



**I. Examination board and  
course title:**  
AS / A Level Psychology  
AQA

**QAN Number:**  
601/4837/8; 601/4838/X  
**Specification: 7181, 7182**

**GDA**



## 2. Course overview

Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. It relates to all aspects of everyday life from our personal relationships to our career goals.

The A Level Psychology course offers you an opportunity to learn about the science behind human behavior. Gain an understanding into how psychological research is conducted and used to develop theories about human behaviour.

Some of the questions you will attempt to answer will be, 'Why do we obey authority figures and what impact does this have on society?'; 'How does our memory work?'; 'Where do phobias come from and how do we treat them?' and many more besides.

You will also consider a variety of issues, debates and approaches that psychologists consider when attempting to explain complex and abstract human behaviours; for example, how culture plays a part in theory development, and the nature vs. nurture debate.

In addition to all of this you will develop your critical analysis skills, independent thinking, and research skills throughout the course, which are all highly valued by Higher Education (HE) and employers.

A Level Psychology is a 2 year linear course; which means that what we cover in year one will be tested again at year two and you will be expected to show a greater depth of knowledge than in the AS exams.

### **What will I learn?**

At AS level you will cover the following topics;

- **Introductory Topics in Psychology**  
Social influence / Memory / Attachment
- **Psychology in Context**  
Approaches in Psychology / Psychopathology / Research methods

These will be assessed in two exam papers.

At A-level (year 2) you will also cover the following topics;

- **Introductory Topics in Psychology**  
Social influence / Memory / Attachment
- **Psychology in Context**  
Psychopathology / Approaches in Psychology /  
Biopsychology / Research methods
- **Issues and Options in Psychology**  
Issues and debates in Psychology / Relationships /  
Schizophrenia / Aggression

These will be assessed in three exam papers.

### 3. Assessment outline

At the end of year 1 there will be two written exam papers;

- **Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology**  
**1 hour 30 minutes / 72 marks in total / 50% of AS**  
Section A, B & C: multiple choice, short answer and  
extended writing, 24 marks each
- **Paper 2: Psychology in Context**  
**1 hour 30 minutes / 72 marks in total / 50% of AS**  
Section A, B & C: multiple choice, short answer and  
extended writing, 24 marks each

At the end of year 2 there will be three written exam papers;

- **Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology**  
**2 hours / 96 marks in total / 33.3% of A-level**  
Section A, B, C & D: multiple choice, short answer and  
extended writing, 24 marks each
- **Paper 2: Psychology in Context**  
**2 hours / 96 marks in total / 33.3% of A-level**  
Section A & B: multiple choice, short answer and extended  
writing, 24 marks each  
Section C: multiple choice, short answer and extended  
writing, 48 marks

- **Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology**  
**2 hours / 96 marks in total / 33.3% of A-level**

Section A: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section B: one topic from option 1, 9–11 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section C: one topic from option 2, 12–14 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section D: one topic from option 3, 15–17 above, multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

There will also be regular informal assessments throughout the course to assess your individual progress.

#### **4. Entry requirements**

Grade C or above in GCSE Triple Science Award or grade C or above in two science GCSE's.

Grade 5 or above in Maths GCSE as we will be analysing and interpreting data and making simple statistical calculations.

Overall, at least 10% of the marks in assessments for Psychology will require the use of mathematical skills. These skills will be applied in the context of Psychology A level and will be at least the standard of higher tier GCSE Mathematics.

Grade 5 or above in English as a high level of literacy is also required, due to the required essay writing and written exams.

#### **Extracurricular activity**

Various trips to university lectures and related days out are available to support the content within the A Level Psychology course.

#### **5. Career pathways**

Studying psychology provides you with a vast number of options. Just some of the potential career options open to you include: educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, social work, advertising, counselling, the police force and many more.