

## AS and A-Level Psychology

Are we in control of our behaviour or does something else determine it?

Do experiences before the age of 3 really influence the person you are today?

Would you give a lethal electric shock just because you were told to?

Should we trust eyewitness accounts?  
Are any of our memories truly accurate?

Why do some people compromise their own beliefs to conform?



### What is Psychology?

Psychology is the study of behaviour and emotions. It aims to investigate why we behave as we do and to try to find ways of predicting and changing such behaviour. Psychology tries to understand and explain human phenomena, from mass events to the individual: what makes you, you? How have you been shaped? And what by? From your evolutionary past and inherited genes, your relationship with your parents as you develop, personal experiences you have growing up, the role of peers, friends and strangers in social settings; all contributing to who you are today. Psychology relies heavily on research methods to find the causes of behaviour and as such involves interpreting data

### Questions to consider:

*Are you interested in people?  
Can you express yourself clearly in writing?  
Can you understand quite complex, technical writing?  
Can you interpret and analyse statistical data?  
Are you prepared to discuss your own ideas and opinions in class?  
Are you happy to accept that there may be more than one answer?*

### Why study Psychology?

You will learn a variety of skills including analytical thinking, effective communication, problem solving and practical research skills and more that will prepare you for an exciting future with the possibility of a range of fantastic careers.

#### Possible degree options

The top seven degree courses taken by students who have an A-level in Psychology are:

- Psychology
- English Studies
- Sociology
- Business Studies
- Teaching
- Sport and Exercise Science
- Law.

#### Possible career options

Studying Psychology at university can give you a whole host of exciting career options, including:

- Marketing
- Business Development
- Accountancy
- Human Resources
- Forensic Psychology
- Occupational Therapy
- Clinical Psychology
- Nursing
- Teaching

## What topics will you study?

AS and first year of A-level	Second year of A-level
<p><b>Subject content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social influence</li><li>• Memory</li><li>• Attachment</li><li>• Approaches in Psychology</li><li>• Biopsychology</li><li>• Psychopathology</li><li>• Research methods</li></ul>	<p><b>Compulsory content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Issues and debates in Psychology</li></ul> <p><b>Option content</b></p> <p><u>Option one</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships</li></ul> <p><u>Option two</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schizophrenia</li></ul> <p><u>Option three</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Addiction</li></ul>

## Assessment

There are two exams at **AS** each worth 50% of your AS qualification. Each exam lasts 1 hour 30 minutes and is worth 72 marks. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

At **A-level** there are three exams, each account for one third of your A-level. The three exams last 2 hours and are worth 96 marks each. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

**Note:** At LEAST 25% of each exam will be research methods (even if it is not a topic on that paper) and 10% of each paper will be maths based analysis questions. Research Methods is therefore a key component of the course. It is essential to gain critical understanding of research design to evaluate/scrutinise the conclusions of research in all the topics. Students will also have opportunity to design and implement their own projects throughout the course.

## Entry requirements

As the subject is not available at GCSE, no prior knowledge is required.

However, as all of the exam papers include an essay component, research methods and some maths, it is expected that students will have achieved **at least a 5 in GCSE English Language/English Literature, Double Award Science and Maths (equivalent to a C/B).**

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