

PSYCHOLOGY

The key quality to be successful is a real interest in people and how they think and behave. It is important to be prepared to question the information as well as to identify what is missing. There is learning of theories and research so be prepared to remember facts. Enjoying thinking for yourself and asking questions as well as a willingness to work with others are key qualities for success. Students who have not found science particularly easy often find their skills improve when the subject matter is people as they already have some understanding of them.

EXAMINATION BOARD AQA

MODULES

Psychology at AS level provides students with the opportunity to understand the following units:

Memory – What is the best way to remember things? Why do we forget things we have learned? How do we explain memory?

Biopsychology – What happens when we become stressed? Do we have any control over it? Are there really different parts of the brain that are responsible for different things? Do we inherit mental illness?

Social Psychology – Why do we obey others? What makes us less or more likely to obey? Why can some people get us to do things we don't want to? Does having an audience make us perform better or worse?

Individual Differences – Why is it that some people are terrified of things? How do phobias develop? How can they be overcome? When does a ritual become an obsession?

Approaches – What did Freud say, and who was he? How does TV influence us? Are we born knowing how to interact with others or do we have to learn to do so? What is the difference

between psychology and common sense? Is psychology a science?

Research Methods – It is expected that each student will undertake mini projects in which they actually do the work of psychologists. Students will be able to understand what tools psychologists use.

EXAMS

There are 2 one and a half hour exams at the end of the course. Each exam has three sections containing short answer questions and a 10 mark essay. We teach you how to do this bit.

A2 Content

Child Social Development – How children form relationships with their parents and others. Gender differences in friendship.

Cognition and the Law – Examines the reliability of eyewitness testimony and how police can improve their questioning technique. Ways in which people recognise faces.

Stress and Stress Management – Examines the link between stress and illness. Stress management techniques and their effectiveness.

Forensic Psychology – Theories of offending and criminal behaviour. Examines how effective custodial sentences are. Treatment programmes and their effectiveness.

Approaches to Psychology – Looks in more detail at the various approaches taken in psychology

Debates – Considers the extent to which individual differences in people's attitudes effect whether or not biological tendencies actually do happen.

Research Methods – Further development of AS in understanding the tools which psychologists use to gather and analyse data about how people think and behave.

Exams

Two 2 hour exams at the end of the course. Each exam consists of short answer questions as well as extended essays worth 12 marks. Three questions of 20 marks each for each paper.

WHERE DOES IT LEAD?

There are a number of different career options open to Psychologists. Most psychologists work as clinical psychologists where they can help people with mental health problems such as schizophrenia and depression. Health psychologists work with people with eating disorders, giving up smoking and food phobias. Occupational psychologists work in the business environment, providing recruitment methods, helping people work better in teams, examining the impact of jet lag and shift work on people. Forensic psychologists help the police to profile criminals and look at ways of reducing criminal behaviour. Educational psychologists work with children and young people who may have educational or social difficulties.