

# PSYCHOLOGY

## Course Content

### KS4

(Years 10 and 11)

In key stage 4 the Edexcel specification is set up to help students develop an awareness of why psychology matters, acquire knowledge and understanding of how psychology works and its essential role in society. Additionally students will develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and social, cultural, scientific and contemporary issues, and its impact on everyday life and develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology. Students will also develop a critical approach to scientific methods and evidence. Furthermore it provides an introduction to the key concepts and contexts of psychology enabling progression to study A Level Psychology.

#### Overview of content of Unit 1:

Topic A: How do we see our world?

This topic focuses on perception and illusions, drawing on biological and cognitive psychology.



Topic B: Is dreaming meaningful?

This topic addresses Freud's dream theory and the theory of activation synthesis.

#### Overview of content of Unit 2:

Topic C: Do TV and video games affect young people's behaviour?

This topic covers causes of aggression including psychological and social causes.

Topic D: Why do we have phobias?

This topic considers social learning, conditioning and evolutionary causes of phobias.

Topic E: Are criminals born or made?

This topic considers proposed biological and social causes of criminality.

### KS 5

(Years 12 and 13)

The aims of the Edexcel A Level topics in Psychology are to allow students to appreciate the scientific nature of psychology and to engage in contemporary debates through an understanding of research. Students will demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of psychology and essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other. In addition students will be able to describe ethical, safe and practical techniques and processes.

They will be able to understand qualitative and quantitative methods and analyse, interpret, explain and evaluate the methodology resulting in the impact of their own and others' activities in a variety of ways.

#### Paper 1 Description

This paper is designed to introduce the social, cognitive, biological and learning approaches to psychology through the development of key content areas. The unit is divided into four parts, Social Psychology: obedience and prejudice, Cognitive Psychology: memory, Biological Psychology: Mechanisms within our body and how behaviour is affected focusing on aggression and Learning Psychology: Conditioning, Reinforcement and punishments.

## **Paper 2 Description**

The aim of this unit is to enable students to study how psychology can be applied to the real world. It focuses on the treatment of mental health issues. The unit is intended to further contextualise and make real the understanding of approaches. There is a focus on evaluation, assessment, application and comment as well as on knowledge. Students will be completing a compulsory clinical section and one out of 3 applications.

## **Paper 3 Description**

This is a synoptic section in which students will be asked to draw on other areas of the qualification in order to understand conceptual and methodological issues. Students will develop an understanding of how to use theories and evidence from many areas of psychology and apply them to the issues.

## **How Learners Are Assessed:**

### **Summary of assessment at Key stage 4**

Assessment has recently become linear, in that, all students taking Psychology will sit two examinations, i.e., unit 1 and 2, in June of that year.

### **Key Stage 4 Overview of Assessment**

This is assessed through two external examinations.

#### **Unit 1 breakdown:**

##### **This includes Topics A and B only.**

The paper consists of multiple-choice and short-answer questions, and lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes.

There are 60 marks in the examination and the result contributes 40% of the total grade for the full GCSE.

#### **Unit 2 breakdown:**

##### **This includes Topics C, D and E.**

The paper consists of multiple choice questions, short answers and some extended writing and lasts 1 hour and 45 minutes.

There are 90 marks in the examination and the result contributes 60% of the total grade for the full GCSE.

### **Summary of assessment at Key Stage 5**

Edexcel level 3 Advanced GCE in Psychology is structured into nine topic areas. Topics 1-4 are compulsory and focus on Social, Cognitive, Biological and Learning approaches. Topics 5-8 focus on how our understanding of psychology is applied today. Topic 5 (Clinical psychology) is compulsory. Only one topic will be studied from Topics 6, 7 and 8. Lastly topic 9 is a summary of the psychological skills and research methods covered throughout the course.

## **AS Units- First year of A Level**

### **Unit 1 (Social and Cognitive Psychology):**

#### **Paper 1**

The paper consists of a section of mixed type questions, including stimulus response and short answer questions. It lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes and is worth 70 marks and 50% of the total AS mark.

#### **Paper 2**

### **Unit 2 (Biological and Learning Theories):**

The paper consists of a section of mixed type questions, including stimulus material and short answer questions. It lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes and is worth 70 marks and 50% of the total AS mark.

## **A2 units- Second year of A Level**

**Paper 1: Foundations of Psychology** (This paper will include Social, Cognitive, Biological and Learning theories.) In addition it has a topic E section titled 'Issues and Debates' which has 20 marks and comprises of two extended response questions. There will be a formulae and statistics table given in the paper and the use of a calculator is permitted. It is worth 90 marks, 2 hours long and 35% of the total qualification.

**Paper 2: Applications of Psychology:**

The paper is composed of two sections. Students must answer **all** questions from Section A (mandatory clinical section) and all questions from **either** Topics 6 (Criminological), 7 (Child) or 8 (Health).

Section A has 54 marks and comprises of mixed question types, including data-response and short answer questions and a 20 mark essay covering the topic area of clinical psychology.

Section B presents students with a choice of one from three optional topic areas. Each section totals 36 marks and comprises of mixed question types, including data response questions, short answer and extended responses.

The assessment is 2 hours long, consists of 90 marks and 35% of the total qualification. The formulae and statistical tables will be given in the paper and the use of a calculator is permitted.

**Paper 3: Psychological Skills**

There are 3 sections and questions from 3 sections.

Section A has 24 marks and comprises of mixed questions, including data-response and short answer questions covering the topic of research methods.

Section B has 24 marks and comprises two extended response questions based on psychological studies given in Topics 1-4.

Section C has 32 marks and comprises two extended response questions covering the topic area of 'Issues and Debates' in psychology.

The assessment is 2 hours long, consists of 80 marks and 30% of the total qualification. Statistical tables and formulae will be given and the use of a calculator will be permitted.

**Homework**

Homework plays an integral part of the course and students get to develop and enhance their independent working skills. Psychology has an array of different tasks such as researching a topic, creating leaflets, carrying out surveys, completing exam questions, preparing speeches/presentations and sketching diagrams. Essentially homework will reinforce a topic taught or prepare students for the next lesson. It is set every week in KS4 and KS5.

**Revision, Intervention and Enrichment**

Underachieving learners are encouraged to attend after school sessions. There are also Saturdays and some holiday booster sessions which are held in preparation for examinations.