

# Find out how to prove — and improve — the effectiveness of your Psychology program with the ETS® Major Field Tests.

## Content Validity

**The Major Field Test (MFT) in Psychology**, first administered in 1989, assesses mastery of concepts, principles and knowledge by graduating Psychology students. To ensure fairness and content relevance, the test is revised approximately every four to five years.

## Developed by Leading Educators in the Field

Experienced faculty members representing all the relevant areas of the discipline determine test specifications, questions and types of scores reported. ETS assessment experts subject each question to rigorous tests of sensitivity and reliability. Every effort is made to include questions that assess the most common and important topics and skills.

In addition to factual knowledge, the test evaluates students' abilities to analyze and solve problems, understand relationships and interpret material. Questions that require interpretation of graphs, diagrams and charts are included. Academic departments may add up to two subgroups and as many as 50 additional locally written questions to test areas of the discipline that may be unique to the department or institution.

## National Comparative Data

A *Comparative Data Guide*, published each year, contains tables of scaled scores and percentiles for individual student scores, departmental mean scores and any subscores or group assessment indicators that the test may support. The tables of data are drawn from senior-level test takers at a large number of diverse institutions. Nearly 1,500 colleges and universities employ one or more of the Major Field Tests for student achievement and curriculum evaluation each year.

### Who Develops the MFT in Psychology?

Individuals who serve or recently have served on the Committee for the MFT in Psychology are faculty members from the following institutions:

**Amherst College**  
**North Carolina State University**  
**Pomona College**  
**Queens College, CUNY**  
**University of Virginia**  
**University of Wisconsin–River Falls**

### For more information about the MFT in Psychology:

Phone: **1-800-745-0269**  
Email: **higherred@ets.org**  
Visit: **www.ets.org/mft**

Educational Testing Service  
Rosedale Road  
Princeton, NJ 08541

# Test Content — Psychology

The Major Field Test in Psychology consists of 140 multiple-choice questions, some of which are grouped in sets and based on such materials as a description of an experiment or graphs of psychological functions. The questions in the Psychology test are drawn from the courses of study most commonly offered in undergraduate programs within the broadly defined field of psychology. Questions often require students to identify theories, psychologists, methods and other information from the field. Some questions require students to analyze relationships, apply principles, draw conclusions from experimental data and evaluate experiments.

Programs can choose when and where to administer the tests. It is designed to take two hours and may be split into two sessions. This test must be given by a proctor. Mathematical operations do not require the use of a calculator.

The outline below shows the content areas covered on the test and the approximate distribution of questions among the areas. Numbers in parentheses represent the proportion of the test devoted to a particular content category.

## The Test Outline

### I. Experimental or Natural Science Oriented (~35%)

- A. Learning (~5–7%): classical conditioning, operant conditioning, knowledge acquisition, social learning, biological constraints, theories and issues
- B. Memory (~3–5%): levels of processing, types of memory phenomena, encoding strategies and failures, retrieval strategies and failures, semantic organization, theories and issues
- C. Cognition (~9–11%): representation, information processing, problem solving, reasoning, metacognition, language, theories and issues
- D. Perception and Sensation (~3–5%): psychophysics and signal detection, attention, perceptual systems and organization, theories and issues
- E. Physiology and Neuroscience (~10–12%): neurons and neural communication, sensory structures and functions, motor structures and functions, central and peripheral nervous system, states of consciousness, psychopharmacology, hormonal factors, motivation and emotion, comparative and evolutionary, neurophysiological models (e.g., memory, motivation, arousal, emotion), theories and issues

### II. Social Science Oriented (~40%)

- A. Clinical/Abnormal (~10–12%): types of disorders, biological factors, psychological factors, sociocultural factors, diagnostic systems, treatment of disorders, prevention, theories and issues

- B. Developmental (~10–12%): nature-nurture; behavioral genetics; motor, sensory and perceptual; attention, cognition and memory; language, learning and intelligence; social, personality and emotion; socialization influences; cultural influences; periods of development (e.g., infancy, adolescence, adulthood); theories and issues
- C. Personality (~6–8%): behavioral approaches, phenomenological approaches, psychodynamic approaches, social cognitive approaches, trait approaches, assessment, theories and issues
- D. Social (~10–12%): social perception, cognition, attribution and beliefs; attitudes and behavior; self; social influence and persuasion; interpersonal attraction; group processes; cultural and diversity; theories and issues

### III. Other Areas (~25%)

- A. Historical (~2–4%)
- B. Applied (~1–3%): industrial-organizational and human factors; educational, applied and public policy; health psychology
- C. Measurement and Methodology (~8–12%): research and methods (measurement, scales and tests, research designs, interpretation of findings, ethics); statistics

### How scores for the Major Field Test in Psychology are reported:

**Total Score** — Reported for each student and summarized for the group

**Subscores** — Reported for each student and summarized for the group

- Learning/Cognition/Memory (27)
- Sensory/Perception/Physiology (22)
- Clinical/Abnormal/Personality (25)
- Developmental/Social (31)

**Assessment Indicators** — Reported for the group\* only

- Memory and Cognition (19)
- Perception/Sensation/Physiology (22)
- Developmental (15)
- Clinical/Abnormal (15)
- Social (16)
- Measurement and Methodology (29)

Numbers in parentheses are the approximate number of questions in each category.

\* A minimum of five (5) students is required for assessment indicators to be reported.