

Psychology A-Level

Entry Qualifications

In addition to the standard College entry criteria (see below) students are also required to have achieved grade 5 or above in GCSE English Language, grade 4 or above in GCSE Maths and a minimum of two GCSE Sciences at grade 4 or above.

What will I study?

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour, characteristics and functioning. The first year introduces the core foundations of the subject via the different approaches used to explain human behaviour (behaviourist, cognitive and biological), the range of research methods used to investigate it scientifically, and statistical techniques for analysing data from research.

You will learn about theory and research which can help answer questions such as: Why do we conform or obey? Why do we forget? How can we improve eyewitness testimony? How and why does a bond develop between infants and their caregivers? Can we define what is normal and abnormal? How can we explain and treat illnesses such as depression and OCD?

The second year builds on this foundation through investigation of topics such as gender, sleep, aggression and stress. You will also extend your study of approaches and research methods, as well as learning about controversial debates in Psychology: Is behaviour due to 'nature' or 'nurture'? Do humans have free will?

How will I study?

Teaching methods are varied and include teacher-led activities, class discussion, group work, use of videos and student-led research and presentations. To support your progress, you will be set regular tests and assignments. Help is available from peer mentors and teachers.

How is the course examined?

There are three 2-hour exams at the end of the second year. All exams contain a mix of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions. Additionally, regular internal assessments will take place throughout the course.

Where next?

Students will develop skills valued by Higher Education and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research. Knowledge of psychology would be useful in many careers, for instance, medicine, education, probation work or human resources. To become a psychologist you will need a good Psychology degree followed by postgraduate training in areas such as clinical, educational or forensic psychology.

What does the course combine well with?

As the course covers a broad range of issues and skills, it is suitable for students from diverse backgrounds and combines well with most subjects.

College Entry Requirements

We normally expect applicants to have achieved good GCSE passes in at least six subjects, these must:

- demonstrate the suitability for Advanced Level study
- have been achieved at Grade 4/C as a minimum
- include two at Grade 5/B as a minimum
- include English Language - a minimum grade of 4/C

Mathematics - If not achieved within the scope of the above should normally be achieved at grade 3/D. If mathematics is not achieved at grade 4/C then it will be a requirement to continue to study at the correct level until a grade 4 is achieved. Subjects with a mathematical content will require a higher grade.
