



Year 12 Psychology Curriculum Overview

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and how we behave. On this course students will develop a broad understanding of human behaviour as well as the skills to understand and interpret research findings concerning human behaviour. In year 12, we introduce our students to this multidisciplinary subject through exploring theories into what makes us conform, how we assess and treat mental health disorders, where information is stored in our memory and how early childhood attachment impacts later behaviour. There are three exams in the AQA Psychology specification and much of year 12 addresses Paper 1 – *Introductory topics in Psychology (33.3% of overall grade, 2 hours and 96 marks)* and part of Paper 2 – *Psychology in Context (33.3% of overall grade, 2 hours and 96 marks)*. This year builds a fantastic skill and knowledge base that our students develop further in their 2nd year of study looking at the rest of Paper 2 and Paper 3 which covers more complex topics like Schizophrenia and Forensic Psychology. Although all examination skills are explored and assessed throughout the course, each half term will have a specific skill focus to ensure all skills are consistently applied but also forensically explored for thorough understanding of psychological study and application. These skills are addressed in the outline of each topic below.

Term/Length of Time	Outline	Assessment/Teacher Feedback Opportunities	Homework and Literacy resources
Autumn term	Research methods part 1 Seen as the building blocks to any applied science, research methods will build students' knowledge and skills of the scientific method and techniques. This allows students to develop an understanding of how successful and credible research studies are conducted, allowing them to evaluate research studies claiming to support popular theories within psychology. Research methods is a double weighted section worth 50% of paper 2, but also is examined throughout all sections in all papers. The topic is therefore split into 4 parts with this first part consisting of the basics like types of experiments and how we collect our participants. Although students could be asked a 12 mark 'design a study' essay which will include some of this first part, the key focus of skill development of this section will be short answer questions based on 'knowledge acquisition' which range from multiple choice to 4 mark questions. Larger research methods questions will be addressed in the 3 rd part of research methods when students have more experience and knowledge of psychological research.	<i>Every topic will have two formal assessments, most of which are marked by the teacher in depth to provide feedback on how to improve. Additionally, every lesson has exam question practise and model answers given to consistently allow students the opportunity to assess their own progress and develop skills leading up to the formal assessments. Teachers regularly check in class exam practise and give verbal feedback.</i> Formal assessments: 1) Short answer questions sat in timed conditions and then self	Recommended revision guide/textbooks for all topics in year 12: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS: 2nd Edition by Cara Flannigan (TEXTBOOK) - AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS Revision Guide: 2nd Edition by Cara Flannigan (REVISION GUIDE) <i>We also recommend www.physicsandmathstutor.com as they have detailed notes on every topic, every past paper, and past paper questions organised by topic. This is completely free!</i>

		<p>assessed using mark schemes to develop the skill of assessing one's own work, and reading a-level mark schemes. <i>This is the only formal assessment self-assessed.</i></p> <p>2) End of topic test consisting of short answer questions and an extended 'design a study' essay.</p>	<p>Homework for all psychology topics: <i>In psychology, all topics have a similar homework structure:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Revision resources are completed by the students and then checked after each topic by the teacher.</i> 2. <i>For all other topics, students will have weekly short answer questions on the previous topic taught to complete each week that will take them roughly 1 hour to revise and complete. Model answers to these questions are given in class for students to assess their progress. These questions are based on the previous topic as students will have exams at the end of year 13 on all topics taught so it is important students consistently revise all topics, not just the current one being taught</i> 3. <i>Prior to the Spring and Summer mock, a detailed revision schedule will be embedded in</i>
	<p>Social influence Social influence refers to how our social surroundings (other people) can influence our behaviours. In this topic pupils will explore obedience and minority influence in detail. For each type of social influence pupils will discover various explanations (e.g. Why do we obey members of authority?). In addition, pupils will then apply their knowledge of social influence to historical events, such as the Holocaust: why did so many people obey Hitler's murderous commands? Why did Sarah Everard get in the car with a man she'd never met? There are also synoptic links with Social influence and many other units the students will study over the two years, including 'Research Methods' and 'Issues and Debates'! This topics allows students to develop an eye-opening understanding of societal behaviour and social change but also how we can avoid instances of blind obedience to ensure cases such as the holocaust never happen again! This term the skill development is 'knowledge acquisition and application' which will give students the building blocks they need to understand what a key study or theory is comprised of and how they will need to apply this to the exam.</p>	<p>Formal assessments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A 16 mark essay question. As this is the first extended piece of writing that will be assessed, students are given an extended time frame and a writing frame to help scaffold this exam skill. 2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions. 	

Autumn term	<p>Approaches</p> <p>Assessed in paper 2, approaches covers most aspects of psychology to allow students to gain an understanding of the main assumptions. Psychology as an applied science is incredibly broad and multifaceted and students will explore the main explanations of human behaviour. The approaches covered are 'Behaviourism' exploring whether we learn all our behaviour through what is rewarded and consequence in our upbringing, 'Social Learning Theory' suggesting we learn all behaviour from our role models, 'Cognitive Psychology' questioning whether our mind is like a computer system inputting, storing and outputting information and the 'Biological Approach' suggests all behaviour is genetically inherited or down to evolution! Additionally, the 'Psychodynamic approach' popularly pioneered by Freud himself suggests our behaviour is driven by our unconscious desires and lastly the 'Humanistic approach' looks at how counselling has been revolutionised to support clients to becoming their best self! As this topic is synoptic in the sense it underpins many other topics, a predominant skill needed evaluation to allow students to unpick whether the theory can be used to explain all behaviours and disorders. Therefore a key focus this term is evaluation skills and extended writing.</p>	<p>Formal assessments:</p> <p>1) A 16 mark essay question with a scenario that students are required to apply a theory to explain the behaviour in the scenario. This has a writing frame to model the expectation of structure.</p> <p>2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions with some questions on the previous topic of research methods to support consistent revision of the whole course.</p>	<p><i>place of the weekly questions to give structure to students revision. This is not in place of all the revision they should do for these mock exams, more so it complements the independent study expected.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Students are required to read a chapter of a book/research paper that is linked to the topic they are studying. This reading is provided to the students.</i></p>
	<p>Memory</p> <p>In the memory topic we look in depth at the different types of memory stores and ways that we can explain how information gets processed from our environment, remembered and even, in some cases, forgotten! In particular, we focus on key theoretical models of memory, known as the 'multi-store model' and the 'working memory model'. This is the perfect topic for A-level students as it has some key take-away messages of how best we can remember information to help with that all important revision that students must do for internal assessments and exams! Alongside this, students also investigate how issues with our memory can have huge implications for eye-witness testimonies and on occasion can result in false-convictions! Within this topic, pupils will have the opportunity to put their own memories to the test: do you truly remember as much as you think you do? There are also synoptic links with Memory and many other units the students will study over the two years, including 'Research</p>	<p>Formal assessments:</p> <p>1) A 16 mark essay question without a writing frame but extended time to assess whether students fully understand the structure expected.</p> <p>2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions with some questions on the previous topic of social influence to support consistent revision of the whole course.</p>	<p><u>Optional homework & literacy resources BY TOPIC:</u></p> <p>Research methods</p> <p>Reading list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Little Book of Psychology – Emily Ralls</i> - https://www.bps.org.uk/about-psychologist - Link to 'The Psychologist' a magazine published by the British Psychological Society. <p>Podcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Speaking of Psychology (American Psychological Association discussing latest research) (Spotify/Apple music)</i>

	Methods' and 'Approaches'! Memory is a classic topic with modern and traditional theories and concepts of how we store information, which allows the termly skill focus of evaluation to fit well with this element of psychology.		Social influence Reading list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Lucifer Effect</i> – Zimbardo - https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-33/april-2020/coronavirus-psychological-perspectives - Articles related to Covid-19 continually updated - <i>Conformity: The Power of Social Influences</i> by Cass R Sustein Podcasts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Invisibilia (questions why we interact with others the way we do)</i> (Spotify/Apple music) Documentaries/films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>12 Angry Men</i> - <i>The Experimenter</i>
Spring term	Attachment Attachment refers to a two-way emotional bond between an infant and caregiver. In this topic, students will study various explanations of attachment, including both evolutionary and learning theories. In addition to this, students will also explore cultural difference in child rearing behaviours and how this can impact the types of attachments that children around the world will go on to develop. On the darker side of this topic, we will also explore what can happen to a child if they are deprived of attachment or are never able to form an attachment at all by looking at real life case studies of children, such as Genie! Within this topic, pupils will have the opportunity to show off their knowledge of attachment by raising their own infant (an egg) for a week and keeping a diary log. There are also synoptic links with Attachment and many other units the students will study over the two years, including 'Research Methods' and 'Approaches'! The spring term key skill is that of application whereby students need to be able to read a scenario and apply knowledge to explain key behaviours and abnormalities.	Formal assessments: 1) An 8 mark question with a scenario to apply knowledge to, to develop an understanding of the differences in structural expectations between 8 mark and 16 mark essays. 2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions with some questions on the previous topic of memory to support consistent revision of the whole course.	Memory Reading list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foster J. K. (2009) <i>Memory: A very short introduction</i>, Oxford (Good short book giving you all you need to know about memory) Podcasts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>All in the mind (in depth look at the brain and how we function)</i> (Spotify/Apple music) Documentaries/films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Notebook</i>
	Clinical Psychology and Mental Health Clinical psychology refers to the study of mental disorders in terms of their causes, development, course, classification, and treatment. Students will explore the characteristics, potential causes and then treatment processes of phobias, OCD and depression. Within this topic students will also have the chance to investigate 'healthy happiness' strategies within our international school project where in groups, they will research non-drug related strategies for coping with low mood during winter months and present their findings to their class. There are synoptic links with clinical psychology and many others units the students have studies and will go onto study, like 'Approaches' and 'Forensic Psychology'. This topics allows students to develop an understanding of life debilitating disorders, debug any misconceptions they have and overall give them a flavour of	Formal assessments: 1) A 16 mark essay question with a scenario to apply theory to with exam based timings and no writing frames to assess individual needs allowing bespoke intervention regarding exam skill to be delivered. 2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions with some questions on the previous topic of approaches to	

	clinical psychiatry. This topic lends itself well to the termly skill focus of application where students will be given a scenario where someone's phobic disorder, for example, is outlined and theory is to be used to unpick that behaviour.	support consistent revision of the whole course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>50 First Dates</i> Approaches Reading list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Reaching Down the Rabbit Hole: Journeys into the Human Brain by Dr Allan Ropper and Brain David Burrell (Biological and cognitive approach)</i>
Summer term	Research methods part 2 This is a continuation of the research methods initially delivered at the start of the term, however here we look at multiple concepts like numeracy and basic statistical analysis, an introduction to types of data gathered and analysed, how research is reviewed to ensure it is credible and how the study of psychology benefits the economy. This term the skill focus is topic based and understandably students will be assessed on the mathematical ability to ensure all students at all levels are able to develop data analysis skill and understanding.	Formal assessments: 1) Short answered questions self assessed 2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions with some questions on the previous topic of attachment to support consistent revision of the whole course.	Podcasts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Hidden Brain (50 minute episodes on sources from around the world – links to humanistic psychology)</i> - <i>Under the Cortex (delves into science about how we think, behave and learn – links to all approaches) (Spotify/Apple music)</i>
	Biopsychology (Partial) What happens if we have half of our brain removed? Why do taxi drivers have a significantly larger part of their brain used for spatial awareness than others? How does our body react in a fight or flight situation? Why does one twin have a biological disorder but other Biopsychology is a multidisciplinary field that investigates how the brain influences our behaviours, thoughts and feelings. Seen as the most biological fact of psychology, it explores various concepts like how certain behaviours could be inherited, how we investigate the brain giving insight into cognitive neuroscience, and what various parts of the brain are responsible for. Students will have an emphasis on joint skills in this topic, where they will emphasise the practise of both evaluating and applying knowledge in extended essay based questions.	Formal assessments: 1) A 16 mark essay question exam timings and no writing frame. 2) An end of topic test comprised of both short and extended answer questions. This will include psychopathology questions to support consistent revision of the whole course. (This will be in year 13 due to half being taught in year 12, and then half being taught in year 13).	Documentaries/films: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Dangerous methods (Psychodynamic approach)</i> Clinical Psychology and Mental Health Reading list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Happiness Hypothesis by Jonathan Haidt</i> - <i>Reaching Down the Rabbit Hole by Dr Allan Ropper</i> - <i>The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat by Oliver Sacks</i> - <i>The Happiness Hypothesis by Jonathan</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Psychopath Test</i> by John Ronson <p>Podcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Happiness Lab</i> (Lecturer from Yale University discussing how to be happy based on research!) (Spotify/Apple music) <p>Documentaries/films:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>A beautiful mind</i> - <i>Shutter Island</i> - <i>Black Swan</i> <p>Attachment</p> <p>Reading list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Harry Potter books!</i> (links to attachment theory, childhood experiences and development) <p>Podcasts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Invisibilia</i> (questions why we interact with others the way we do) (Spotify/Apple music) <p>Documentaries/films:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>KIDS</i> (a Channel 4 documentary series on children in care, filmed in Coventry) - <i>Inside the mind of 4 year olds</i> (BBC Docuseries) <p>Biopsychology</p> <p>Reading list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Reaching Down the Rabbit Hole</i> by Dr Allan <p>Podcasts:</p>
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