

Psychology

AS/A Level

AQA

Structure & Specification

Year 1: AS 1181

Year 2: A2 2181

Many students have little knowledge of what the study of Psychology actually involves. They often imagine it will enable them to know what others are thinking or 'read' other people minds. This is definitely not the case!

In fact, Psychology has close links with Science subjects and uses empirical research to make inferences and draw conclusions about the reasons behind aspects of human behaviour. This research is ongoing – what we know about human behaviour is constantly being evaluated and challenged so there are no simple answers or facts in Psychology.

What does the course include?

Year 1- AS

Unit 1:

Cognitive Psychology – includes memory and eye-witness testimony

Developmental Psychology – includes social development, attachment and the effects of day-care.

Research methods – understanding how psychologists study human behaviour.

Unit 2:

Biological psychology – includes stress, factors affecting stress and how to manage stress.

Social Psychology - includes conformity, obedience and independent behaviour.

Individual differences – includes definitions of abnormality, approaches and therapies.

Year 2- A2

Unit 3: Topics in Psychology

This includes research into biological rhythms and sleep, relationships and aggression

Unit 4: Psychopathology, Psychology in Action and Research Methods

How will I learn?

The course is usually divided between two teachers and a variety of learning activities are used. These include taking part in discussions, creating and delivering presentations, evaluating psychological studies and carrying out independent research. You should be prepared to complete a great deal of challenging reading and also be aware that regular written tests will take place to encourage and develop

What are the entry requirements?

5 GCSEs at Grade C or above, preferably including English, Maths and Science. A grade B in English is strongly preferred.

How will my work be assessed?

AS: Unit 1 and 2 are assessed by separate 1½ hour written examinations.

A2: Unit 3 is assessed by a 1.5 hour written examination. Unit 4 is assessed by a 2 hour written examination.

What skills will I need to be successful in this subject?

Make sure you have a realistic and accurate picture of what this subject entails. It is **not** an easy option and involves a great deal of reading difficult texts and producing evaluative written work. You must be prepared to deal with unfamiliar language and complex ideas and theories. We expect you to make a real contribution in lessons, asking and answering questions and participating in class discussion.

What are the opportunities after this course for further/higher education and employment?

Psychology students have gone on to a whole range of degree courses including Psychology, Law, Medicine, Social Sciences and Humanities. A variety of careers are also available. For example, the legal profession, social work, marketing, clinical psychology, business, medicine and personnel.