

# SYLLABUS

**Cambridge International AS and A Level  
Psychology**

**9698**

For examination in June and November 2017

### Changes to syllabus for 2017

This syllabus has been updated. The significant change to the syllabus is indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

**You are advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.**

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 Why choose Cambridge?

Cambridge International Examinations is part of the University of Cambridge. We prepare school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

Our programmes set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, are rooted in academic rigour, and provide a strong platform for progression. Over 10 000 schools in 160 countries work with us to prepare nearly a million learners for their future with an international education from Cambridge.

### Cambridge learners

Cambridge programmes and qualifications develop not only subject knowledge but also skills. We encourage Cambridge learners to be:

- **confident** in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others
- **responsible** for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others
- **reflective** as learners, developing their ability to learn
- **innovative** and equipped for new and future challenges
- **engaged** intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.

### Recognition

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are recognised around the world by schools, universities and employers. The qualifications are accepted as proof of academic ability for entry to universities worldwide, although some courses do require specific subjects.

Cambridge AS and A Levels are accepted in all UK universities. University course credit and advanced standing is often available for Cambridge International AS and A Levels in countries such as the USA and Canada.

Learn more at [www.cie.org.uk/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/recognition)

## 1.2 Why choose Cambridge International AS and A Level?

Cambridge International AS and A Levels are international in outlook, but retain a local relevance. The syllabuses provide opportunities for contextualised learning and the content has been created to suit a wide variety of schools, avoid cultural bias and develop essential lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving.

Our aim is to balance knowledge, understanding and skills in our programmes and qualifications to enable students to become effective learners and to provide a solid foundation for their continuing educational journey. Cambridge International AS and A Levels give learners building blocks for an individualised curriculum that develops their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Schools can offer almost any combination of 60 subjects and learners can specialise or study a range of subjects, ensuring a breadth of knowledge. Giving learners the power to choose helps motivate them throughout their studies.

Cambridge International A Levels typically take two years to complete and offer a flexible course of study that gives learners the freedom to select subjects that are right for them.

Cambridge International AS Levels often represent the first half of an A Level course but may also be taken as a freestanding qualification. The content and difficulty of a Cambridge International AS Level examination is equivalent to the first half of a corresponding Cambridge International A Level.

Through our professional development courses and our support materials for Cambridge International AS and A Levels, we provide the tools to enable teachers to prepare learners to the best of their ability and work with us in the pursuit of excellence in education.

Cambridge International AS and A Levels have a proven reputation for preparing learners well for university, employment and life. They help develop the in-depth subject knowledge and understanding which are so important to universities and employers.

Learners studying Cambridge International AS and A Levels have opportunities to:

- acquire an in-depth subject knowledge
- develop independent thinking skills
- apply knowledge and understanding to new as well as familiar situations
- handle and evaluate different types of information sources
- think logically and present ordered and coherent arguments
- make judgements, recommendations and decisions
- present reasoned explanations, understand implications and communicate them clearly and logically
- work and communicate in English.

### Guided learning hours

Cambridge International A Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 360 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course. Cambridge International AS Level syllabuses are designed on the assumption that learners have about 180 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the course. This is for guidance only and the number of hours required to gain the qualification may vary according to local curricular practice and the learners' prior experience of the subject.

## 1.3 Why choose Cambridge International AS and A Level Psychology?

Cambridge International AS and A Level Psychology is accepted by universities and employers as proof of knowledge and ability.

This syllabus aims to encourage an interest in and appreciation of psychology through an exploration of the ways in which psychology is conducted. This exploration includes:

- a review of a number of important research studies
- an opportunity to look at the ways in which psychology has been applied.

The syllabus uses a wide variety of assessment techniques that will allow students to show what they know, understand and are able to do. The emphasis is on the development of psychological skills as well as the learning of psychological knowledge.

### Prior learning

Candidates beginning this course are not expected to have studied Psychology previously.

### Progression

Cambridge International A Level Psychology provides a suitable foundation for the study of Psychology or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable for candidates intending to pursue careers or further study in social sciences, or as part of a course of general education.

Cambridge International AS Level Psychology constitutes the first half of the Cambridge International A Level course in Psychology and therefore provides a suitable foundation for the study of Psychology at Cambridge International A Level and thence for related courses in higher education. Depending on local university entrance requirements, it may permit or assist progression directly to university courses in Psychology or some other subjects. It is also suitable for candidates intending to pursue any career in which an understanding of human nature is needed. The qualification is also suitable for any further study in social sciences, or as part of a course of general education.

## 1.4 Cambridge AICE (Advanced International Certificate of Education) Diploma

Cambridge AICE Diploma is the group award of the Cambridge International AS and A Level. It gives schools the opportunity to benefit from offering a broad and balanced curriculum by recognising the achievements of candidates who pass examinations in different curriculum groups.

Learn more about the Cambridge AICE Diploma at [www.cie.org.uk/aice](http://www.cie.org.uk/aice)

## 1.5 How can I find out more?

### If you are already a Cambridge school

You can make entries for this qualification through your usual channels. If you have any questions, please contact us at **info@cie.org.uk**

### If you are not yet a Cambridge school

Learn about the benefits of becoming a Cambridge school at **www.cie.org.uk/startcambridge**. Email us at **info@cie.org.uk** to find out how your organisation can register to become a Cambridge school.

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## 2. Teacher support

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### 2.1 Support materials

We send Cambridge syllabuses, past question papers and examiner reports to cover the last examination series to all Cambridge schools.

You can also go to our public website at **[www.cie.org.uk/alevel](http://www.cie.org.uk/alevel)** to download current and future syllabuses together with specimen papers or past question papers and examiner reports from one series.

For teachers at registered Cambridge schools a range of additional support materials for specific syllabuses is available from Teacher Support, our secure online support for Cambridge teachers. Go to **<http://teachers.cie.org.uk>** (username and password required).

### 2.2 Endorsed resources

We work with publishers providing a range of resources for our syllabuses including print and digital materials. Resources endorsed by Cambridge go through a detailed quality assurance process to ensure they provide a high level of support for teachers and learners.

We have resource lists which can be filtered to show all resources, or just those which are endorsed by Cambridge. The resource lists include further suggestions for resources to support teaching.

### 2.3 Training

We offer a range of support activities for teachers to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver our qualifications. See **[www.cie.org.uk/events](http://www.cie.org.uk/events)** for further information.



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## 3. Syllabus content at a glance

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### Themes

- Methodology
- Approaches and perspectives
- Issues and debates

### Core content

- Cognitive psychology
- Social psychology
- Developmental psychology
- Physiological psychology
- The psychology of individual differences

### Specialist choices

- Psychology and education
- Psychology and health
- Psychology and environment
- Psychology and abnormality
- Psychology and organisations

## 4. Assessment at a glance

### For the Advanced Subsidiary Level qualification:

Candidates take Papers 1 and 2. Both papers must be taken at the same exam series.

### For the Advanced Level qualification:

Candidates take Papers 1, 2 and 3. Papers 1 and 2 must be taken at the same exam series, but Paper 3 may be taken at a later exam series.

**All three papers are available in both the June and November exam series.**

Assessment structure	Marks	Weighting %	
		AS	A
<p><b>Paper 1</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>1 hour 30 minutes</b></span></p> <p>Short-answer and structured essay questions, based on core studies  <i>Section A:</i> 15 short-answer questions (60 marks)  <i>Section B:</i> two structured essay questions (20 marks) with a choice of one core study from a list of three in each question</p>	80	50	25
<p><b>Paper 2</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>1 hour 30 minutes</b></span></p> <p>Structured essay questions  <i>Section A:</i> one question on methodology with a named core study (25 marks)            one question on approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates, with a named core study (25 marks)  <i>Section B:</i> one question on approaches, issues and debates (20 marks) related to a number of core studies, from a choice of two questions</p>	70	50	25
<p><b>Paper 3</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>3 hours</b></span></p> <p>Short-answer and structured essay questions            Candidates study two specialist options from a choice of five            For <b>each</b> option chosen there are three sections:  <i>Section A:</i> short-answer questions (6 marks)  <i>Section B:</i> one structured essay: topic areas (20 marks)  <i>Section C:</i> one structured essay: applying psychology (14 marks), from a choice of two questions</p>	80	–	50

## Availability

This syllabus is examined in the June and November examination series.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

Detailed timetables are available from **[www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)**

## Combining this with other syllabuses

Candidates can combine this syllabus in an examination series with any other Cambridge syllabus, except:

- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

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## 5. Syllabus aims and assessment objectives

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### 5.1 Syllabus aims

The aims of the Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Level syllabuses set out below are not listed in order of priority.

The aims are:

- to provide an introduction to psychological concepts, theories, research findings and applications
- to create an understanding of the range and limitations of psychological theory and practice
- to encourage candidates to explore and understand the relationship between psychological findings and everyday life
- to develop skills of analysis, interpretation, application and evaluation
- to promote an appreciation and understanding of individual, social and cultural diversity
- to develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology, including the moral and ethical implications of psychological research
- to explore and understand the relationship between psychological findings and social, cultural and contemporary issues
- to study psychological principles, perspectives and applications
- to improve communication skills.

### 5.2 Assessment objectives

#### A. Knowledge and understanding

Candidates should be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological theories, terminology, concepts, studies and methods in the areas of cognitive, social, physiological and developmental psychology, and the psychology of individual differences
- express their knowledge and understanding in a clear and effective manner.

Demonstrating *knowledge* is a credit-worthy skill; *understanding* is the skill of interpreting what the knowledge means. For example, a description of the study by Bandura et al., which includes details of the experimental procedure and results, represents psychological *knowledge*. The meaning of these results, which refers to the imitation of aggressive behaviour and how this can be inferred from the results, represents *understanding*.

The skills of knowledge and understanding are allocated 50% of the available marks.

## B. Analysis, evaluation and application

Candidates should be able to:

- analyse and evaluate psychological theories, terminology, concepts, studies and methods in the areas of cognitive, social, physiological and developmental psychology, and the psychology of individual differences
- apply psychological theories, concepts and studies to practical situations, everyday life and to their own experience.

*Analysis* is the ability to express information and ideas in a clear and accurate style; the ability to identify key points in a study and see their relationship to other studies and theories; and the ability to make valid generalisations. In the example above, one of the key points is the passive nature of learning which can be related to learning theory/social learning theory and behaviourist models of people. Generalisations can be made about a person's control over their behaviour.

*Evaluation* skills can be identified in terms of the ability to point out methodological errors and consider their effect on the data; the ability to consider the quality of the data; the ability to consider the ethics of the study; and the ability to consider the scientific value of the outcome of the study. In the example above, the candidate can identify the unreal aspects of the laboratory situation that would have structured the behaviour of the children; they can further identify problems of observer reliability, of the ethics of distressing children and exposing them to aggressive role models, and finally of assessing the outcomes of the research.

*Application* skills, in the context of this syllabus, do not refer to giving descriptions of applied psychology. The skill of application is the ability to consider a psychological finding or theory and apply that information to some new situation or to everyday life. The skill of application can also be shown by the ability to consider a new research finding and apply it to existing psychological theory. In the example, application can be demonstrated by relating contemporary concern over the amount of violence on television to social learning theory.

The skills of analysis, evaluation and application are allocated 50% of the available marks.

## 5.3 Scheme of assessment

### **Advanced Subsidiary Level qualification:**

Candidates take Papers 1 and 2. Both papers must be taken at the same examination series.

### **Advanced Level qualification:**

Candidates take Papers 1, 2 and 3. Papers 1 and 2 must be taken at the same examination series, but Paper 3 may be taken at a later examination series.

**All three papers are available in both the June and November examination series.**

## Themes

The syllabus contains three themes that should inform all aspects of the candidate's progress on the course:

- the theme of **methodology** encourages the candidate to evaluate the psychology for the methods that are used
- the theme of **approaches and perspectives** encourages the candidate to look at how psychology informs our view about human experience and action
- the theme of **issues and debates** encourages the candidate to consider alternative points of view and debate explanations of human experience and action, particularly the impact of psychology on everyday life.

## Overview of core content

Defining the core content of psychology is a topic that can stimulate endless debate. The growth of the subject over the last hundred years has continually widened the areas of interest and the body of knowledge. This means that candidates must either specialise before they have an overview of the subject, or else deal with all the areas in a superficial way. This syllabus deals with that problem by requiring the candidate to cover all the major areas of psychology, and to do this by sampling the research rather than over-viewing it all. Therefore, the syllabus prescribes the studies that must be covered during the course. This design allows the subject to be studied in depth while retaining breadth and balance.

The core studies have been selected to reflect five key approaches in psychology:

- cognitive psychology
- social psychology
- developmental psychology
- physiological psychology
- the psychology of individual differences.

There will be four studies in each section and they are listed in the syllabus content section. These studies will be replaced periodically, to maintain a freshness of material and approach. The syllabus document will indicate when a change has occurred.

The core studies have been chosen to allow candidates to demonstrate:

- *knowledge* and *understanding* of approaches to the solution of problems
- an ability to *analyse* and to *evaluate* some of the cultural, social and ethical implications of psychology
- an ability to *apply* psychological concepts to practical problems and to everyday life.

The studies illustrate a wide range of methodologies used in psychology, such as experiments, observations, self reports and case studies. By exploring the relationship between the content of the study and the methodology of the research, the candidate will gain an insight into how psychologists study human experience and action and the interconnections between different approaches, perspectives and topics in psychology.

All the studies have been chosen because they raise contemporary issues, even if the original work was conducted some time ago. For example, the work of Thigpen and Cleckley on multiple personality disorder was published in 1954, yet the topic is still under discussion, and this original study illustrates all the issues in the continuing debate. Similarly, the study by Milgram on obedience to authority, published in 1963, never fails to challenge the way we think about ourselves and our behaviour. The range of studies is balanced to show how psychological theory and practice develop, how the past informs the present, and how the present is used to re-evaluate the past.

## Overview of specialist choices

A traditional approach in the study of psychology is to progress to greater and greater specialism and, in so doing, narrow the range of study. This syllabus is designed to increase the specialism of study yet retain a breadth of coverage. Over the past few years, a number of applied areas have developed in psychology that have sought to integrate the knowledge derived from a variety of psychological sources and apply it to specific problems. The syllabus takes this approach and encourages the candidate to look at how psychological theory has been applied. This involves the candidate in integrating the various areas of the subject, and seeing the connections and contrasts between them.

The chosen applied areas are:

- education
- health
- environment
- abnormality
- organisations.

These applied areas have been chosen because of the range of literature available for each, and because of the breadth of psychology that is relevant to each area. Within each chosen applied area, candidates will be required to look at the core approaches in psychology: cognitive psychology, social psychology, physiological psychology, developmental psychology and the psychology of individual differences. Candidates will also be required to apply the issues and debates from the AS Level component along with various methods.

## Paper 1: Core Studies 1

This paper will consist of short-answer and structured response questions and will be assessed by a 1½ hour examination. The examination paper will consist of two parts:

- Section A: 15 compulsory short-answer questions (75% of available marks)
- Section B: two structured essays (25% of available marks)

Section A will examine candidates' knowledge and understanding of the core studies.

In particular candidates will be asked questions about:

- the context, or background, of each study
- the information in the studies, such as theories or reasons why the study was conducted
- the methods used in the studies (experiment, self report, case study, observations) including types of experiment (e.g. laboratory and field), self report and observations
- the participants in the study and the sampling technique used
- the design of the study (repeated measures, independent groups or matched pairs)
- the way the study was conducted, such as the procedure and apparatus used
- the type of data gathered (e.g. qualitative and/or quantitative), the way the results are analysed and presented
- the conclusions that can be drawn from the studies.

Candidates may also be asked questions about themes: methods, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates as they apply to each core study.

Section B will examine candidates' ability to make evaluative points about the studies and their ability to see the studies in the wider context of psychological themes. Both structured essay questions will have three named core studies from which candidates choose one study on which to write their answer.

## Paper 2: Core Studies 2

This paper will consist of structured essay questions and will be assessed by a 1½ hour examination. The examination paper will consist of three parts:

### Section A

one compulsory methodology question (36%) related to a named core study

one compulsory approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates question (36%) related to a named core study

### Section B

one approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates question (28%) related to a number of named core studies, from a choice of two questions.

The paper will examine how well candidates can draw out and apply the themes of methods, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates in the course to the core studies. Candidates will be asked to make comparisons and distinctions between a number of core studies, as well as placing them within the broader context of general debates within psychology.

In particular candidates will be asked questions about:

Approaches:

- cognitive psychology
- social psychology
- developmental psychology
- physiological psychology
- the psychology of individual differences.



Perspectives:

- the behaviourist perspective
- the psychoanalytic perspective.

Issues and debates:

- the application of psychology to everyday life (its *usefulness*)
- ecological validity
- ethics
- ethnocentric bias
- reliability and validity
- individual and situational explanations
- nature and nurture
- psychometrics
- quantitative and qualitative data
- generalisations
- snapshot and longitudinal data
- the use of children in psychological research
- the use of animals in psychological research
- reductionism
- determinism.

### Paper 3: Specialist Choices

This paper contains five specialist choice options and candidates are required to answer questions from the two options they have studied.

The paper will consist of short-answer and structured essay questions and will be assessed by a 3 hour examination. The questions for **each** specialist choice option are divided into **three** sections:

Section A: Compulsory short-answer questions on a particular topic area

Section B: one compulsory structured essay

Section C: one structured question on applying psychology, from a choice of two.

Questions will require candidates to consider various themes in psychology: methods, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

## 5.4 Weightings

Assessment objective	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	Total
Knowledge and understanding	15%	10%	25%	50%
Analysis, evaluation and application	10%	15%	25%	50%
Weighting	25%	25%	50%	100%

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## 6. Syllabus content

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### 6.1 Themes

#### Methodology

Candidates should:

- be able to describe a range of psychological methods
- be able to consider the strengths and weaknesses (evaluate) and compare and contrast the methods and consider their practical and theoretical implications
- be able to discuss methodological issues such as design, sampling and control.

#### Approaches and perspectives

Candidates should:

- be aware of the range and assumptions of approaches and perspectives in psychology: cognitive, social, physiological, developmental, the psychology of individual differences and the behaviourist and psychodynamic perspectives
- be able to consider strengths and weaknesses (evaluate) and compare and contrast the approaches and perspectives.

#### Issues and debates

Candidates should:

- be aware of the issues and debates that structure psychological research
- be able to evaluate the issues and debates
- be able to consider the moral and ethical implications of psychological research.

## 6.2 Advanced Subsidiary Level

### Cognitive psychology

The core studies:

Mann, S, Vrij, A and Bull, R (2002), Suspects, Lies, and Videotape: An Analysis of Authentic High-Stake Liars. *Law and Human Behavior*. 26(3). pp. 365–376

Loftus, E F and Pickrell, J E (1995), The Formation of False Memories. *Psychiatric Annals*. 25. December 1995. pp. 720–725

Baron-Cohen, S, Wheelwright, S, Hill, J, Raste, Y and Plumb, I (2001), The 'Reading the Mind in the Eyes' Test Revised Version: A Study with Normal Adults, and Adults with Asperger Syndrome or High-functioning Autism. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 42(2). pp. 241–251

Held, R and Hein, A (1963), Movement-Produced Stimulation in the Development of Visually Guided Behavior. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology*. 56(5). pp. 872–876

Candidates should be able to:

- describe and evaluate the cognitive approach in psychology
- describe and evaluate the various methodologies used to study cognitive psychology
- describe and evaluate the various issues and debates appropriate to cognitive psychology
- describe and evaluate the cognitive core studies in relation to methodology, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

### Social psychology

The core studies:

Milgram, S (1963), Behavioral Study of Obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 67(4). pp. 371–378

Haney, C, Banks, C and Zimbardo, P (1973), A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison. *Naval Research Reviews*. 26(9). pp. 1–17

Piliavin, I M, Rodin, J and Piliavin, J (1969), Good Samaritanism: An Underground Phenomenon? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 13(4). pp. 289–299

Tajfel, H (1970), Experiments in Intergroup Discrimination. *Scientific American*. 223. pp. 96–102

Candidates should be able to:

- describe and evaluate the social approach in psychology
- describe and evaluate the various methodologies used to study social psychology
- describe and evaluate the various issues and debates appropriate to social psychology
- describe and evaluate the social core studies in relation to methodology, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

### Developmental psychology

The core studies:

Bandura, A, Ross, D and Ross, S A (1961), Transmission of Aggression Through Imitation of Aggressive Models. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 63(3). pp. 575–582

Freud, S (1909), Analysis of a phobia of a five-year-old boy. *Pelican Freud Library*. Vol. 8. Case Histories 1, pp. 169–306

Langlois, J H, Ritter, J M, Roggman, L A and Vaughn, L S (1991), Facial Diversity and Infant Preferences for Attractive Faces. *Developmental Psychology*. 27(1). pp. 79–84

Nelson, S A (1980), Factors Influencing Young Children's Use of Motives and Outcomes as Moral Criteria. *Child Development*. 51. pp. 823–829

Candidates should be able to:

- describe and evaluate the developmental approach in psychology
- describe and evaluate the psychodynamic perspective (Freud) and the behaviourist perspective (Bandura)
- describe and evaluate the various methodologies used to study developmental psychology
- describe and evaluate the various issues and debates appropriate to developmental psychology
- describe and evaluate the developmental core studies in relation to methodology, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

### Physiological psychology

The core studies:

Schachter, S and Singer, J E (1962), Cognitive, Social and Physiological Determinants of Emotional State. *Psychological Review*. 69(5). pp. 379–399

Dement, W and Kleitman, N (1957), The Relation of Eye Movements During Sleep to Dream Activity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*. 53(5). pp. 339–346

Maguire, E A, Frackowiak, R S J and Frith, C D (1997), Recalling Routes around London: Activation of the Right Hippocampus in Taxi Drivers. *The Journal of Neuroscience*. 17(18), September 15. pp. 7103–7110

Demattè, M L, Österbauer, R and Spence, C (2007), Olfactory Cues Modulate Facial Attractiveness. *Chemical Senses*. 32(6). pp. 603–610

Candidates should be able to:

- describe and evaluate the physiological approach in psychology
- describe and evaluate the various methodologies used to study physiological psychology
- describe and evaluate the various issues and debates appropriate to physiological psychology
- describe and evaluate the physiological core studies in relation to methodology, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

### The psychology of individual differences

The core studies:

Rosenhan, D L (1973), On Being Sane in Insane Places. *Science*. 179. pp. 250–258

Thigpen, C H and Cleckley, H (1954), A Case of Multiple Personality. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 49(1). pp. 135–151

Billington, J, Baron-Cohen, S and Wheelwright, S (2007), Cognitive style predicts entry into physical sciences and humanities: Questionnaire and performance tests of empathy and systemizing. *Learning and Individual Differences*. 17. pp. 260–268

Veale, D and Riley, S (2001), Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the ugliest of them all? The psychopathology of mirror gazing in body dysmorphic disorder. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. 39. pp. 1381–1393

Candidates should be able to:

- describe and evaluate the individual differences approach in psychology
- describe and evaluate the various methodologies used to study the psychology of individual differences
- describe and evaluate the various issues and debates appropriate to the psychology of individual differences
- describe and evaluate the individual differences core studies in relation to methodology, approaches and perspectives, and issues and debates.

## 6.3 Advanced Level

The specialist choice options build on the work in the first part of the course and explore how all five core areas of psychology have been applied in a range of contexts. Over the past few years, a number of areas have developed in psychology that have sought to integrate the knowledge derived from a variety of psychological sources and apply it to specific problems. The syllabus takes this approach and encourages the candidate to look at how psychological theory has been applied. This involves the candidate in integrating the various areas of the subject, and seeing the connections and contrasts between them.

Candidates are required to study how psychology is applied in **two** of the following areas:

- psychology and education
- psychology and health
- psychology and environment
- psychology and abnormality
- psychology and organisations.

These areas have been chosen because of their diverse nature. The education option has many theories and approaches which are then applied in schools. Every candidate studying this syllabus will have direct experience of a particular education system. The abnormality option considers the definitions, symptoms, causes and treatments of a variety of disorders. The environment option is more 'study'-based, rather than theoretical, and applies to people living their everyday lives. The health option also applies to everyday lives, because most people will have visited a medical practitioner at some point in their lives, or at the very least have experienced pain or stress. The organisations option considers the world of work, something that most people will do for around forty years of their lives. Each option is balanced and is equivalent in content to any other.

In contrast to the first part of the course, which requires an in-depth look at core studies, this part of the course requires much less depth, but much more breadth. Rather than considering every aspect as for a core study, here candidates need only consider the essential elements of a study, for example the abstract of a study. More importantly, it is what a study illustrates that is important. For example, if the topic area is health psychology and the specific sub-section is the measurement of pain, and one specific aspect is the UAB pain observation scale, only a little knowledge of this is needed. It is more important to know: how this measure differs from other measures; that it is the observation method; that it gathers quantitative data; that the method is ethical and ecologically valid; and any other aspect of approaches, methods, issues and debates that are applicable. To consider the original published article for each sub-section of the two chosen options would be impossible. A much better approach is to consider textbooks which provide a brief summary of the study.

Underlying each option are the themes described in section 6.1 and expanded in the AS Level component of the course. These are the approaches, perspectives, methods and the issues and debates. Candidates should bring forward from the AS Level what they have learned about these themes and consider how they apply to the new subject matter of the specialist choice options.

## Psychology and education

- a) Perspectives on learning:
- behaviourist applications to learning  
Underlying theory (classical and operant conditioning); applications such as programmed learning and behaviour modification techniques (controlling disruptive behaviour).
  - humanistic applications to learning  
Underlying theory (Rogers, 1951); applications such as co-operative learning, learning circles and the open classroom. Summerhill School.
  - cognitive applications to learning  
Underlying theory (e.g. Piaget); applications such as discovery learning (Bruner); expository teaching/reception learning (Ausubel); zone of proximal development (Vygotsky).
- b) Special educational needs:
- definitions, types and assessment of special educational needs (including gifted children)  
Definitions of special educational need and giftedness; types of special educational need (e.g. dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder ADHD), autistic spectrum disorders and giftedness (e.g. Bridges, 1969).
  - causes and effects of one specific learning difficulty or disability  
Most likely: dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autistic spectrum disorder or any other need.
  - strategies for educating children with special needs  
Integration versus segregation; for gifted children, acceleration or enrichment (e.g. Renzulli, 1977). Dyslexia (e.g. Selikowitz, 1998).
- c) Learning and teaching styles:
- learning styles and teaching styles  
Learning styles: the onion model (Curry, 1983); Grasha's (1996) six styles of learning.  
Teaching styles: formal and informal styles (Bennett, 1976); high-initiative and low-initiative (Fontana, 1995).
  - measuring learning styles and teaching styles  
Learning: Approaches to Study Inventory (ASI) (Entwistle, 1981). Teaching: teacher-centred and student-centred styles (Kyriacou and Williams, 1993); Kolb's (1976) learning styles.
  - improving learning effectiveness (study skills)  
The 4-mat system (McCarthy, 1990); PQRST method – learning from textbooks; strategies for effective learning and thinking (SPELT) Mulcahy et al (1986)
- d) Motivation and educational performance:
- definitions, types and theories of motivation  
Types such as extrinsic and intrinsic. Theories: behaviourist (e.g. Brophy, 1981); humanistic (e.g. Maslow, 1970); cognitive (e.g. McClelland, 1953).
  - improving motivation  
Behavioural: effective praise (e.g. Brophy, 1981); cognitive: McClelland (1953) need for achievement and need to avoid failure; cognitive-behavioural: self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).
  - motivation issues: attribution theory and learned helplessness  
Attributing causes to behaviours (Weiner, 1984); learned helplessness (Dweck et al., 1978); changing attributions (e.g. deCharms, 1977).

- e) Disruptive behaviour in school:
- types, explanations and effects of disruptive behaviours  
Types: conduct (e.g. distracting, attention-seeking, calling out, out-of-seat); immaturity and verbal and physical aggression (bullying), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Explanations and effects for one or more of above types. Poor teaching style.
  - causes and effects of one disruptive behaviour  
Any disruptive behaviour (e.g. one from above) but not attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
  - corrective and preventive strategies  
Preventive: effective preventive discipline (Cotton, 1990); effective classroom management behaviour (Kounin, 1990). Corrective: behaviour modification techniques (Presland, 1990); cognitive behaviour modification, e.g. self-instructional training (Meichenbaum, 1971).
- f) Intelligence:
- concept, types and tests of intelligence  
Concept of intelligence and IQ. Types of intelligence tests: Stanford-Binet; Wechsler (WAIS & WISC; BAS). Reliability, validity and predictive validity. Intelligence and educational performance.
  - theories of intelligence  
Factor-analytic approach (Cattell, 1971); multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983); triarchic theory (Sternberg, 1988).
  - alternatives to intelligence  
Emotional intelligence (e.g. Goleman, 1995); creativity and unusual uses test (e.g. Guilford, 1950); problem-solving: means-end analysis, planning strategies and backwards searching.

### Psychology and health

- a) The patient-practitioner relationship:
- practitioner and patient interpersonal skills  
Non-verbal communications (e.g. McKinstry and Wang); verbal communications (e.g. McKinlay, 1975; Ley, 1988).
  - patient and practitioner diagnosis and style  
Practitioner style: doctor and patient-centred (Byrne and Long, 1976; Savage and Armstrong, 1990). Practitioner diagnosis: type I and type II errors. Disclosure of information (e.g. Robinson and West, 1992).
  - misusing health services  
Delay in seeking treatment (e.g. Safer, 1979). Misuse: hypochondriasis (e.g. Barlow and Durand, 1995), Munchausen syndrome (e.g. Aleem and Ajarim, 1995).
- b) Adherence to medical advice:
- types of non-adherence and reasons why patients don't adhere  
Types and extent of non-adherence. Rational non-adherence (e.g. Bulpitt, 1988); customising treatment (e.g. Johnson and Bytheway, 2000).
  - measuring adherence/non-adherence  
Subjective: self reports (e.g. Riekart and Droter, 1999). Objective: pill counting (e.g. Chung and Naya, 2000); biochemical tests (e.g. Roth, 1987); repeat prescriptions (e.g. Sherman, 2000).
  - improving adherence  
Improve practitioner style (e.g. Ley, 1988), provide information (e.g. Lewin, 1992), behavioural techniques (e.g. Burke et al., 1997).



## c) Pain:

- types and theories of pain  
Definitions of pain. Acute and chronic organic pain; psychogenic pain (e.g. phantom limb pain). Theories of pain: specificity theory, gate control theory (Melzack, 1965).
- measuring pain  
Self report measures (e.g. clinical interview); psychometric measures and visual rating scales (e.g. MPQ, visual analogue scale), behavioural/observational (e.g. UAB). Pain measures for children (e.g. paediatric pain questionnaire, Varni and Thompson, 1976).
- managing and controlling pain  
Medical techniques (e.g. surgical; chemical). Psychological techniques: cognitive strategies (e.g. attention diversion, non-pain imagery and cognitive redefinition); alternative techniques (e.g. acupuncture, stimulation therapy/TENS).

## d) Stress:

- causes/sources of stress  
Physiology of stress and effects on health. The GAS Model (Selye, 1936). Causes of stress: lack of control (e.g. Geer and Maisel, 1972), work (e.g. Johansson, 1978), life events (Holmes and Rahe, 1967), personality (e.g. Friedman and Rosenman, 1974), daily hassles (e.g. Lazarus, 1981).
- measures of stress  
Physiological measures: recording devices and sample tests (e.g. Geer and Maisel, 1972; Johansson, 1978); self report questionnaires (Holmes and Rahe, 1967; Friedman and Rosenman, 1974; Lazarus, 1981).
- management of stress  
Medical techniques (e.g. chemical). Psychological techniques: biofeedback (e.g. Budzynski et al., 1973) and imagery (e.g. Bridge, 1988). Preventing stress (e.g. Meichenbaum, 1985).

## e) Health promotion:

- methods for promoting health  
Fear arousal (e.g. Janis and Feshbach, 1953; Leventhal et al., 1967). Yale model of communication. Providing information (e.g. Lewin, 1992).
- health promotion in schools, worksites and communities  
Schools (e.g. Walter, 1985; Tapper et al., 2003). Worksites (e.g. Gomel, 1983). Communities (e.g. three community study, Farquhar et al., 1977).
- promoting health of a specific problem  
Any problem can be chosen (e.g. cycle helmet safety: Dannenberg, 1993; self-examination for breast/testicular cancer; obesity and diet: Tapper et al., 2003; smoking: McVey and Stapleton, 2000).

## f) Health and safety:

- definitions, causes and examples  
Definitions of accidents; causes: theory A and theory B (Reason, 2000); examples of individual and system errors (e.g. Three Mile Island, 1979; Chernobyl, 1986).
- accident proneness and personality  
Accident prone personality; personality factors, e.g. age, personality type.  
Human error (e.g. Riggio, 1990); illusion of invulnerability (e.g. The Titanic); cognitive overload (e.g. Barber, 1988).
- reducing accidents and promoting safety behaviours  
Reducing accidents at work: token economy (e.g. Fox et al., 1987); reorganising shift work; safety promotion campaigns (e.g. Cowpe, 1989).

## Psychology and environment

- a) Noise:
- definitions and sources  
Definitions of noise (e.g. Kryter, 1970); transportation noise and occupational noise.  
Factors that make noise annoying.
  - negative effects on social behaviour in adults and performance in children  
Anti-social behaviour (e.g. Geen and O'Neal, 1969; Donnerstein and Wilson, 1970).  
Pro-social behaviour (e.g. lab: Mathews and Canon, 1975; field: Mathews and Canon, 1975)  
Performance (e.g. Bronzaft, 1981; Haines et al., 2002).
  - positive uses of sound (music)  
Consumer behaviour (e.g. North, 2003; North, 1999); stress reduction (e.g. Chafin, 2004);  
performance (e.g. Mozart effect).
- b) Density and crowding:
- definitions, measurements and animal studies  
Social and spatial density; crowding. Animal studies (e.g. lemmings: Dubos, 1965; deer: Christian, 1960; rats: Calhoun, 1962).
  - effects on human health, pro-social behaviour and performance  
Pro-social behaviour (e.g. Dukes and Jorgenson, 1976; Bickman et al., 1973). Health (e.g. Lundberg, 1976). Performance (e.g. Mackintosh, 1975).
  - preventing and coping with effects of crowding  
Preventing: modify architecture; visual escape (e.g. Baum et al., 1976) and other aspects.  
Coping: (e.g. Langer and Saegert, 1977; Karlin et al., 1979).
- c) Natural disaster and technological catastrophe:
- definitions, characteristics and examples  
Natural disaster and technological catastrophe. Real life examples of both.
  - behaviours during events, and methodology  
Contagion (LeBon, 1895); scripts (Shank and Abelson, 1977). Laboratory experiments (e.g. Mintz, 1951), simulations and real life examples.
  - psychological intervention before and after events  
Before: preparedness (e.g. Sattler et al., 2000); evacuation plans (e.g. Loftus, 1972).  
After: treating PTSD. Herald of Free Enterprise – Belgium (Hodgkinson and Stewart, 1991).  
London Bombing (Rubin et al., 2005).
- d) Personal space and territory:
- definitions, types and measures  
Defining space (e.g. Hall, 1966) and territory (e.g. Altman, 1975). Alpha space and beta space.  
Measuring space: simulation (e.g. Little, 1968); stop-distance; space invasions (see below).
  - Invading space and territory  
Invasions (e.g. Middlemist et al., 1976; Fisher and Byrne, 1975; Brodsky et al., 1999).
  - defending territory and space  
Defending primary territory (e.g. Newman, 1976) and public territory (e.g. Ruback, 1997);  
territorial markers (e.g. Hoppe et al., 1972).

- e) Architecture and behaviour: housing design and urban renewal:
- theories and effects of urban living on health and social behaviour  
Theories: adaptation level, behaviour constraint, environmental stress and overload. Effects on health (e.g. Soderberg et al., 1994) and social behaviour (e.g. Amato, 1983).
  - urban renewal and housing design  
Renewal and building design: (e.g. Pruitt-Igoe, 1954–1972); Newman (e.g. Clason Point and Five Oaks, 1994).
  - community environmental design  
Shopping mall atmospherics (e.g. Michon et al., 2003); casino environments (Finlay et al., 2006); public places (e.g. Whyte, 1980 or Brower, 1983).
- f) Environmental cognition:
- definitions, measures, errors and individual differences in cognitive maps  
Definitions, measures: sketch maps (Lynch, 1960); multidimensional scaling (e.g. Moar, 1987); errors and individual differences (e.g. Malinowski, 2001).
  - cognitive maps in animals  
Cognitive maps in: squirrels (Jacobs and Linman, 1991); bees (Capaldi, 2000); pigeons and magnetite (Walcott, 1979).
  - designing better maps; wayfinding  
Map design (Levine, 1982); wayfinding (Maguire et al., 1997); virtual wayfinding (Janzen et al., 2001).

## Psychology and abnormality

- a) Models of abnormality:
- definitions of abnormality  
Definitions: deviation from statistical norms, social norms, ideal mental health, failure to function adequately. Problems with defining and diagnosing abnormality.
  - models of abnormality  
Medical/biological, behavioural, psychodynamic, cognitive. Assumptions and applications of models.
  - treatments of abnormality  
Treatments derived from models: biological/medical; psychotherapies; cognitive-behavioural. Effectiveness and appropriateness of treatments.
- b) Schizophrenia:
- symptoms and characteristics of schizophrenia  
Characteristics; case studies/examples.
  - explanations of schizophrenia  
Genetic (e.g. Gottesman and Shields, 1972); biochemical (dopamine hypothesis); cognitive (e.g. Frith, 1992).
  - treatments for schizophrenia  
Biochemical (antipsychotics and atypical antipsychotics); electro-convulsive therapy. Token economy (Paul and Lentz, 1977); cognitive-behavioural therapy (Sensky, 2000).

- c) Abnormal affect:
- types, characteristics, examples and sex differences  
Types: depression (unipolar) and mania (bipolar); causes and treatments for manic depression; sex differences in depression.
  - explanations of depression  
Biological: genetic and neurochemical; cognitive: Beck's cognitive theory; learned helplessness/attributional style (Seligman, 1979).
  - treatments for depression  
Biological: chemical/drugs (MAO, SSRIs); electro-convulsive therapy. Cognitive restructuring (Beck, 1979); rational emotive therapy (Ellis, 1962).
- d) Addiction and impulse control disorders:
- definitions, types and characteristics of addictions  
Definitions (e.g. Griffiths, 2005); types, e.g. alcoholism; impulse control (e.g. kleptomania, pyromania, compulsive gambling); physical and psychological dependence.
  - causes of addiction and impulse control disorders  
Genetic: alcohol (e.g. Schuckit, 1985); biochemical: dopamine; behavioural: positive reinforcement; cognitive/personality.
  - coping with and reducing addiction and impulse control disorders  
Behavioural, e.g. token economy; aversion therapy (for alcoholism). Cognitive-behavioural therapy (e.g. Kohn, 2000) for kleptomania.
- e) Anxiety disorders (phobias):
- definitions, types/examples (case studies) of phobias  
Types: e.g. agoraphobia, blood phobia, dog phobia.
  - explanations of phobias  
Behavioural (classical conditioning, e.g. Watson, 1920); psychoanalytic (Freud, 1909); biomedical/genetic (e.g. Ost, 1992); cognitive (e.g. DiNardo et al., 1988).
  - treating phobias  
Systematic desensitisation (Wolpe, 1958); flooding; applied tension (Ost et al., 1989); cognitive-behavioural therapy (Ost and Westling, 1995).
- f) Anxiety disorders (obsessions and compulsions):
- definitions, measures and examples of obsessions and compulsions  
Defining obsessions and compulsions; case studies/examples (e.g. 'Charles' by Rapoport, 1989); measures, e.g. Maudsley obsessive-compulsive inventory.
  - explanations of obsessive/compulsive disorder  
Biomedical; cognitive-behavioural; psychodynamic.
  - treatments for obsessive/compulsive disorder  
Drug therapy; cognitive-behavioural therapy; psychoanalytic therapy.

## Psychology and organisations

- a) The selection of people for work:
- selection of people for work  
Selection procedures: applications (e.g. weighted application blanks and biographical inventories, i.e. a curriculum vitae). Selection interviews: structured and unstructured. Personnel selection decision-making. Use of psychometric tests.
  - personnel selection decisions and job analysis  
The selection of personnel: decision-making (e.g. multiple regression, multiple hurdle and multiple cut-off models). Biases in selection decisions and equal opportunities. Job descriptions and specifications. Job analysis techniques (e.g. FJA and PAQ).
  - performance appraisal  
Performance appraisal: reasons for it and performance appraisal techniques (e.g. rating scales, rankings, checklists). Appraisers, problems with appraisal and improving appraisals (e.g. effective feedback interviews).
- b) Motivation to work:
- need theories of motivation  
Need theories: hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970), ERG theory (Aldefefer, 1972), achievement motivation (McClelland, 1965).
  - motivation and goal-setting  
Theories: goal-setting theory (Latham and Locke, 1984), setting effective goals. Cognitive/ rational theories: VIE (expectancy) theory (Vroom, 1964). Managerial applications of expectancy theory.
  - motivators at work  
Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Types of rewards systems: e.g. pay, bonuses, profit-sharing. Performance-related pay. Non-monetary rewards: praise, respect, recognition, empowerment and a sense of belonging.
- c) Leadership and management:
- theories of leadership  
Universalist: great person theory, charismatic and transformational leaders. Behavioural: Ohio state studies (initiating structure and consideration), University of Michigan studies (task and relationship-oriented behaviours).
  - leadership style and effectiveness  
Effectiveness: contingency theory (Fiedler, 1976); situational leadership (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988), path-goal theory (House, 1979).  
Styles: permissive versus autocratic (e.g. Muczyk and Reimann, 1987).  
Leadership training and characteristics of effective leaders.
  - leaders and followers  
Leader-member exchange model (e.g. Danserau, 1994). Normative decision theory (Vroom and Yetton, 1973).

- d) Group behaviour in organisations:
- group dynamics, cohesiveness and teamwork  
Group development (e.g. Tuckman, 1965; Woodcock, 1979). Group cohesiveness, team-building and team performance. Characteristics of successful teams.
  - decision-making  
The decision-making process (e.g. Wedley and Field, 1983). Decision style and individual differences in decision-making. Individual versus group decisions. Groupthink (e.g. Janis, 1972) and group polarisation. Strategies to avoid groupthink and training to avoid poor decisions (e.g. Bottger and Yetton, 1987).
  - group conflict  
Major causes of group conflict: organisational and interpersonal. Positive and negative effects of conflict. Managing group conflict (e.g. Thomas, 1976).
- e) Organisational work conditions:
- physical and psychological work conditions  
Physical: illumination, temperature, noise, motion (vibration), pollution, aesthetic factors.  
Psychological: feelings of privacy or crowding, excess or absence of social interaction, sense of status or importance/anonymity or unimportance.
  - temporal conditions of work environments  
Shiftwork: rapid rotation theory (e.g. metropolitan rota and continental rota); slow rotation theory. Compressed work weeks and flexitime.
  - ergonomics  
Operator-machine systems: visual and auditory displays, controls. Errors and accidents in operator-machine systems. Reducing errors: theory A and theory B (Reason, 2000).
- f) Satisfaction at work:
- job design  
Job characteristics (e.g. Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Job design: enrichment, rotation and enlargement. Designing jobs that motivate.
  - measuring job satisfaction  
Rating scales and questionnaires: e.g. job description index, Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire. Critical incidents: e.g. critical incidents technique. Interviews.
  - attitudes to work  
Theories of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (e.g. Herzberg, 1959). Job withdrawal, absenteeism and sabotage. Organisational commitment. Promoting job satisfaction.

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## 7. Other information

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### Equality and inclusion

Cambridge International Examinations has taken great care in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. To comply with the UK Equality Act (2010), Cambridge has designed this qualification with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Arrangements can be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who are unable to access the assessment of any component may be eligible to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

Information on access arrangements is found in the *Cambridge Handbook* which can be downloaded from the website [www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers](http://www.cie.org.uk/examsOfficers)

### Language

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available in English only.

### Grading and reporting

Cambridge International A Level results are shown by one of the grades A\*, A, B, C, D or E, indicating the standard achieved, A\* being the highest and E the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no results) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

Cambridge International AS Level results are shown by one of the grades a, b, c, d or e, indicating the standard achieved, 'a' being the highest and 'e' the lowest. 'Ungraded' indicates that the candidate's performance fell short of the standard required for grade 'e'. 'Ungraded' will be reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. The letters Q (result pending), X (no results) and Y (to be issued) may also appear on the statement of results but not on the certificate.

If a candidate takes a Cambridge International A Level and fails to achieve grade E or higher, a Cambridge International AS Level grade will be awarded if both of the following apply:

- the components taken for the Cambridge International A Level by the candidate in that series included all the components making up a Cambridge International AS Level
- the candidate's performance on these components was sufficient to merit the award of a Cambridge International AS Level grade.

For languages other than English, Cambridge also reports separate speaking endorsement grades (Distinction, Merit and Pass), for candidates who satisfy the conditions stated in the syllabus.

## Entry codes

To maintain the security of our examinations, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. Where the component entry code has two digits, the first digit is the component number given in the syllabus. The second digit is the location code, specific to an administrative zone. Information about entry codes for your administrative zone can be found in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*.



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