

PSYCHOLOGY

Course Length: Studied over two years
Examination Board: AQA
Course Leader: Mrs J Eaton (eaton@queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk)

Course Content

The Psychology A-level science course ensures that all students are given the opportunity to acquire the experimental and practical skills essential for further study and successful scientific research.

The mathematical skill in Psychology is taught and understood at and beyond the level of Mathematics required for a GCSE grade 4. Students taking A-level Psychology are required to have a grade 5 in GCSE Mathematics (over 10% of the assessment tests mathematical ability).

Paper 1 - Introductory topics in Psychology

1 - Social Influence: What makes people follow the crowd and what gives some of us the power to resist? Why do you follow an authority figure?

2 - Memory: Can you remember everything you have done in the last 24 hours and what happens when you invent events to fill the gaps?

3 - Attachments: How are emotional bonds with our caregivers built and how do earliest attachments leave a lasting mark on our lives?

4 - Psychopathology: What does it mean to be abnormal? An exploration of the definitions, explanations and treatments of psychological disorders including; phobias and depression.

Paper 2 – Psychology in Context

1 - Approaches in Psychology: Where does psychology originate from? Who were the key researchers that established the main approaches we study in psychology today?

2 - Biopsychology: Focuses on explaining behaviour biologically by considering the role of genetics, brain physiology and biochemistry. What happens to your brain following injury?

3 - Research Methods: Scientific methods are explored alongside a thorough consideration of the ethical issues relating to psychological research.

Students are required to carry out mathematical equations including algebra, percentages, ratios amongst other skills.

Paper 3 - Issues and Options in Psychology

1 - Issues and Debates: What is the nature vs. nurture debate? Is psychological research biased to males? This explores the different issues that arise throughout psychological research and how best to deal with them.

2 - Schizophrenia: How does a psychiatrist decide whether a patient has a mental illness such as schizophrenia and depression? Why do these definitions vary so much between cultures?

3 - Relationships: Theories of the formation, maintenance and breakdown of romantic relationships. For example, reward/need satisfaction, social exchange theory.

4 - Forensic Psychology: Forensic psychology looks at how we define, explain and treat criminal behaviour using psychological theories and research.

Assessment

Paper	Title	Assessment	A Level
1	Introductory Topics in Psychology <i>Social influence, Memory, Attachment & Psychopathology</i>	Written Exam: 2hr	33.3%
2	Psychology in Context <i>Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology & Research Methods</i>	Written Exam: 2hr	33.3%
3	Issues and Options in Psychology <i>Issues and Debates, Schizophrenia, Relationships & Addiction</i>	Written Exam: 2hr	33.3%