

SCIENCE - PSYCHOLOGY

KS5 (AQA AS AND A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY)

YR13



Course Overview

The AQA A Level Psychology course offers a comprehensive introduction to the field of psychology. In the second year, students cover key topics such as biopsychology, issues and debates in psychology, relationships, schizophrenia, and forensic psychology. Students also explore research methods in more depth, and learn about inferential statistical testing. The course emphasises the scientific nature of psychology, teaching students to understand and apply various research methods, conduct their own investigations, and analyse data. Assessment is based on three written exams at the end of the course, each covering different areas of the curriculum and incorporating multiple-choice, short answer, and extended writing questions. This course prepares students for further education in psychology and related fields, emphasising critical thinking, scientific inquiry, and the application of psychological knowledge to real-world issues.

Course Content

Building on the first year of learning, students will deepen their understanding of the mind and human behaviour. They will also learn more about scientific processes, data analysis, and inferential testing.

Core Areas Covered:

- **Approaches in Psychology:** including the psychodynamic, and humanistic perspectives.
- **Biopsychology:** Detailed study of the nervous system, endocrine system, brain function, and biological rhythms.
- **Research Methods:** Advanced exploration of research design, data collection methods, statistical analysis, and interpretation of research findings, along with ethical considerations.
- **Issues and Debates in Psychology:** Examination of key debates, including nature vs. nurture, free will vs. determinism, holism vs. reductionism, idiographic vs. nomothetic approaches, and ethical implications in research and practice.

Optional Topics (three chosen from the following):

- **Relationships:** Theories and research on the formation, maintenance, and breakdown of romantic relationships.
- **Schizophrenia:** Detailed analysis of symptoms, causes, and treatments of schizophrenia.
- **Forensic Psychology:** Application of psychological theories and research to understanding criminal behaviour, investigation, and rehabilitation.

Students are assessed on three main objectives:

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:

- in a theoretical context
- in a practical context
- when handling qualitative data
- when handling quantitative data.

AO3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:

- make judgements and reach conclusions
- develop and refine practical design and procedures.

Numeracy

In A Level Psychology, students develop various mathematical skills essential for analysing and interpreting data. These include understanding and calculating descriptive statistics such as mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation. Students learn to calculate percentages and ratios. They are also trained in presenting and displaying quantitative data using graphs, tables, scattergrams, bar charts, and histograms. Additionally, students explore normal and skewed distributions, recognising their characteristics. They analyse and interpret correlations, including calculating correlation coefficients, and understand different levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal, and interval. These skills are crucial for conducting and interpreting psychological research effectively.

Weighting of assessment objectives for A-level Psychology

Assessment objectives (AOs)	Component weightings (approx %)			Overall weighting (approx %)
	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3	
AO1	11-14	7-10	9-12	30-33
AO2	6-9	16-19	5-8	30-33
AO3	12-14	7-9	15-17	36-38
Overall weighting of components	33.3	33.3	33.3	100

When and how assessment of learning will happen

Students are assessed via an 'End of Topic Assessment' at the end of each module. There is one formal set of mock exams at the end of the first year (June).

Self and peer assessment will happen regularly in lessons. Students will engage with exam style assessment activities in most lessons. Some independent learning tasks will also be formatively assessed.



The final exams/ assessment

Students will complete three 120 minute examination papers at the end of their two year programme.

A-level

Component	Maximum raw mark	Scaling factor	Maximum scaled mark
Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology	96	x1	96
Paper 2: Psychology in Context	96	x1	96
Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology	96	x1	96
		Total scaled mark:	288

Independent Learning Expectations

Students will complete exam style essay questions regularly as independent tasks. They will be required to extend their research and learning beyond the classroom via a variety of mediums e.g. websites, films, webinars, podcasts etc...

Students will need to consolidate their notes and develop effective revision strategies. They should also complete examination style questions and self-assess these against the published mark schemes.

Useful Information

Students will be required to purchase a textbook for the first year of their course: https://www.illuminatepublishing.com/wp-content/uploads/samples/AQA_Psychology_for_A_Level_Year_2_Student_Book_2nd_Edition/

They will be joined to a Google Classroom in which all lesson resources will be stored. There will also be access to extended research and information via the Google Classroom.

