



GCSE Psychology

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Why study GCSE Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and human behaviour. Psychologists observe and conduct experiments to find out more about the way people act and interact. They try to understand what motivates, challenges or changes us and use this understanding to help us tackle personal and social problems.

What does the course involve?

Throughout the course, students study various psychological ideas, processes, techniques and procedures within the following topics:

Development – This area includes stages of development (pre-natal; childhood; adolescence; and adulthood), the development of brain structures and functions (the nervous system; neurons, synapses and their interaction in development of the brain) and IQ tests as a measure of intelligence

Memory - The stages of information processing (input; encoding; storage; retrieval and output), types of forgetting, the structure and functions of the brain and how the brain works in the formation of memories, how neurological damage can affect memory

Psychological problems- An introduction to mental health and the effects of significant mental health problems on the individual and society

Social influence – Conformity including majority influence, Collective and crowd behaviour including pro-social and anti-social behaviour, Obedience including obeying the orders of authority figures

Criminal psychology – Different types of crime including: violent; drug related; acquisitive; sexual; and anti-social offences, Criminal behaviour as a social construct including deviation from norms and the role of culture in defining criminal/anti-social behaviour and how crime is measured: official statistics and self-report.

Sleep and dreaming – The functions, features and benefits of sleep, the stages of sleep cycle and when dreaming occurs, sleep disorders and their causes.

Research methods: An overview of all of the methods used by psychologists including experiments, observations, correlations and self reports. Descriptive statistics including mathematical calculations such as averages, ranges, ratios and standard form.

How will I be assessed?

The course will be assessed within two examinations at the end of year 11 which are both equally weighted. Both papers are 90 minutes and are worth 90 marks each. Research methods will be assessed throughout both exams. As there is no internally assessed element with this course all students must be confident in terms of their literacy, mathematical and analytical skills.

What are my progression routes?

GCSE psychology provides an excellent foundation for the A level Psychology course. Furthermore, people with skills in psychology are sought after in business, management, teaching, research, social work and careers in medicine and healthcare.