



# Psychology

Course Leader: Mrs T Ward

## Why study Psychology?

Psychology is a fascinating subject for anyone who is interested in how and why people behave as they do. Whether it is studied at school or university level, the content of the course is fully applicable to real life and, as a modern experimental science, research in the subject is also cutting edge. The content of this A Level course is relevant to many higher education courses and careers as it focusses on applied psychology. It is also very broad and encompasses a range of topics in psychology, including drug therapy, learning theories, memory and forgetting, explanations of antisocial behaviour and clinical psychology, so is bound to interest a wide range of students.



## Course content and Assessment

This two year A Level course consists of 3 externally examined papers.

**Paper 1:** Introductory topics in Psychology (2hrs). Includes multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

- Social influence (e.g. Conformity and obedience)
- Memory (e.g. Explanations of forgetting and eyewitness testimony)
- Attachment (e.g. Caregiver-infant interactions in humans and animal studies of attachment)
- Psychopathology (e.g. Explanations and treatments for phobias and depression)

**Paper 2:** Psychology in context (2 hrs). Includes multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

- Approaches in psychology (e.g. Cognitive and biological approaches)
- Biopsychology (e.g. The nervous system and endocrine system)
- Research methods (e.g. The experimental method, data handling and analysis)

**Paper 3:** Issues and options in psychology (2hrs). Includes multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions.

- Issues and debates in psychology (e.g. The nature-nurture debate and ethical issues)
- Cognition and Development (e.g. Piaget's theory of cognitive development and explanations for autism)
- Schizophrenia (e.g. Biological explanations and drug therapy)
- Aggression (e.g. Neural and hormonal mechanisms in aggression and institutional aggression in prisons)

## Progression Routes

Psychology is a very popular choice at university degree level, and is also included in many vocational courses, such as Education, Counselling, Social Work and Nursing, so an understanding of the subject gained at Advanced Level is a good basis for progression to these and similar courses. Knowledge of psychology is also useful for many careers in business, such as resources management, marketing and advertising. A higher degree is necessary to become a practising psychologist in areas such as educational psychology, clinical psychology and research psychology.

## Entry Requirements

A Level Psychology should never be considered to be a 'soft option'. In order to succeed at this course, students will need good motivational and time-management skills, and the ability to analyse data using statistical tests. To get the most out of this subject, students will need to have achieved at least a grade 5 in English, Mathematics and Science at GCSE.