

A-Level Psychology

Issues and Debates - Spec Cheat Sheet · Paper 3 (synoptic)

Edexcel Psychology (9PS0)

Paper 3 (synoptic)

11 spec points

Every specification point for **Issues and Debates**, in spec order - tick each one off as you revise. Codes match the official Edexcel specification. Nothing here is optional.

Issues and debates (synoptic, 9.3)

- ID1** Ethical issues in research using both humans and animals, including the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct, risk assessment, the Scientific Procedures Act 1986 and Home Office regulations, and how these guidelines apply across all studied topic areas.
- ID2** Practical issues in the design and implementation of research, including choice of method, sampling, controls, operationalisation, reliability, validity and the practical difficulties of carrying out psychological studies.
- ID3** Reductionism in the explanation of behaviour, contrasted with holism - whether behaviour is best explained by breaking it into simpler component parts (for example biological or environmental reductionism) or by considering the person and situation as a whole.
- ID4** Comparisons of the ways of explaining behaviour using the different themes - comparing how the social, cognitive, biological, learning and applied approaches account for the same behaviour, identifying their similarities and differences.
- ID5** Psychology as a science, including the use of objectivity, control, replicability, falsifiability, the experimental method, hypothesis testing and the extent to which psychology meets the criteria of a science.
- ID6** Cultural and gender issues in psychological research, including cultural bias, ethnocentrism, the use of ethnocentric or unrepresentative samples, gender bias (alpha and beta bias) and the impact of these biases on the validity and generalisability of findings.
- ID7** The role of both nature and nurture in psychology - the relative contributions of inherited, biological factors and of environmental, learned and social factors, and the interaction between them, in explaining behaviour.
- ID8** An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time, including how theories, methods and explanations have changed and been refined as new research and evidence have emerged.
- ID9** The use of psychology in social control, including how psychological knowledge and techniques (for example token economies, drug therapies or persuasion) can be used to influence, manage or control behaviour, and the implications of doing so.
- ID10** The use of psychological knowledge in society, including the practical and beneficial applications of psychology to everyday life, institutions and policy (for example in education, health, the workplace and the criminal justice system).
- ID11** Issues related to socially sensitive research - the ethical and social implications of studying sensitive topics or groups, including potential for harm, misuse of findings, stigmatisation and the responsibilities of researchers.