

## A Level Psychology Course Content

The course specification taught is AQA [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

# psychology



**Student**

**workbook**

Name: .....

|                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unit 1</b>                                                         | <b>Social influence</b><br>Why do people conform to group pressures and obey authority?                                                         |
| <b>Unit 2</b>                                                         | <b>Memory</b><br>How do we remember and why do we forget?                                                                                       |
| <b>Unit 3</b>                                                         | <b>Attachment</b><br>How and why do we form attachments to others?                                                                              |
| <b>Unit 4</b>                                                         | <b>Approaches in Psychology</b><br>Is Psychology a science? What do different psychologists believe it?                                         |
| <b>Unit 5</b>                                                         | <b>Clinical Psychology and Mental Health</b><br>How do we decide if someone is mentally ill? How do people develop Phobias, Depression and OCD? |
| <b>Unit 6</b>                                                         | <b>Research Methods</b><br>How is psychological research carried out and interpreted?                                                           |
| <b>Unit 7</b>                                                         | <b>Biopsychology</b><br>How does our biology impact our behaviour? How does the brain work?                                                     |
| <b>Unit 8</b>                                                         | <b>Issues and debates in Psychology</b><br>Are Psychological studies biased in any way?                                                         |
| <b>We will learn 1 topic from <u>each</u> of these option blocks:</b> |                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Option block 1</b>                                                 | Gender                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Option block 2</b>                                                 | Stress                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Option block 3</b>                                                 | Aggression                                                                                                                                      |

### **AS Psychology:**

If you choose to take the standalone AS qualification over 1 year we will study only topics 1-6.

**Exams:** You will sit 2 summer exams.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 30 minute exam, topics 1-3. 72 marks in total worth 50% of the AS Grade

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 30 minute exam, topics 4-6. 72 marks in total worth 50% of the AS Grade

### **A2 Psychology:**

If you choose to take A level Psychology over 2 years we will cover topics 1-6 in the first year and topics 7,8 and 3 more (1 each from option blocks 1-3)

**Exams:** You will sit 3 summer exams at the end of your second year.

**Paper 1:** 2 hour exam, topics 1-4. 96 marks in total worth 33% of the A level Grade

**Paper 2:** 2 hour exam, topics 5-7. 96 marks in total worth 33% of the A level Grade

**Paper 3:** 2 hour exam, topic 8 plus one topic from each of the 3 option blocks.  
96 marks in total worth 33% of the A level Grade

*As with all new specifications the AS qualification is 'stand-alone' and does not contribute towards the final A2 grade.*

## **PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Features of a very good Sixth Form lesson in Psychology**

- Being involved in the different activities in the lessons e.g. questioning, matching tasks, videos, discussions & note taking
- Willingness to participate in discussions & to listen to others' ideas
- Ability to write effectively
- Attendance & punctuality- find out in advance of the next lesson what work you missed so you will not be behind- just copying up work will not help you.
- Meeting deadlines for any homework that is set- it may be preparation for the next lesson or consolidate your previous learning.
- Personal organization- bring past work to lessons
- Clarification of anything not understood in lesson straightaway as we tend to move on in the next lesson
- Be active in setting yourself targets
- A variety of lesson tasks e.g. PowerPoint presentation, the textbook, discussion, video footage

### **A successful Sixth Form student studying Psychology should:**

- Be interested in people e.g. reading newspaper articles & watching relevant programmes on TV (part of the independent learning log)
  - Show effort & initiative- make your learning active & ask for additional resources
  - Matching each 1 hour lesson with 1 hour of personal study. This could be in the form of homework but if not you could read ahead or consolidate your learning by beginning to make revision notes.
  - Try revising as you go along as a two year course with a lot of modules creates a lot of notes to learn. You should have learnt from your GCSEs how you revise the best but tried & tested methods include-
    - Mind maps
    - Bullet points
    - Revision cards
    - Quizzes
    - Planning answers to exam questions
    - Practise past exam questions in timed conditions
- See Mrs Heath for help with revision of main theories & studies. After each module you will have a past exam paper, although weekly homework questions will include plenty of exam practice.

- When making notes in class, remember to use whichever method suits you best. These could include-
  - Notes
  - Bullet points
  - Tables
  - Spider diagrams

Whatever you use, remember there is no point copying huge chunks from the textbook, you will never remember it so it becomes a waste of your time

- The recommended textbooks will mainly be used for your own learning outside of lessons (i.e. homework & consolidation of learning)
- Use the textbooks in the psychology base which are a bit simpler or provide more details on many topics. These can be borrowed on short term loan- see Mrs Heath for more details
- Mrs Heath has a variety of subject specific extension books (A Level & Degree level) that can be borrowed. There are also copies of *The Psychologist*.
- There is also the whole archive available online for *Psychology Review* if you follow the link on the school desktop to Library Online Resources. This is good to look at for many topics as well as advice on answering questions.
- Keep mobile phones in bags & turned off
- Be punctual to all lessons

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- Meet all deadlines
  - If you miss a lesson you should see your teacher to arrange a mutually convenient time to go through the work- just copying notes from the textbook or another student will not be enough. Take the initiative & don't expect your teacher to chase you.
  - PSYCHOLOGY IS A BRAND NEW COURSE FOR YOU. IT CONTAINS ELEMENTS OF MATHS AND BIOLOGY NOT JUST SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY ELEMENTS. IT IS A SUBJECT WITH A HIGH LEVEL OF ACADEMIC RIGOUR WHICH OFTEN SUPRISES STUDENTS. IF YOU FIND YOURSELF STRUGGLING PLEASE SPEAK TO YOUR TEACHER AS SOON AS YOU CAN.
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**Your Psychology teacher will:**

- Plan lessons & resources to suit individuals by differentiating resources & tasks for lower, middle & upper ability
  - Make every piece of homework meaningful & useful
  - Give out regular essay practice, both as homework & in class in exam conditions, and also carry out end of topic formal tests in exam conditions
  - Give students a chance to self & peer assess when appropriate
  - Mark essays as quickly as possible with appropriate feedback (including strengths & areas for improvement)
  - Keep records of missed homework & following up appropriately
  - Record essay grades in A-U format in department spreadsheet
  - Keep a register so any students missing lessons can be followed up regarding missed work
  - Give all students the chance to be involved in discussions
  - Ask to see your psychology revision at regular intervals
  - Offer revision classes after October half term at a lunchtime
  - Provide an open door policy so individual help can be gained
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**Task 1****Key terms**

*Below are some key terms that you must know when you start*

| Term                        | Definition |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Aim                         |            |
| Procedure                   |            |
| Findings/<br>conclusions    |            |
| Evaluation                  |            |
| Laboratory<br>Experiment    |            |
| Observational<br>techniques |            |
| Independent<br>variable     |            |
| Dependent<br>variable       |            |
| Extraneous<br>variable      |            |
| Ecological<br>validity      |            |
| Ethical issue               |            |

# Psychology Summer work

## Task 2

Research and prepare a newspaper article detailing one psychologist of your own choosing.

Please include:

1. An overview of their work
2. Use images to add interest
3. Assess how well they have contributed to Psychology by considering the strengths and weaknesses of their work.

Key psychologists or people who have contributed significantly to psychology include:

Sigmund Freud

Abraham Maslow

Burrhus Skinner

Ivan Pavlov

John Watson

Wilhelm Wundt

Albert Ellis

Aaron Beck

Albert Bandura

Charles Darwin

Elizabeth Loftus

John Bowlby

Mary Ainsworth

Philip Zimbardo

This is not exhaustive you can choose another psychologist that you may have heard of.

Happy researching!

## Task 3

There are some core approaches to Psychology that you need to know for your A level – they are different ways of explaining human behaviours. Some of these are listed below: your job is to do some research on them using the internet.

Task 3 is to research & write a short paragraph/draw a poster/make a model on at least one of the 4 approaches- biological, behavioural, social learning theory & cognitive

You should find out what the main word in the approach means & how it might explain human behaviour (its main assumptions or beliefs). Identify at least one key researcher or psychologist from this area and why are they famous. Think about any obvious strengths or weaknesses of the approach.

Use the following websites or any resources you have to help you-

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/a-level-approaches.html>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/collections/a-level-psychology-study-notes-approaches-and-biological-psychology>

Wikipedia, while sometimes untrustworthy, is very good for this! There are also plenty of great videos on YouTube you can watch

**These approaches are used throughout the entire course & will be used right at the start of Y12**

**If you have any further questions while you are enjoying your Summer holiday, my email address can be found below 😊**

**Mrs Heath**

reheath@fcc.cambrianlt.org

### Optional additional activities to develop psychological understanding

As you now know, psychology is all around us. This means that there is lots you can do to develop your psychological understanding.

The tasks are optional- I do not expect you to complete these, but they will help you with your studies & you may wish to complete some of the tasks below over the summer.

Also take a look at the powerpoint of additional films & books on the 6<sup>th</sup> form website for summer work

Have a look in a psychology review magazine & write a summary of an article you have read

Watch a film with a psychological theme (e.g. Black Swan, Girl Interrupted, Side Effects, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, A Beautiful Mind etc) & make a simple fact sheet about it (story, actors, opinion on film)

Watch a TV show with psychological content. Record channel & date & main topics discussed (e.g. attachment, sleep, phobias, memory, aggression etc)

Construct a model using recyclable material to demonstrate a theory, model or process e.g. strange situation, memory models, parts of the brain etc

Produce a powerpoint about a psychological explanation of an aspect of psychology e.g. SIT, deindividuation, learning theory of attachment etc

Use the BBC website and find out 10 facts about the brain

Using the BBC website, take one of the tests. Note down what you have learned about your behaviour

Research 5 famous psychologists & explain why you have chosen them

#### Useful websites:

[www.allpsych.com](http://www.allpsych.com)



<http://bps-research-digest.blogspot.com/>



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/mind/>

