

# **PSYCHOLOGY**

**Examination Board:** AQA Specification A  
**Specification Number:** AS-1181 A-2181

## **Why Study PSYCHOLOGY to AS Level?**

Are you curious about human behaviour? If you are, then you will enjoy Psychology. If you have ever wondered why people (including yourself) react in the way that they do, then Psychology will give you some very interesting ideas to think about.

## **Why Study PSYCHOLOGY to A2?**

A2 Psychology builds on the concepts and ideas you learn about at AS level and prepares you for possible degree level study in Psychology. It is a very good subject to study in comparison with other A levels, even if you are not intending to study Psychology at university.

## **Entry Requirements**

The absolute minimum entry requirement is C grades in English and Mathematics, with C grades in **at least three** other subjects. However, you are unlikely to pass AS or A2 Psychology if your **average GCSE grade across all subjects is lower than C**.

## **Higher Education**

There are a wide range of degree courses in Psychology as well as joint degrees with other subjects. These can lead on to specialist training in a particular area of Psychology if you wish to study beyond first degree level.

## **Careers**

Careers in Psychology are many and varied because understanding human behaviour is recognised as being so important to all areas of life. Medical careers include clinical psychology, psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Other areas include sports psychology (which is becoming increasingly sought after by people doing sports at all levels), forensic psychology, teaching psychology at school and university level, occupational psychology, counselling, advertising, educational psychology etc.

## **Course Content**

Psychology involves study for two modular examinations of 1.5 hours each at AS level and a further two at A2 level of 1.5 hours and 2 hours. There is no coursework in Psychology.

## **Unit 1: Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Research Methods**

In Cognitive Psychology we study how memory works and what consequences this has for eyewitness testimony in court cases. In Developmental Psychology we study the types of emotional bonds which we form with our parents (attachments) and how this

affects our everyday lives, particularly with regard to day care for children. In Research Methods we look at the many different ways in which Psychologists research human behaviour and the strengths and weaknesses of these methods. We also look at how Psychologists design investigations and how they analyse the data they collect.

### **Unit 2: Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences**

In Biological Psychology we study how the body responds to stress and the effects of stress in everyday life. In Social Psychology we study conformity and obedience, and the effects of these kinds of social influence on our everyday lives. In Individual Differences we look at how we define and explain abnormality and how these ideas affect the ways in which we treat people who are different.

### **Unit 3: Topics in Psychology**

There are a range of topics for this paper and you have to study three of them. We are likely to be studying Biological Rhythms and Sleep, Aggression, and Eating Disorders. In each of these topics we will explore the research and ideas in these areas to give you a sense of what debates and developments are taking place with regard to these types of human behaviour.

### **Unit 4: Psychopathology, Psychology in Action and Research Methods**

In Psychopathology we will study either anxiety disorders, depression, or schizophrenia. In Psychology in Action we will study either media psychology, the psychology of addictive behaviour, or anomalistic psychology (study of the paranormal like ESP and telepathy). In Research Methods we will build on the AS level work to give you an understanding of the more advanced issues which psychologists have to deal with when conducting research.

Updated 22/09/08