



Psychology

One year AS/Two year A level.

This course is assessed through 100% examination. Psychology is often not what students first think it will be, so we would recommend you read the course outline carefully and seek subject specialist advice at our recruitment events before making your decision.

The course is of a scientific nature and requires the close analysis and evaluation of a range of complex psychological studies, research methods, issues and debates. Your answers must therefore be psychologically grounded and there is no room for creative writing, anecdotes or personal experience. You will be required to read and closely analyse a great deal of psychological material and produce very focussed answers. We explore a range of interesting and at times controversial studies, which are assessed rigorously in the examinations. You will be required to read original studies as this is not a textbook-based course.

There is quite a large amount of Biology involved in the course as we also study the structure and function of the brain as well as the role of genes in determining our behaviour. The research methods psychologists use are also central to the course at both AS and A2 and you will explore the strengths and weaknesses of them. The nature-nurture debate, ethics and an evaluation of the different approaches in Psychology are amongst the recurrent themes you will be dealing with.

Requirements:

The College minimum to start an advanced level course is one grade B and four grade Cs at GCSE. The specialist nature of this course means that entry requirements will be higher. Students wishing to undertake this course require BB in Core and Additional Science GCSE and there may be other requirements which will be discussed at interview. The student will also be expected to meet the Average Points Score for this subject.

This subject will focus on:

AS

- we cover core studies from different approaches on a wide variety of areas including: the reliability of mental illness diagnosis, obedience to authority figures, brain structure and function; and
- the variety and use of research methods used in psychological research is also key to the course and includes laboratory experiments, observations and interviews.

A2

- we take your AS studies further as we deal with more applied areas of Psychology; and
- we then revisit and extend your studies in areas such as the approaches and research methods.

You can expect to:

- develop a critical understanding of psychological research, theories and approaches;
- develop your ability to critically discuss and evaluate a variety of studies, theories and approaches;
- develop your written and verbal communication skills through the close analysis of key pieces of research;
- develop your research and analysis skills; and
- read original journal articles.

Method of assessment:

Assessment is by examination only and involves focused shorter-answer questions and essays.

Progression:

Some students go onto study Psychology as a degree in its own right, whereas others choose to combine it with other subjects like Sociology, Law, Criminology and the Sciences.

Many careers involve Psychology including management, mental health work, forensic science, research and medicine. It can also make an extremely valuable contribution to other careers such as human resources, social work, policing and, of course, teaching.

Other information:

You must have a very good eye for detail, enjoy the sciences and produce essays. You must also be prepared to undertake a great deal of further reading outside of lessons. We hope you enjoy this challenging and stimulating subject as much as we do!