

## Psychology AS and A level (AQA - A)

### What is the Psychology Department like?

The Psychology Department is one of the largest in the college being responsible for the work of about 450 students and the vast majority of students achieve an excellent pass rate.

The psychology courses we offer aim to enable students to realise their own potential by creating an atmosphere of enthusiasm and responsibility for their own learning, encouraging them to become self motivated and effective learners.

According to the British Psychological Society *'Psychologists are committed to increasing the understanding that people have of their own and other's behaviour in the belief that this understanding improves the human condition and enhances human dignity'*.

We are housed in an impressive set of classrooms and offices with a computer suite on hand which we use regularly to complete 'on line' experiments and class work.

The teaching involves a variety of approaches designed to suit different abilities and learning styles. We try hard to help any student with his or her own learning difficulties such as dyslexia and to stretch those with high academic ability. There are also opportunities for students to attend relevant conferences and apply for the Psychology Advanced Extension Award (AEA).

### What is the course about?

The course aims to provide a broad, balanced and challenging introduction to a wide range of psychological theory, research and application. It aims to provide opportunities to develop skills of analysis, interpretation and evaluation, encouraging students to challenge their own thinking. Examples of topics covered include memory, attachments, stress, abnormality, social influence and research methods.

### What sort of work will I be doing?

In psychology a variety of teaching and learning styles are used to allow a great deal of flexibility in our approach. These include lectures, videos, use of ICT, open-learning units, small group work, revision and individual tutorials.

### How will I be assessed?

<b>AS Examination</b>	
<b>Unit 1</b>	
1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the total AS marks
Structured questions: Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology and Research Methods	
<b>Unit 2</b>	
1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the total AS marks
Structured questions: Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences	

<b>A2 Examination</b>		
<b>Unit 3</b>		
1 hour 30 minutes Three essay-style questions.		25% of the total A-Level marks
<b>Unit 4</b>		
2 hours One essay-style question and two structured questions.		25% of the total A Level marks

### **What qualifications are recommended?**

A minimum of five GCSE subjects at Grade C or above including English, Mathematics and Core Science. In addition, a Grade C or above in GCSE Additional Science or in one (preferably Biology) or more Separate Sciences.

Very few students will have done GCSE Psychology, and it is not necessary to have done so in order to take Psychology at AS or A Level.

### **What are the progression routes with this qualification?**

Psychology A Level is taken by students doing a wide range of other subjects including both arts and sciences. Students of A Level Psychology go on to do a wide range of courses and careers, with Psychology now being a very popular choice of course in Higher Education. A qualification in Psychology may be relevant to a number of different career options including: market research, advertising, social work, teaching, nursing, the police service and personnel management. Professional psychologists work in a variety of fields including industry, education, sport, the NHS etc.

### **What skills will I develop during this course?**

Psychology will provide the opportunity to develop your skills in communication, information technology and application of number as well as improving your study and research skills.

### **What extra work can I do?**

Additional background reading is helpful and encouraged by the department in order to develop depth of understanding of the subject matter. The department provides a substantial reading list as well as recommending, when appropriate, further reading to support AS and A Level work in progress. There are also opportunities for extension work and extra practice in typical examination questions. Students are invited to attend revision workshops which are run during lunch time at various points in the academic year.