



# PSYCHOLOGY

Examination Board: EDEXCEL  
Specification: Advanced GCE 9PS01

## Why should I study Psychology?

Psychology is about people and people are fascinating. Studying psychology we explore fundamental questions about the way we experience and make sense of the world around us and how we behave in it. What makes us who we are? Why do we behave in the ways that we do? Studying psychology is interesting and challenging and makes you think about abilities and social behaviour that you take for granted. You will develop your oral and written communication skills, your scientific thinking and your powers of critical analysis, in a lively, yet focused, productive and supportive atmosphere.

## What will I learn about?

### Paper one – Foundations in Psychology

The content of this paper introduces students to important psychological ideas and ways of thinking through study of four key areas in Psychology. Social psychology is all about the ways in which people understand and affect each other. Students learn about destructive obedience to authority and the causes of prejudice. Cognitive psychology is all about how human memory works and students apply their knowledge to questions about the best way to study and the accuracy of eyewitnesses. In biological psychology students learn how behaviour is influenced by the brain and nervous system and their relationship with behaviour such as aggression. Learning theories is a topic that addresses the ways in which people's behaviour is influenced by their environment. Students learn, amongst other things, about how phobias can be explained and treated.

### Paper two – Applications of Psychology

The content of this paper invites students to study two topics in considerable depth. In Clinical Psychology, students learn about how psychologists classify, diagnose and treat psychological disorders such as schizophrenia and depression. Criminological Psychology is all about how psychology is applied within policing and the criminal justice system. Students learn how psychologists explain criminal behaviour and role that psychology can play in police investigations and criminal trials. By applying to these topics the concepts and theories studied in paper one students develop a more sophisticated understanding of how Psychology works as a science.

### Paper three – Psychological Skills

Whilst learning about the course content, students develop a range of psychological research skills by carrying out their own practical investigations. They also develop thinking skills, and explore broad debates that appear repeatedly within the field. These skills and understandings are assessed on paper three, which draws together the entire content of the course.



### How will I be taught?

We use a wide range of teaching and learning techniques to deliver the subject in a dynamic and engaging manner. In a psychology lesson you might find yourself applying psychology to real-life problems, analysing your own or others' behaviour, discussing theories or research or pulling apart a (model) brain to find out what's inside. You will always be expected to get involved, try things out and explain or defend your ideas, views and conclusions. Outside class you will have preparation tasks for new topics, essays and exam questions to help you consolidate your understanding and develop your skills in thinking and writing like a psychologist. But you might also conduct a survey or observation so your class can analyse the data or ask your family members about what you were like when you were two years old. Everything you do outside class will be relevant to making you a better psychologist and helping you get the best examination grade you can.

### Application beyond school:

Psychology at A Level is a Science qualification but it combines well with humanities, creative arts, languages, mathematics or the physical sciences. The course provides an introduction to the field for anyone considering a career in applied psychology areas such as sport, criminal behaviour, mental health or education. It is an approved science subject for many medical schools as well as being ideal for those intending to follow higher education courses in business, law, journalism, media, theatre studies and many others. Knowledge of psychology is useful in careers as diverse as product design, advertising, management, computing and IT, health care, teaching, policing and the military. Indeed, psychology has applications in nearly every career.

### Assessment Format:

Level	Component	Requirements	Duration	Marks
A Level	Paper 1 Fundamentals of Psychology	Social psychology, bio-psychology, cognitive psychology, learning theory	2 hours Year 13	90 35% of A Level
A Level	Paper 2 Applications of Psychology	Clinical psychology, criminological psychology	2 hours Year 13	90 35% of A Level
A Level	Paper 3 Psychological skills	Research methods and statistics, synoptic review or studies, themes, issues and debates.	2 hours Year 13	80 30% of A Level

**Are there any special requirements?** Grade 7+ in one of GCSE English, Mathematics, a science, or an humanity is required as is an interest in why people do the things they do. You also need self-motivation and discipline and the ability to work independently and as part of a team. Good grades in Mathematics and the Sciences are advantageous.