

A Level Psychology

Introduction – an outline of the course

Welcome to the fascinating world of Psychology!

This course will introduce you to the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. Throughout the two years, you'll explore key psychological concepts, learn how psychologists conduct research, and begin to understand why people think, feel, and act the way they do.

Psychology offers plenty of opportunities to engage with real-life issues, covering a wide range of topics, from how we form memories to what motivates our actions, and how mental health issues are diagnosed and treated.

The assessment comprises 3 two-hour exams at the end of Year 13, which include a range of multiple choice, short answer and essay-based questions.

What skills will you develop and learn?

As a psychology student, you will build valuable skills in:

- Critical thinking and analysis
- Scientific reasoning and statistical interpretation
- Essay writing and how to structure arguments
- Ethical consideration and reflection

These skills are highly transferable and will be useful to you in a range of future academic and professional settings.

What will You Study in the first term?

In the autumn term of Year 12, you will cover the following two key topics:

Approaches in Psychology – in this topic you will begin to understand the different ways psychologists explain human behaviour. Each approach is like a different "lens" used to study the mind and behaviour. You will learn about six main approaches: the behaviourist approach, social learning theory, biological approach cognitive approach, psychodynamic and the humanistic approaches as well as make comparisons between them.

Social Influence –in this topic, you will explore how individuals are influenced by other people and the social context around them, including why we conform, obey, and resist social influence. You will also learn about classic studies such as Asch's conformity experiments and Milgram's obedience research,

What can I do that will help me prepare for A Level Psychology?

Completing the summer gap task detailed below is the best way to prepare for Psychology.

As well as this, you may wish to use some of your summer to carry out some background reading into some introductory Psychology books such as *"The Psychology Book"* (DK Publishing) or *"Opening Skinner's Box"* by Lauren Slater. You can also watch documentaries or listen to podcasts related to psychology, such as BBC's *Mind over Marathon*, *The Mind Explained* (Netflix), or podcasts like *All in the Mind* or *Psychology Unplugged*.

It would also be useful to look at the specification for more detail about the topics we will be studying.

You can find this at <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/a-level/psychology-7182/specification>

Summer Gap Task

If you read the booklet and complete the tasks over the summer, then you will gain a good insight into the key foundations of Psychology and begin to develop the research and evaluation skills that you will need to be successful in this course.

[On the school website](#), if you click on Sixth Form and follow the list until you see Year 11 into 12 Gap Tasks. Click on this and find the Psychology task which is a PDF booklet.

In this transition pack there are various tasks that we would like you to complete, these will be of benefit to you when you start the course. It starts with a course overview, expectations of the course, a maths assessment, and a range of research tasks to help support you with some of the key topics.

We are really looking forward to meeting you in September and guiding you on this journey into the human mind!