

# A Level Psychology Course Induction Booklet 2026-27

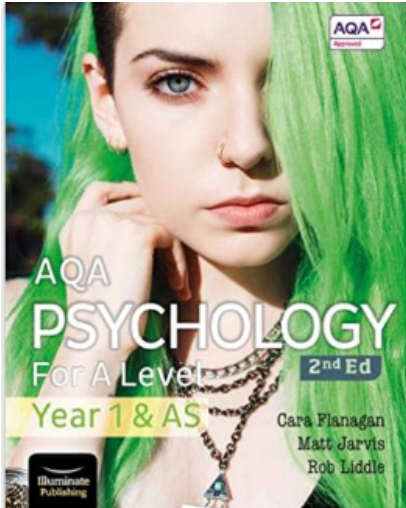


Name:

Tutor Group:

## RESOURCES FOR PSYCHOLOGY

There are many things that you can do to complement the information given to you in class. Textbooks are available to borrow from the sixth form resource centre on a short-loan basis. If you wish to purchase a text book, the recommended books are shown below:

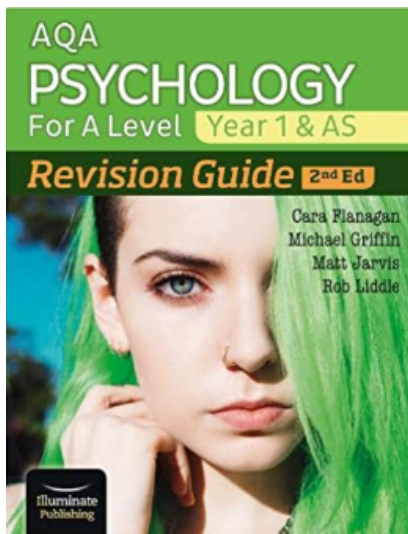


AQA Psychology A Level: Year 1&AS 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.

Flanagan, Jarvis & Liddle

**ISBN: 978-1912820429**

**(Illuminate publishing)**



AQA Psychology A Level: Year 1&AS

Complete Revision Guide 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.

**ISBN: 978-1912820436**

### For Student Digital Book access:

Please use the following username and password

Year 1/AS:

<https://illuminate.digital/aqapsych2edy1/>

USER: SFAMILY7 / PASSWORD: GREEN7

Year 2

<https://illuminate.digital/aqapsych2edy2/>

USER SFAMILY8 / PASSWORD: PINK8

## USEFUL WEBSITES FOR PSYCHOLOGY

The Brain – a Secret History <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00xccs9>

AQA Psych past papers:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology-7181-7182/assessment-resources>

Science: Human Body and Mind

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/index.shtml?brain>

All in the Mind (Radio 4) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qxx9>

Clips for class – video clips of experiments <http://clipsforclass.com/>

Psychlotron – lots of good resources <http://www.psychlotron.org.uk/>

About Psychology <http://psychology.about.com/>

Simply Psychology <http://www.simplypsychology.org/>

TED Psychology talks <http://www.ted.com/topics/psychology>

British Psychology Society <http://www.bps.org.uk/>

NHS (Mental Health) <http://www.nhs.uk>

Careers in Psychology

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/psychology>

# PERSONAL DETAILS SHEET

*Please complete and hand to your teacher*

<b>NAME</b>	
<b>PERSONAL TUTOR</b>	
<b>ADDRESS</b>	
<b>EMAIL ADDRESS</b>	
<b>EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME AND NUMBER</b>	
<b>MOBILE NUMBER</b>	
<b>A LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY - WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS SUBJECT?</b>	

## TIMETABLE WEEK 1

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
P1					
P2					
BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
P3					
P4					
LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
P5					
P6					

## TIMETABLE WEEK 2

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
P1					
P2					
BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
P3					
P4					
LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
P5					
P6					

# **LEARNING AGREEMENT**

## **A LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY**

### **Requirements**

All students will be expected to get to all lessons on time. In addition to this, you will be expected to complete other work in your own time. You will be required to hand in essays and independent homework tasks no later than the deadline date. You will also be expected to take full participation in group work and theory debate.

### **Class work**

Lesson time will focus on covering the key aspects of each topic. There may be some class time dedicated to working through exercises, but it is likely that you will need to complete the exercises at home or in your own time.

### **Homework**

You will be given assignments to complete in individual learning time, and revision tasks. These will be expected to be completed on time and assessed formally to enable effective revision and learning to take place.

### **Monitoring**

You will be regularly assessed in the form of learning conversations, past papers, debates, group and peer work and formal assessments. Half termly formal assessments will feed into your formal reports, but we will also complete class-based timed assessments every 3-4 weeks. Students will be assessed in accordance with AQA's marking criteria and assessment objectives.

### **Your target**

We want you to achieve the highest possible grade and we will target you a grade that you can achieve, providing you follow the course requirements. This target grade will be based on your GCSE grade and our experience. We will discuss this grade with you and alter it over time if necessary. It is understood that many students will not have experience of Psychology therefore regular assessment in the form of learning conversations will take place to enable individual targets to be set and reviewed.

## A Level Year 1 Psychology – Curriculum Map & Assessment Schedule

Half Terms	Teacher 1 (5 lessons per fortnight)	Teacher 2 (5 lessons per fortnight)	Assessment Schedule
Autumn 1 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction to Psychology</li> <li>● Ethical issues in research (P2)</li> <li>● Sampling (P2)</li> <li>● Basic reliability and validity, assessing and improving in experiments (P2)</li> <li>● Animal studies (P1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction to Psychology</li> <li>● Experimental method (P2)</li> <li>● Types of experiment (P2)</li> <li>● Control of variables (P2)</li> <li>● Experimental Design (P2)</li> </ul>	<b>Induction assessment September</b>
<b>Assessment 1</b>	<b>First main assessment</b>		
Autumn 1 Plan cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Caregiver infant interaction (P1)</li> <li>● Stages of attachment (P1)</li> <li>● Role of father, incorporating psychological research and the economy (P1&amp;2)</li> <li>● Explanations of attachment (P1)</li> <li>● Observational methods, including assessing and improving reliability and validity (P2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Multi-store model of Memory (P1)</li> <li>● Types of LTM (P1)</li> <li>● The working memory model (P1)</li> </ul>	
<b>HALF TERM</b>	<b>Holiday homework: Preparation for next topic areas</b>		
<b>Assessment 2</b>	<b>Second main assessment</b>		
Autumn 2 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strange Situation, types of attachment, and cultural variation (P1)</li> <li>● Self-reporting methods, including assessing and improving reliability and validity (P2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explanations for forgetting: Interference theory (P1)</li> <li>● Explanations for forgetting: retrieval failure (P1)</li> <li>● Descriptive statistics (P2)</li> <li>● Graphical representations (P2)</li> <li>● Distribution of data (P2)</li> <li>● Correlations (P2)</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maternal deprivation and institutionalisation, including case study methods (P1&amp;2)</li> <li>• Impact of early attachment on later relationships (P1)</li> <li>• Types of data (P2)</li> <li>• Scientific method, pilot studies and peer review (P2)</li> </ul> <p>REVISION FOR Winter exam</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematical content (P2)</li> <li>• Factors affecting the accuracy of EWT (P1)</li> <li>• Cognitive Interview (P1)</li> </ul> <p>REVISION FOR Winter exam</p>	
<b>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Holiday homework: Revision for Winter Exam</b>		
<b>Winter Mock exam</b>	<b>Third main assessment – 2 hours (96 marks)</b> <i>Memory and Attachment from Paper 1</i> <i>Research Methods from Paper 2</i>		
Spring 1 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Origins of Psychology (P2)</li> <li>• The Behavioural Approach (P2)</li> <li>• The Social Learning Theory (P2)</li> <li>• Content &amp; Thematic Analysis (P2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cognitive Approach (P2)</li> <li>• Definitions of abnormality (P1)</li> <li>• Characteristics of disorders (P1)</li> <li>• Depression (P1)</li> </ul>	
<b>HALF TERM</b>	<b>Holiday homework: Preparation for next topic areas</b>		
<b>Assessment 4</b>	<b>Fourth main Assessment</b>		
Spring 2 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work of Asch – types and explanations of conformity (P1)</li> <li>• The work of Zimbardo – conformity to social roles (P1)</li> <li>• Explanations for obedience as investigated by Milgram (P1)</li> <li>• Authoritarian personality (P1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phobias (P1)</li> <li>• The structure and function of neurons (P2)</li> <li>• OCD (P1)</li> <li>• The biological approach (P2)</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanations of resistance to social influence (P1)</li> </ul>		
<b>EASTER HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Holiday homework: Preparation for next topic areas</b>		
Summer 1 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minority influence (P1)</li> <li>• The role of social influence processes in social change (P1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nervous system (P2)</li> <li>• The endocrine system (P2)</li> <li>• Fight or flight (P2)</li> </ul>	<b>Interim Assessment March</b>
<b>Assessment 5</b>	<b>Fifth main assessment</b>		
Summer 1 Plan cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The psychodynamic approach (P2)</li> </ul> <p>REVISION FOR Summer exam</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Localisation of Function (P2)</li> <li>• Plasticity and Functional Recovery (P2)</li> </ul> <p>REVISION FOR Summer exam</p>	
<b>HALF TERM</b>	<b>Holiday homework: Prepare for summer exam</b>		
<b>DATA DROP 3 Summer exam</b>	<b>Sixth main assessment – 2 hours (96 marks)</b> <i>Full paper 1- Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Psychopathology</i>		
Summer 2 Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanistic psychology (P2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split brain research and hemispheric lateralisation (P2)</li> </ul>	
<b>SUMMER HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Holiday homework:</b> 1) <b>HAL work: Ways of studying the Brain (P2)</b> 2) <b>AMT work: Classification of Schizophrenia (P3)</b>		

### Curriculum Design and Implementation notes

- We teach the three papers broadly in order, with the exception of Research Methods, teaching of which runs across the first four terms, concluding with a round up, design your own study activities and revision in term 5.
- There is such a weighting towards RM across all three papers that it is important that it is not taught discretely, but applied to the course content across the whole A Level. The basics of RM eg: Ethics, experimental method, controls, Validity, Reliability etc. are front loaded via post-enrolment homework to ensure students hit the ground running, are aware of the scientific/maths elements of course and can gain greater understanding of studies as soon as they start the course.
- We teach only to the full linear A Level, not the AS and start students on full A Level past paper questions from the very start. The papers are taught in exam order to allow students the option of dropping 'down' to AS for their end of Year 13 exams, either after Year 12 summer mocks, or at any point across year 13.

- In addition, some of the conceptual elements of Paper 2 and 3 are difficult to grasp immediately at the start of the course, so it makes sense to teach these later on

### **Exam prep and support**

- Past paper packs have been created for each 11 topic areas, filleted from real papers with a contents page so each sub-topic area can be found within seconds
- Online textbook which can be accessed anywhere, with additional past paper questions, self assessment etc.
- Flipped learning packs for each sub topic area on the course. These include thinking hard exercises and stretch/challenge.

### **Assessments**

- Formal style assessments every three weeks (interims, Mock Mocks/Walking talking mocks and full paper mocks)
- These mirror the style of the actual public exams with a mixture of assessment objectives, with 24 marks available per section, three sections assessed – one from DEM teaching, one from EVS teaching and one research methods based.
- Assessments deeper into the course often include questions on earlier content (especially Year 1 content throughout Year 2) to ensure students are constantly reminded and are tested on their knowledge of earlier content

### **Feedback**

- School marking codes are used and at least one lesson per teacher is set aside for assessment feedback and student green penning of answers
- Students are provided with a mark scheme for each assessment which includes exemplar answers. A full set of exemplars is produced for each mock exam. Students also utilise PLCs for each 11 sections on the course and rag rate themselves

# A rough guide to 'extended response' questions in Psychology A Level

## What are extended response questions?

These generally (but not always!) come in two lengths - 8 marks or 16 marks – but you can also see extended response questions of up to 12 marks within the Research Methods section, asking you to design your own study, or write up sections of a psychological report. We will cover these research methods style questions later in the course.

Extended response questions are designed to allow students to show 'essay writing ability' and to construct a logical coherent argument, drawing on a wide range of information. They tend to include multiple assessment objectives eg: Both A01 and A03, or even A01, A02 and A03 (Where there is a scenario included which you will need to refer directly to in your answer). A reminder about these assessment objectives:

**AO1:** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

**AO2:** Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:

- In a theoretical context
- in a practical context
- when handling qualitative data
- when handling quantitative data.

**AO3:** Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:

- make judgements and reach conclusions
- develop and refine practical design and procedures.

## How many extended response questions will there be on the exams?

- It is highly unlikely that there would be more than one extended response question on each section of each exam (each section is only 24 marks long – with the exception of Research Methods which is 48 marks).
- The exam boards will also want to ask you about a range of topics in each section of the exam, so the longer style questions they ask, the less range of topics they can ask about.
- Therefore, there tends to be an average of **just over two** longer extended response questions (the 16 mark ones) on each paper, and possibly a shorter 8 marker as well.
- This **changes EVERY YEAR** so you cannot assume anything – we have even seen an exam paper before that had three 16 markers on!
- So the general guidance here is to expect them potentially anywhere on all three exams and expect at least two, possibly more, of either length on each exam.

## **So teachers – tell me exactly how to write an extended response answer in Psychology then!**

The bad news here is that there is no 'one right way' to write an extended response answer in Psychology. There are unfortunately though, many VERY WRONG ways. You may be taught specific writing frames or essay templates in other subjects to write essays eg: PEEL or PERC etc. Many of these can work quite well in some Psychology questions – but we tend not to teach a specific way to answer a question in Psychology because:

- The wording and style of questions often differs from question to question
- We would prefer you to simply focus on answering the question set, rather than worrying about trying to fit your potential answers into an existing inflexible structure.

### **Style of questions and lay-out of answers**

The wording of extended response questions **tends** to be either:

- Outline/Describe and Evaluate..... (The term 'outline' tends to be used in smaller questions as it suggests less detail is needed than the term Describe)
  - In this type of question you specifically need to outline/describe something **and then** evaluate it – judge how good/bad, effective/not effective, strong/weak etc. it is from the available evidence.
- Discuss.... Here there is no distinction between outlining/describing something and then creating an argument – you should still do both (as the A01/A03 requirements are the same) but there is no need to clearly differentiate between them.

In other words your A01 and A03 can be merged together – you can attract A01 marks by showing your knowledge of arguments, as much as your knowledge of psychological research.

You should also remember, in a 'discuss' question, that AO3 includes analysis as well as evaluation

### **A timely reminder of the meaning of the command words that are likely here:**

- Outline = Set out main characteristics
- Describe = Give an account of
- Evaluate = Judge from available evidence
- Discuss = Present key points about different strengths and weaknesses of an idea and/or analyse the idea, which could include comparing it with another idea.

While the mark descriptors and allocation of marks is the same across both these styles of questions, the wording points to a subtle difference in how you should go about answering the question.

Here's three examples to look at - it is important here to think about how each essay has the same type and weighting of Assessment Objectives (A01 and A03) but they would probably look very different in who they would be structured.

**Describe and evaluate the Multistore Model of memory (16 marks)**

- This is quite a straightforward question, where it would make sense to firstly describe the model in depth and then evaluate it after the description.
- This is because 'breaking down' the description of the model and attempting to evaluate parts of it at a time would read in quite an odd manner. The model is best evaluated as a whole here, once the description has been put down on paper.
- You could of course get a very similar question for 8 marks (although it would probably say 'outline' instead of describe'). In this case you would need to write less detail as the marks would be less!
- The description of the model would likely take up around a third to 40% of the total writing, while an evaluation of how well the model explains memory would make up the other 2/3rds or around 60%.

**Describe and evaluate research into the effects of anxiety on the accuracy of Eyewitness Testimony (16 marks)**

- This is again a relatively straightforward question, you will need to ensure you describe research that is relevant to anxiety specifically (no marks for anything relating to leading questions or post-event discussion!)
- You would then need to evaluate how well that research supports the idea that anxiety impacts (either positively or negatively) on the accuracy of EWT.
- Here you could write out all the research first (you probably need to refer to about two pieces of research), THEN evaluate it OR refer to each piece of research separately, with its own evaluation (although this does risk repeating evaluation points).
- Evaluation here is likely to refer to methodological strengths and weaknesses of the research, but MUST refer back to how well that research supports the argument that EWT is either negatively or positively affected by anxiety levels.

*NOTE: The word 'research' can refer to anything Psychologists have found out - this could be in a wide range of forms including, but not restricted to:*

- Specific theories eg: Bowlby's monotropic theory
- Specific Models eg: The Working Memory Model
- Experimental Research studies such as Loftus and Palmer (1974)
- Observational research such as that conducted by Mary Ainsworth
- Definitions eg: The different ways we define Abnormal behaviour
- Psychological concepts eg: the concept of conformity within Social Psychology

**Discuss cultural variation in attachment. (16 marks)**

- This is not a question that immediately suggests an obvious structure - with this type of question, you need to take a moment to think about how you might structure it.
- It does not make sense to describe how attachment is different in different cultures and then evaluate this - you can't identify strengths and weaknesses of a difference. You could however describe the differences and then explain some possible reasons for them - your AO3 marks would be coming from analysis rather than evaluation.

- If the question asked you to discuss “*research into* cultural variation”, that would be a slightly different question, in that you could treat it as a “describe and evaluate”, focusing on the study by Van Ijzendoorn and Kroonenberg.

This last question in particular, should show you why we want you to focus on interpreting specific questions, rather than trying to learn a “one size fits all” essay structure.

### How much should I be writing / how long should I be writing?

- For an 8 mark question aim for 250-300 words (approximately one written side of A4)
- For a 16 mark question aim for 450-500 words (no more than two written sides of A4)
- If you are doing typed practice responses then halve the length – eg: a 16 mark answer should be about 1 typed side of A4.
- These are VERY rough guidelines based on how much you should be able to write in the relative time provided in the exam
- Each exam is 120 minutes long and there are 96 marks available. You therefore have approximately 1.25 minutes per mark. This equates to approximately 10 minutes for 8 marks or 20 minutes for 16 marks
- However, you can probably answer some of the shorter mark questions on the exam in a faster time than this calculation allows, thus allowing you to allocate slightly more time to your extended response answers
- So as a VERY rough guide, allocate around 11-12 minutes to an 8 mark question and 21-22 minutes to a 16 mark question. This all assumes you have ‘gained’ some time by answering other questions quickly. Time management of the exam is vital!!

### What should I not include in an extended response answer?

- Note, we have mainly avoided using the term ‘essay’ in this guide. The maximum marks available for an extended response question is 16 marks – this isn’t really of true essay length compared to many other subjects where you may see questions of 30 or 40 marks long.
- Psychology is a Science, therefore the response you write should be scientific in its nature. Therefore avoid:
  - A long winded introduction explaining what you are going to write about. There is no point in this as there are no marks available for it and you don’t have the time/marks available. Plunge straight into describing/outlining/discussing whatever it is the question is referring to
  - A long winded conclusion – for the same reason above! Any conclusions you draw can easily be done via the main body of your response. If you think it suitable to give a summarising comment, then please do **BUT** only if it is going to help generate you marks because it is effective evaluation or discussion!
  - Giving your own opinion **unsupported by evidence**. You CAN talk in the first person (although you should avoid it) but anything ‘you think’ in the essay **MUST** be backed up by evidence, otherwise it is just your opinion and not based on research/fact.
  - **Describing/outlining** anything that is not referred to directly in the question – there are no marks available for this unless it is framed as evaluation/discussion

- Giving **too much description** related to the essay question and not enough effective evaluation/discussion. Remember the assessment objective guide of A01 to A03. It equates to a part to part ratio of 3:5 (Or approximately 1/3 of A01 only)

### What should I use as A03?

Here are some suggested A03 points. NOT all are relevant for every question you could get, so don't try to 'shoehorn' them in!

- Supportive research (Focus on how research findings support the main topic of the question)
- Critical research (Focus on how research findings critique the main topic of the question)
- Counter-criticisms of supportive or critical research, but only if explicitly related back to the question.
- Methodological issues (eg: S'&W's of Lab, Field, Experimental Design, lack of control, commentary of the reliability or validity etc.)
- Comparison/contrast to alternatives eg: research that is similar or different – how/why
- Ethical issues raised
- Real life applications (Can the main topic of the essay be applied well to the real world and used to improve human welfare?)
- Application of Issues and Debates: Reductionism, Determinism, Nomothetic/Idiographic, Nature vs Nurture, Biases (Gender/Culture), Ethical Implications
- Implications for the economy
- Ability to generalise from Animal research
- Any other research specific issues raised in the work packs

### Break down of the Mark Descriptors

Here is an example of the standardised mark descriptors you are likely to get in the markscheme for a 16 mark question. XXX simply refers to whatever area of the specification is the topic of question.

Level	Marks	Description
4	13-16	Knowledge of XXX is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation/discussion is thorough and effective. Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear, coherent and focussed. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9-12	Knowledge of XXX is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies or omissions. Evaluation/discussion is mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5-8	Limited knowledge of XXX is present. Focus is mainly on description. Some evaluation/discussion is present although it is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.

1	1-4	Knowledge of XXX is very limited. Evaluation/Discussion is limited, poorly focussed or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or poorly used.
	0	No relevant content.

Let's look in a little more depth at that top band:

### What does 'Knowledge of XXXX is accurate and generally well detailed' mean?

- Accurate simply means being correct! So you need to know your stuff!
- Well detailed means providing specific pieces of information that are concisely written, but expanded and explained where needed. Detail does not mean writing lots, it refers to selecting the right bits of information to answer the question. Names of psychologists can help here.
- Concise means to the point and not waffle! Don't include anything that isn't needed! You don't have much time to write a 16 mark answer, so you need to be efficient in how you describe things. **You will need to practice summarising your knowledge.**

### What does 'the answer is clear and coherent and focused' mean?

- Lack of **clarity** means you don't understand what someone is saying. So answers with clarity simply make sense!
- **Coherence** means that your words and sentences link together well. Clarity and coherence really go hand in hand!
- Many students write answers that simply don't make sense. Make sure you re-read your answers – or when practicing, give them to someone else to read to see if they are clear.

### What does 'specialist terminology is used effectively' mean

- This means you need to include the key terms that are linked to the content you are attempting to write about.
- It is pretty impossible to write a good description of something in psychology – say the Working Model of Memory, without using the appropriate key terms. For example, an answer on the WMM that DIDN'T mention; The Central Executive, the Phonological Loop, the Visuo-spatial Scratchpad and the Episodic Buffer AND failed to explain clearly what they all mean – would be a very poor answer!
- Specialist terminology can be demonstrated via evaluation as well as just description eg: the use of the terms Validity and Reliability in evaluating something would count as using specialist terminology

### What does 'evaluation/discussion is thorough and effective' mean?

- See the example answers below on this

**Although this is not in the mark descriptors, what do we mean when we say an answer 'flows' well?**

- Obviously, what you write is important, but how you communicate your ideas / arguments has a significant influence on your overall grade. Most students may have similar information / content in their essays, but the better students communicate this information concisely and articulately.
- When you have finished your writing you must check if it 'flows'. This is an important feature of *quality of communication* (along with spelling and grammar)
- This means that the paragraphs follow a logical order (like the chapters in a novel). Have a global structure with themes arranged in a way that allows for a logical sequence of ideas. If you are planning an essay, you might want to rearrange (cut and paste) paragraphs to a different position in your essay if they don't appear to fit in with the essay structure.
- To improve the flow of your essay make sure the last sentence of one paragraph links to first sentence of the next paragraph, if possible. This will help the essay flow and make it easier to read.

**PLEEEEEASE give me some sort of overall essay structure, especially for A03 Evaluation/discussion!!**

No. We explained why above. There is no one set structure to use. But, here is a clue as to how you could structure some *individual points* that you make, using the PEC method.

It is very important to elaborate on your evaluation. Don't just write a shopping list of brief (one or two sentence) evaluation points. Instead make sure you expand on your points, remember, quality of evaluation is more important than quantity.

When you are writing an evaluation paragraph the PEC system would look like this

- Make your **P**oint.
- **E**xplain how and why the point is relevant.
- **C**ommentary - Discuss the consequences / implications of whatever you have written. Are they positive or negative? How do they link back to the question?

So here's an example, using the Multistore Model of Memory

The multi-store model of memory is too simplistic to explain how our memory works

*This is a good solid opening point, but does not yet count as effective evaluation - it doesn't explain why/how it is too simplistic OR even why this is an issue.*

This is because it fails to consider that some memories can enter LTM directly, without prolonged rehearsal - or indeed that prolonged rehearsal of some memories never results in them entering LTM at all.

*So now we have some clear explanation on how/why the MSM is too simplistic - but why is this a problem? How much of a problem is it? Can anything explain it better? We need commentary to make it truly effective.*

The concept of flashbulb memories can explain this process better than the MSM - this is where some memories that are particularly emotional, directly enter LTM without the need

for rehearsal within STM. This therefore means the model cannot explain all methods of transfer between memory stores and may therefore only be a partial explanation of memory as a whole.

*So this bit really expands on the original point and states why it is an issue for the model as a whole - this is important as it ties it back to the actual question.*

So, let's put it all together and see what it looks like:

The multi-store model of memory is too simplistic to explain how our memory works. This is because it fails to consider that some memories can enter LTM directly, without prolonged rehearsal - or indeed that prolonged rehearsal of some memories never results in them entering LTM at all. The concept of flashbulb memories can explain this process better than the MSM - this is where some memories that are particularly emotional, directly enter LTM without the need for rehearsal within STM. This therefore means the model cannot explain all methods of transfer between memory stores and may therefore only be a partial explanation of memory as a whole.

How many of these 'points' should be you making? Well it depends on the depth of evaluation and what the question is, but a good idea is to aim for 4-5 in a 16 mark answer and 2-3 in an 8 mark answer.

### **Best fit marking**

What if the description/outline of something in an answer is worthy of the Level 4 band, but the evaluation is very poor or limited (Level 1)? How do you mark the essay? Examiners would then apply a best fit approach and use the Assessment objective breakdown to help decide which band the essay would fit into. The ratio of assessment objectives at A Level is always biased in favour of A03 (or a combination of A02 and A03 in essays with an application component).

For example in an 8 mark question: A01 = 3 marks, A03 = 5 marks

And in a 16 mark essay: A01 = 6 marks, A03 = 10 marks

This means the focus on mark allocation is always more towards A03

So a fantastic description of a model, which is basically as good as can be considering the time allowed, coupled with very limited evaluation may only gain 8 marks out of 16 (all 6 of the available A01 marks, but only 2 of the available 10 A03 marks)