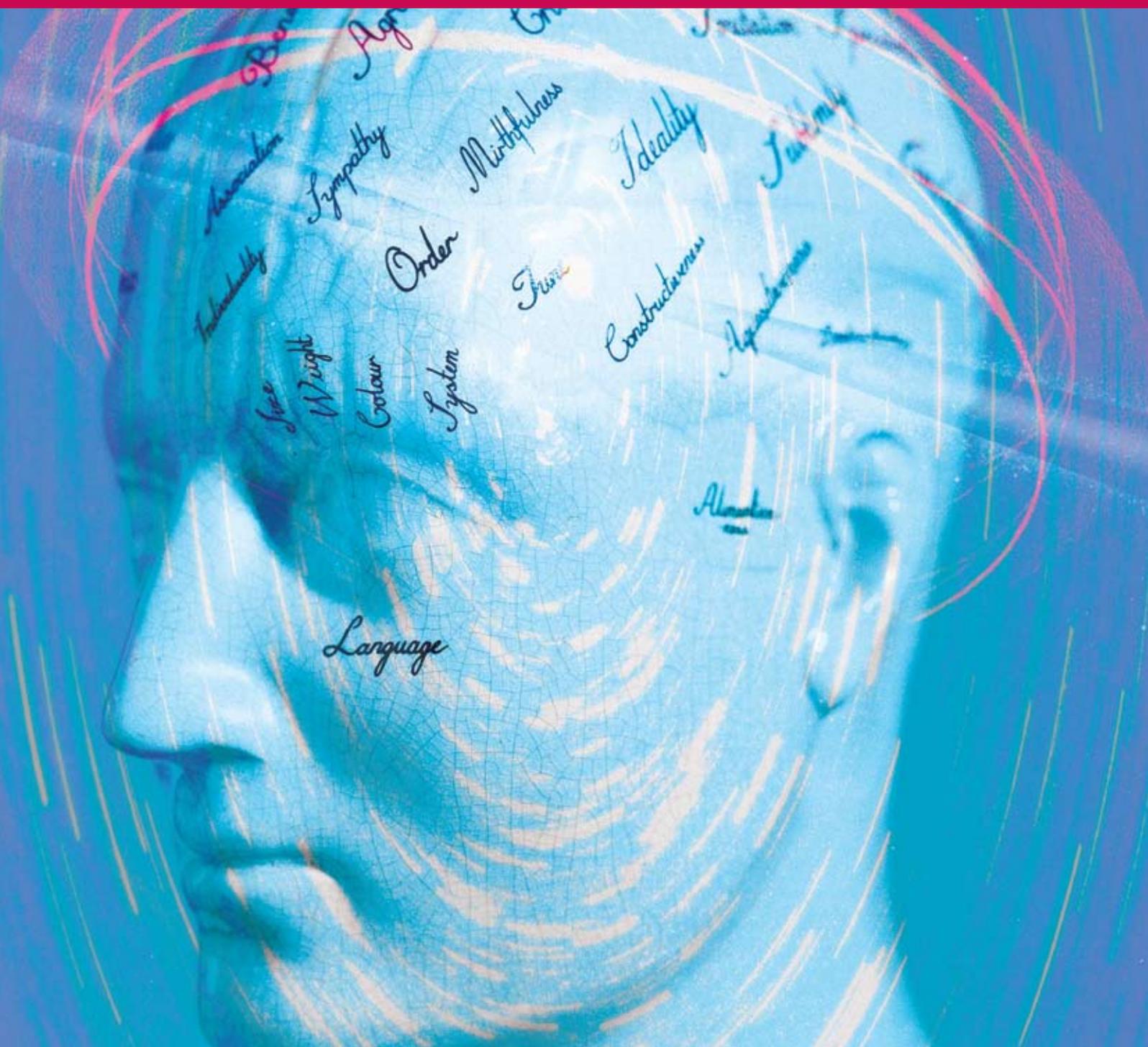


# Syllabus Outline

Cambridge Pre-U  
**PSYCHOLOGY**

Cambridge  
**Pre-U**

For examination in 2010, 2011, 2012



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

## Cambridge Pre-U Overview

Cambridge Pre-U is an exciting qualification for 16-19 year olds who want to go to university. It equips students with the skills they need to make a success of their undergraduate studies:

- a solid and coherent grounding in specialist subjects at an appropriate level;
- the ability to undertake independent and self directed learning;
- the ability to think laterally, critically and creatively and communicate effectively.

The Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject in Psychology is a stand-alone qualification, with all components assessed at the full Cambridge Pre-U standard at the end of a two-year programme of study. There are no unit retakes. Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subjects are certificated separately. They are fully compatible with A Levels and may be taken in combination with them.

## Reporting of Achievement

Achievement is reported on a scale of nine grades: Distinction 1, 2 and 3, Merit 1, 2 and 3 and Pass 1, 2 and 3. The Distinction 3 standard is aligned to that of Grade A and the Pass 3 is aligned to that of Grade E at A Level. Distinction 1 reports achievement above the new A\* grade. The intention is to differentiate more finely and extend reporting at the top end, while keeping the grading scale accessible to the full range of ability currently achieving passes at A Level.

## UCAS Tariff Points

The table shows the UCAS tariff awarded to each Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject Grade and how this compares with the tariff for A Level.

The tariff reflects the additional content within each syllabus and the linear assessment (terminal examinations at full Pre-U standard).

Universities which normally ask for three A grades at A Level might therefore consider Cambridge Pre-U offers involving a combination of Distinction 3 and Merit 1. Other offers may include asking for a Merit 2 in place of a B, Merit 3 or Pass 1 for a C, Pass 2 for a D and Pass 3 for an E.

Cambridge Pre-U Band	Cambridge Pre-U Grade	Cambridge Pre-U Principal Subject Tariff	Equivalent A Level Tariff
Distinction	1	tbc	n/a
	2	145	(A*) 140
	3	130	(A) 120
Merit	1	115	
	2	101	(B) 100
	3	87	
Pass	1	73	
	2	59	
	3	46	(E) 40

For more details, please go to [www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/recognition](http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/recognition).

## Common characteristics of Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses

- **Design:** focused on the development of high level knowledge, understanding and skills to prepare for university and beyond, through extensive consultation with teachers/students and universities.
- **Stretch:** built into syllabus content (380 guided learning hours and challenging concepts), assessment (open ended questions) and grading outcomes (finer differentiation at the top end).
- **Innovation:** new approaches to subjects, greater freedom in subject combination, new topics, new methods of delivery and new forms of assessment.
- **Progression in learning:** Cambridge Pre-U builds on prior knowledge gained at 14-16, where appropriate and develops broad generic skills (independent study and research skills). Students are better prepared for undergraduate study.
- **Linearity:** assessment at the end of the course makes for greater coherence in teaching and learning.

## Feedback from Schools



Increased focus and motivation in year 12 pupils

Richer, more coherent educational experience

Encourages wider reading

More independent inquiry and learning

Opportunity to develop and pursue own academic interests

Greater scope for upper ability pupils to distinguish themselves

More time and support available for lower ability pupils

Greater maturity at examination time



## Cambridge Pre-U Psychology Scheme of Assessment

Four compulsory components:

Paper 1. Key Studies and Theories: short answer questions and one structured essay question from a choice of two.

Paper 2. Methods, Issues and Applications: three structured essay questions covering Methodology, Issues and Applications.

Paper 3. Key Applications: short answer questions, structured question and essay question. Candidates choose two options out of five.

Paper 4. Personal Investigation: design, conduct and report a psychological investigation.

Components 1, 2 and 3 are externally set and marked. Component 4 is internally marked with external moderation. Examinations take place at the end of the two year course. A single grade is awarded. Individual components cannot be retaken.

## Curriculum content

### Key Studies and Theories; Methods, Issues and Applications

Fifteen research articles introduce the original research that shaped modern psychology. They demonstrate how psychological research has been, is, and ought to be undertaken, and represent five core approaches in psychology: Cognitive, Social, Developmental, Individual Differences, Biological.

The articles indicate the wide range of methods available in psychological research. By becoming familiar with this body of work candidates will be taught different methods and techniques, learn to appreciate the difficulties of designing research (matters of ethics, controls, control groups, ecological validity and so forth), and become equipped to evaluate research.

Students should consider either the theory on which research articles are based, or the theory which developed from them. The syllabus has the essential link between theory and research.

Psychological research never ends and the third logical aspect is to consider (briefly) some of the latest developments in research - arising either from theory or from the key study itself. The specific subject content follows these three core elements in a coherent and progressive manner.

### Key Applications

Candidates choose two of the five options below, which reflect the nature of modern psychology and provide an appropriate context.

**Abnormality:** e.g. how schizophrenics can be identified by smell, and various impulse control disorders such as kleptomania.

**Crime:** e.g. methods used by the police to identify liars, investigation of the psychological effects of the London bombing and profiling of serial killers.

**Environment:** e.g. areas of wayfinding using a driving simulator and how music results in consumers spending more money.

**Health:** e.g. focuses on the diet of children in schools and how television adverts helped smokers to quit alongside four other topics.

**Sport:** e.g. English soccer teams' 'home advantage' and the role of alcohol in spectator aggression in rugby union.

### Personal Investigation

The Personal Investigation allows the student the freedom to develop their research skills by designing, conducting and reporting an investigation in any appropriate area of psychology which is of interest to them. Topics can be taken from any area of the syllabus and students choose from a range of methods, taking into account reliability, validity and ethics.

## Support and Resources

CIE offers a programme of Cambridge Pre-U INSET training for teachers accompanied by support materials on a dedicated Cambridge Pre-U website.

Full syllabus details are at [www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu](http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridgepreu)

Specimen assessment materials are available from: [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)



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