



Year 12 Syllabus in a nutshell

IB PSYCHOLOGY





Year 12 Syllabus in a nutshell – IB Psychology

Biological Approach

Topic	Content
The relationship between the brain and behaviour	Techniques used to study the brain in relation to behaviour Localization of function Neuroplasticity Neurotransmitters and their effects on behaviour
Hormones and pheromones and their effects on behaviour	Hormones and their effects on behaviour Pheromones and their effects on behaviour
The relationship between genetics and behaviour	Genes and their effects on behaviour Genetic similarity Evolutionary explanation for behaviour
HL extension: The role of animal research in understanding human behaviour	The value of animal models in research to provide insight into human behaviour Ethical considerations in animal research

Cognitive Approach

Topic	Content
Cognitive Processing	Models of memory Schema theory Thinking and decision-making
Reliability of Cognitive Processes	Reconstructive memory Biases in thinking and decision-making
Emotion and Cognition	The influence of emotion on cognitive processes
HL extension: Cognitive processing in a technological (digital/modern) world	The influence (positive and negative) of technologies (digital/modern) on cognitive processes. Methods used to study the interaction between technologies and cognitive processes.

Sociocultural Approach

Topic	Content
The individual and the group	Social identity theory Social cognitive theory Formation of stereotypes and their effects on behaviour:
Cultural origins of behaviour and cognition	Culture and its influence on behaviour and cognition Cultural dimensions
Cultural influences on individual behaviour	Enculturation Acculturation Research Methods Ethics
HL extension: The influence of globalization on individual behaviour	The effect of the interaction of local and global influences on behaviour Research methods used to study the influence of globalization on behaviour.



Research methods	
Qualitative	Quantitative
Case study Naturalistic observation Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unstructured • semi-structured • focus-groups 	Experiments Field experiments Quasi-experiments Natural experiments Correlational research Surveys
Research designs	
Matched pair design	Randomly assign one of a pair to either the control or the experimental group. Researchers may match individuals on specific characteristics, such as ethnicity or age. Twin studies are an example of a matched pair design.
Independent samples/independent measures design	Uses two separate groups of participants. For example, one group of participants is assigned to the control group while the other group is assigned to the experimental or treatment condition.
Repeated measures design	Exposes participants to each condition making up the Independent Variable.
Hypothesis	
<p>A hypothesis is a statement that is testable and falsifiable based on the results of an experiment or observation. The null hypothesis (H_0) is a statement that the treatment has no effect while the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is a statement that the treatment has an effect on the Dependent Variable. One of the hypotheses is rejected and the other accepted depending on the outcome of the investigation.</p>	
Variables	
<p>Dependent Variable—the measurement generated by the manipulation of the Independent Variable.</p> <p>Independent Variable—the factor that the experimenter manipulates.</p>	
Sampling technique	
<p>This involves selecting participants for a study. Examples of sampling techniques include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • random sampling • convenience/opportunity sampling 	



- volunteer sampling
- purposive sampling
- snowball sampling.

Standardization/control

This refers to eliminating or controlling any factor that could affect the results of the study, apart from the Independent Variable. When and how this is carried out will depend on the method chosen to generate the information needed.

Ethical considerations

These are paramount in any investigation of any kind in psychology. Please see the "Ethical guidelines" chapter of this guide and the teacher support material for more information on ethical considerations in psychology.

Analysing data

The ways researchers analyse data through data presentation, inductive content analysis or statistics.

Evaluating research

Evaluation of research data for:

- reliability
- validity (internal/external)
- credibility
- bias.

Bias

Bias refers to factors that may affect the results of the study. These include:

- researcher bias
- participant bias
- sampling bias.

Drawing conclusions

There are several ways to draw conclusions about the research. These include:

- correlation and causation
- replication
- generalization for quantitative research
- transferability for qualitative research
- triangulation.