

Examination Board: AQA

Overview

What is Psychology?

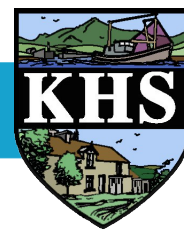
Psychology is often defined as the scientific study of behaviour. This means that virtually anything which organisms do, from humans to simple animals, is part of the subject matter of Psychology.

Psychologists have undertaken the task of describing behaviour thoroughly and objectively, and of constructing theories which allow the variety and complexity of behaviours to be related to underlying principles.

These qualifications are linear. Linear means that students will sit all the AS exams at the end of their AS course and all the A-Level exams at the end of their A-Level course.

AS LEVEL

Unit	Content	Assessment
Introductory Topics in Psychology (Social Influence, Memory and Attachment)	<p>Types of conformity; conformity to social roles; explanations for obedience; explanations of resistance to social influence; minority influence; the role of social influence in social change.</p> <p>The multi-store model of memory; types of long-term memory; the working memory model; explanations for forgetting; the accuracy of eyewitness testimony and how to improve it.</p> <p>Caregiver-infant interactions in humans; animal studies of attachment; explanations of attachment; types of attachment; cultural variations in attachment; Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation; the influence of attachment on childhood and adult relationships.</p>	<p>2x 1 1/2 hour papers</p> <p>Each worth 50% of AS</p>
Psychology in Context	<p>Origins of Psychology; learning approaches; the cognitive approach; the biological approach - the division of the nervous system, the structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons, the function of the endocrine system; the fight or flight response.</p> <p>Definitions of abnormality; the behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of phobias, depression and OCD; the behavioural approach to explaining and treating phobias; the cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression; the biological approach to treating OCD.</p> <p>Experimental method; observational techniques; self-report techniques; correlations; scientific processes data handling and analysis (quantitative and qualitative data, primary and secondary data, descriptive statistics, presentation and display of data, distributions and introduction to statistical testing).</p>	<p>Papers consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer & extended writing</p>



A LEVEL

Unit	Content	Assessment
Introductory Topics in Psychology	Social Influence Memory Attachment Psychopathology See AS content	3x 2 hour Papers Each worth 33% of A Level Papers consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer & extended writing
Psychology in Context	Same as AS content above plus: The psychodynamic approach; Humanistic psychology and Comparison of approaches Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation; Ways of studying the brain and Biological rhythms; Content Analysis; Case Studies; Reliability; Features of science; Reporting psychological investigations; Analysis / interpretation of correlation; Levels of measurement; Content analysis and coding	
Issues and Options in Psychology	Gender and culture in Psychology; Free will and determinism; the nature-nurture debate; Holism and reductionism; Idiographic and nomothetic approaches and Ethical implications of research and theories Piaget's theory of cognitive development: and stages of intellectual development. The development of social cognition: Selman's level of perspective taking. The role of mirror neurons in social cognition and Theory of Mind as an explanation for Autism. Classification of schizophrenia; Biological explanations for schizophrenia; Psychological explanations for schizophrenia; Drug therapy; Cognitive behaviour therapy and Interactionist approaches Neural and hormonal mechanisms in aggression, including the role of the limbic system, serotonin and testosterone. Genetic factors in aggression, including the MAOA gene. Institutional aggression in the context of prisons. Media influences on aggression, including the effects of computer games.	

Careers

Art therapist, aviation psychologist, child care worker, clinical psychologist, counsellor, correctional treatment specialist, criminal investigator, crisis counsellor, cognitive psychologist, developmental psychologist, educational psychologist, employment recruiter, engineering psychologist, environmental psychologist, family and marriage therapist, financial aid counsellor, forensic psychologist, grief counsellor, health psychologist, human resources advisor, journalist, lawyer, market researcher, music therapist, neurologist, occupational therapist, probation officer, psychiatric social worker, public relations agent, publishing agent, psychiatrist, recreational therapist, rehabilitation counsellor, social worker, sports psychologist, statistician, teacher, youth worker