



Psychology A-level - Curriculum Intent Statement

Intent Statement

The aim of Psychology is to cultivate lateral thinkers to appreciate the intrinsic value of scientific inquiry in psychology. By engaging with the systematic processes of research, students will develop a profound understanding of how knowledge emerges and evolves within the discipline and understand the value of the subject in real life applications.

The study of psychology provides opportunities to explore counter perspectives, sharpening critical analysis and fostering a balanced evaluation of complex theories and empirical evidence.

Through studying different approaches, students will develop critical thinking skills by evaluating theories and considering alternative explanations. They will explore how biological factors, the environment, and cognitive processes influence and shape behaviour, from birth and throughout life, gaining a well-rounded understanding of the causes and influences on human actions such as crime, gender development, and obedience.

This curriculum is designed to foster analytical thinking, enhance research skills, and develop an appreciation for ethical considerations in psychological practice. Through exploring topics such as memory, attachment, Clinical Psychology and Mental Health, and biopsychology, students will be equipped to apply psychological concepts to everyday life and contemporary issues, preparing them for further study or careers where psychological insights are valued.

Key debates, such as reductionism versus holism, nature versus nurture, alongside ethical considerations, will help students critically evaluate how and why research is conducted. These discussions also highlight psychology's practical applications, making the subject both relevant and impactful.

The course prepares students for advanced study and careers where the ability to think sensitively, rationally, analytically and scientifically about human behaviours is essential.

Long-Term Plan and Rationale for Psychology Curriculum Implementation

Year	Topics Covered	Knowledge and Skills Developed	Rationale for Choices
Year 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Methods: Introduction to key scientific methods, data handling, and experimental design. - Approaches in Psychology: Overview of key approaches such as biological, cognitive, and behavioural. - Social Influence: Concepts like conformity, obedience, and resistance to social pressure. - Memory: Models of memory, forgetting, and eyewitness testimony. - Clinical Psychology and Mental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop foundational knowledge of psychological theories and approaches. - Learn to apply research methods in simple contexts (e.g., experiments, questionnaires). - Begin to evaluate strengths, limitations, and applications of theories. - Understand real-world applications, such as improving eyewitness testimony or treating Clinical Psychology and Mental Health issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topics in Year 12 focus on foundational concepts that are prerequisites for more advanced Year 13 topics, ensuring that students build their knowledge in a logical progression. - Research methods is embedded early to prepare students for designing and evaluating studies and the methodological evaluations required in Year 13. - Topics such as social influence and memory are highly relevant to students' everyday experiences, enhancing engagement and demonstrating the practical applications of psychology. For example, understanding how misleading information affects eyewitness testimony highlights the real-world implications of psychological research, particularly in the context of court cases and justice systems.



	<p>Health: Introduction to psychopathology and explanations of abnormality.</p> <p>- Attachment: Early relationships, attachment types, and the impact on later behaviour.</p>		<p>- Introducing Clinical Psychology and Mental Health and attachment fosters awareness of developmental and clinical aspects of psychology, providing insight into real-world applications, like treatment.</p>
Year 13	<p>- Issues and Debates: Holism vs. reductionism, free will vs. determinism, ethical implications in research.</p> <p>- Gender: Biological and social factors influencing gender development.</p> <p>- Forensic Psychology: Explanations of criminal behaviour and offender profiling.</p> <p>- Schizophrenia: Symptoms, explanations, and treatments.</p> <p>- Biopsychology: The nervous system, brain function, and biological rhythms.</p>	<p>- Apply advanced research methods to complex scenarios.</p> <p>- Develop critical evaluative skills through debates and discussions on ethics and methodology.</p> <p>- Gain the ability to connect psychological concepts to broader societal issues, such as crime, gender, and Clinical Psychology and Mental Health.</p> <p>- Deepen understanding of biological and cognitive processes</p>	<p>- Year 13 topics are more specialised and challenging, requiring students to apply their foundational knowledge to complex scenarios and contemporary issues.</p> <p>- Issues and debates encourage higher-order thinking by requiring students to analyse multiple perspectives and evaluate ethical considerations, fostering a deep appreciation of psychology as a scientific discipline.</p> <p>- Topics like gender and forensic psychology are particularly sensitive and engaging, promoting discussions of real-world relevance and societal challenges.</p> <p>- The inclusion of schizophrenia and biopsychology supports students planning to pursue careers or further study in healthcare, neuroscience, or research-intensive fields.</p> <p>- Year 13 topics focus on integrating knowledge across psychological approaches, preparing students for advanced study or careers requiring analytical and critical reasoning skills.</p>

End-of-Program Impact

- **Knowledge:** By the end of Year 13, students will have a comprehensive understanding of foundational and advanced psychological topics, as well as the ability to critically evaluate theories and research.
- **Skills:** Students will have developed robust analytical, research, and ethical reasoning skills, enabling them to apply psychological concepts to real-world contexts and contemporary issues.
- **Preparation and resources:** Students will undertake regular, rigorous end of topic assessments, discussions, group work, AQA exam questions, independent retrieval plans, recap activities to enable students to achieve their full potential. Regular, constructive feedback will be provided to guide their progress, address areas for improvement, and help them close knowledge and skill gaps. This approach ensures students reinforce understanding and develop proficiency in the subject, equipping them for academic success and future opportunities.