

Psychology A Level



Features of the Course:

We follow the Edexcel specification at A level. By choosing Psychology, you will learn how to investigate and conduct your own research, how to use evidence to support your arguments, independent learning skills, how to put over your point of view fluently and how to work as part of a team. You will also learn how to use statistical tests.

A Level Units

The Foundations of Psychology – Paper 1

- **Social psychology** is about how people behave in groups and interact with one another. You will learn about obedience to those in authority, and why someone might not obey. You will also learn about prejudice, looking at factors that lead us to become prejudiced and to discriminate.
- **Cognitive psychology** is about how we process information, such as using language, using memory and problem solving. In your course the focus is on memory, including, for example, how we use short-term memory and how we form long-term memories. Understanding memory has many useful applications including how best to revise for an exam!
- **Biological psychology** is about the brain as well as genes, evolution and hormones. Your course will focus on aggression, looking at what parts of the brain relate to aggression and how hormones link to aggression.
- **Learning theories** involves looking at what leads to specific behaviours, including how we develop phobias, and how we respond to praise and react to punishment. Learning theories can help to generate ideas for treating phobias and you will look at those too.

Applications of Psychology – Paper 2

- **Clinical psychology** covers mental health issues and in your course you will look at schizophrenia (features, causes and treatments), and another disorder (depression, anorexia nervosa or OCD).
- **Criminological psychology** focuses on different aspects of crime including offender behaviour, jury decision-making, eye witness testimony and issues around interviewing suspects. Causes of crime are also considered as well as treatments of offenders.

Psychological Skills – Paper 3

- **Methodology** is the study of how psychological research is carried out. You will cover 6 methods including, experiments and case studies.
- **Review of studies** refers to reviewing all the 'classic' and 'contemporary' pieces of research you covered over the 2 years of your course.
- **Issues and debates** refers to core themes which are relevant across are found in psychology. For example, you will look at how the nature/nurture debate can be applied to each psychological approach.

Methods of Assessment:

Psychology is a linear course which means that you will take three, two-hour external examinations at the end of Year 13. Throughout the course you will complete regular internal assessments in class, to measure your progress towards your target grade.