

Psychology

Awarding Body: AQA

Level: A-Level

Intro

This course offers an engaging and effective introduction to Psychology, the study of human mind and behaviour. You will be amazed by the way the human brain works, why we behave as we do and what actually forms our personality. Moreover, you will learn about studies that became milestones in understanding the complexity of our mind, such as Clive Wearing, who had only 30 seconds memory span, or Patient Tan, who was only able to pronounce one word: *tan*.

If video games make you violent, does Monopoly make you a millionaire? What does 'IQ' stand for? What is schizophrenia and OCD? Why do soldiers obey killing orders? Do dreams have meaning? How reliable is eyewitness testimony? How do we remember things and why do we forget them? – those are just some of the questions that we will be answering as we go along.

Furthermore, you will develop skills valued by higher education and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research. You will learn how to design own study and how to analyse its results using inferential statistics.

Year one content

The course is broken up into 11 sections across two years.

The first year (Year 12) we will be covering:

- The fundamentals of human behaviour: from setting the first psychological lab, through Pavlov's conditioning, up to the assumptions of the humanistic approach.
- Biopsychology: brain structures, neuronal pathways, brain scans and more.
- Social Influence: why we obey authority and how good people turn evil.
- Memory: how our memory works and how we can improve it.
- Attachment: why we form bonds with our parents and what happens when the attachment formation is disrupted.
- Psychopathology: what it means to be normal and how to diagnose and treat mental problems, such as OCD, depression and phobias.
- Research methods: from case studies to lab experiments; the procedures, ethics and evaluation of different research methods.

Year two content

In the second year (Year 13) students will study a unit on the Issues, Debates and Approaches in Psychology. The final section of the course is a selection of optional modules. Whilst this is subject to change, we anticipate that students will study units on Relationships, Schizophrenia and Forensic Psychology.

What you need

At least a grade 5 in English Language. A grade 5 in Biology or 5/5 in Combined Science is strongly recommended. Students cannot choose Criminology and Psychology together.

Assessment

At the end of the two year linear A-level (the end of Year 13) students will sit three exams that will be a mixture of what they studied in Year 12 and Year 13. This will account for their entire A-Level grade.

There is no coursework requirement for the final grade; nevertheless, students will have a chance to experience the more practical side of Psychology through various mini-studies conducted in-class or as a part of their homework research.

Career and further study

An awareness of Psychology is becoming increasingly important in a range of disciplines from sports and exercise psychology to human resources management, advertising, marketing, criminology, health care professions, social services and teaching. Some of our students have gone to study Psychology, Psychiatry and Criminology as a follow up route. Psychology is also a fundamental part of effective leadership in any career you choose.

The subject is widely recognised and appreciated. It will be a great asset whether you decide to follow university route or decide to enter employment after Sixth Form.

Trips and other costs

Every student is expected to invest into own textbook – details will be given in your summer homework booklets prior to the course. We organise a variety of optional trips during the year, in most cases students are expected to cover the cost of transport and/or tickets.