

A Level Psychology

at The Warriner School



Psychology A level

Exam Board—AQA

Entry requirements: Maths Grade 6, English language Grade 6, Science Core Grade 6

Psychology is a linear A Level

Course is assessed by three equally weighted 2 hour written papers at the end of two years

Papers contain a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing

Aims

- Develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas within Psychology and how they relate to each other
- Develop and demonstrate a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods
- Develop competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem-solving skills
- Develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject
- Understand how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society

Paper 1

Social influence - how do others influence us to conform or obey?

Memory - how is memory organised and what affects our recall of events?

Attachment - how do our very first relationships with our mothers/carers influence us?

Psychopathology - what are the causes and cures for OCD, depression or phobias?

Paper 2

Approaches in Psychology - what is the best way to study human behaviour? E.g. Looking at behaviours, thoughts, feelings or biochemicals?

BioPsychology – looking at: nervous system; brain structure and function; neural mechanisms; hormones; stress responses; biological rhythms.

Research Methods - what techniques and methods used by psychologists and why?

Paper 3

Issues and debates in Psychology – eg nature/nurture; gender bias; determinism

Gender – what makes us male/female and masculine/feminine?

Schizophrenia – classification, explanations and treatments

Forensic Psychology – offender profiling, explanations, dealing with offensive behaviour

Assessment 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.

Continued...

Answering essay-style questions

This is a skill which must be acquired throughout the course which involves demonstrating critical and conceptual understanding in a coherent prose style. Alongside a grasp of theories, facts and research. Students must be able to present their answers so that the following are evident:: relevance, structure, evaluation, argument.

Future Careers

Studying Psychology at will give you lots of options for your career, especially if you are interested in working with people or in areas that need good problem solving skills. This is because it develops a number of valuable transferable skills in analysis of ideas and data and clear scientific prose writing.

If you wish to pursue Psychology at degree level and beyond then the main areas for work are:

Clinical Psychology - working in mental health eg in hospitals

Counselling - therapists

Academic Psychology – researching and teaching in universities

Educational Psychology – helping children and young people with learning

Occupational Psychology – improving industry and business practices

Forensic Psychology – working with prisons and police

Sports and exercise Psychology – motivation, participation and excellence

However, only about 20 per cent of Psychology graduates end up working as professional psychologists. This does not mean that Psychology graduates do not use the skills they have learnt. They are well placed for careers and further training in many fields and often go on to work in disciplines such as:

- Health and social care
- Marketing and PR
- Management and Human Resources
- Education
- Public sector work
- Detective