the selection required by your agreed route rather than treating all alternatives as compulsory.

Qualification and component choices

All candidates follow the component structure shown in the Assessment Overview. There is no separate Core/Extended route in this syllabus.

The prescribed named studies support understanding of the psychological concepts and theories. Do not import an A Level requirement to learn and evaluate each named study as an individual core study.

The assessed skills

Assessment objectives describe the abilities Cambridge looks for across the qualification. The following explanations paraphrase the syllabus objectives; they are not additional topics or separate orientation tasks.

Assessment objective	Meaning for the learner
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	Select accurate subject knowledge, terminology and examples that answer the question, and explain their meaning.
AO2 Application	Apply the relevant knowledge or method to the specific facts, data or situation in the question.
AO3 Analysis and evaluation	Weigh evidence, explanations or methods, explain limitations and reach a justified judgement.

These abilities work together in an answer. Accurate knowledge supports application, while a clear explanation shows how the evidence or method leads to a conclusion. The balance varies by component, so the next lesson connects these abilities with the actual assessment formats.

Key pointers: Follow the stated examination-year syllabus, cover the required areas for your route and develop skills alongside knowledge. **Next:** Open **Assessment Overview**.