

Subject level Level 3 (vocational) and A-level

Subject context

- Psychology is the scientific study of behaviours and mental functions.
- In Psychology we study topics such as:
- **Social Psychology** – Why do we conform to peer pressure? Why do we follow orders from ‘authority’?
- **Memory** – How does memory work? Why do we forget?
- **Child development** – Do our relationships with our parents determine our future relationships?
- **Bio Psychology** – The structure of the nervous system and how do neurons communicate?
- **Psychopathology** – What makes some people more/less ‘normal’?
- **Research Methods** – How do psychologists conduct psychological research?
- What courses can I choose?

LEVEL 3

- **Applied Psychology** (National Extended Certificate)
- Grades needed: College level 3 entry requirements, plus English Language grade 4, Maths grade 4, two Sciences grade 4
- **A level Psychology** (AQA specification)
- Grades needed: College level 3 entry requirements, plus English Language grade 5, Maths grade 4, two Sciences grade 4

Deadline Please try and complete this before your normal summer holidays would begin, but at least before the start of college in September.

Estimated time required to complete activity 3 - 5 hours

Resources required Internet

Assignment details

TASK 1 – The Stanford Prison Experiment

For this first task, we will look at one of the most famous experiments in psychology.

Watch this video about the experiment using this link:

<https://bit.ly/2KHWxE8>

Now answer these questions:

1. Where you surprised by what you saw?
2. What does this study tell us about human behaviour?
3. Do you think it was right for Zimbardo to carry out this study? (Are there any ethical problems?)

TASK 2 - Other Psychology studies

In preparation for A level Psychology it would be helpful to read and think critically about current psychological research. You can access a variety of research studies

via The British Psychological Society (BPS) Research Digest:

<https://digest.bps.org.uk/>

Choose THREE research studies from the website above. These could be studies in the feed that you find particularly interesting, or you could use the search box to find research relating to some of the topics you will study next year (e.g. memory, attachment, conformity, obedience, phobias, OCD, depression).

For each of the three studies that you have chosen, complete the following questions. Try to keep your answers to each of the questions brief.

NOTE: The Research Digest website includes a mixture of psychological research studies and other general articles about psychological topics. To complete the tasks below you will need to find examples of psychological *research*.

1. What are the names of the psychologists or the name of the study?
2. What is the aim of the study? (What question is it about?)
3. Who are the participants/ the individual or group of people used in the study?
4. What did the participants in the study have to do? (Different participants may have had to do different things) or how was the study conducted?
5. What did the study find?
6. What conclusions can be drawn from this study?
7. What are the limitations with the study?
8. Could the findings from the study be useful in any way?

TASK 3 – Design a questionnaire

In Psychology, we like to ask people questions to try and understand their behaviour. Two ways which we can do this are interviews and questionnaires.

Do some research online looking at how psychologists carry out interviews and design questionnaires. Pay particular attention to ethical issues and the need for confidentiality. This web page might help:

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/questionnaires.html>

Imagine you are a psychologist and you want to collect data on how people use social media, using a questionnaire.

Below are some steps you might like to use:

1. Conduct some online to look for articles or studies about the psychology of social media, such as this one: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-first-impression/201611/the-psychology-social-media>. This background research will help you to develop some ideas on what you could focus on in your questionnaire.
2. Create a short questionnaire that you then give (e.g. by email or a free online survey generator) to some family and friends, asking them about their use of social media, e.g. what they use it for, what are the benefits and downsides, or any other aspect you're interested in. You might want to use some rating scales for this e.g. 1-5, simple 'yes/no' questions or checklists. You could also include one or two open questions. Keep all of the questions optional and do not share the data with anyone else.
3. Write up a small report on what you have done (up to 2 sides of A4) and what your findings are. Try to draw a table and a bar graph of your main results. Do not identify any names of participants in your results!
4. From your results, can you draw any conclusions or make any recommendations for people using social media?

We hope you have found these tasks interesting and that they have given you some insight into what Psychology is about. We look forward to seeing you at the College!