

A level Psychology

Why study Psychology?

- Psychology literally translates as 'the study of the human mind' – but Psychology is more than this. Psychology is everywhere around us. It is intriguing, it is emotional, it is scientific and above all, it is thought provoking.
- This course offers you the opportunity to learn about the science behind human behaviour by understanding how research is conducted and used to develop theories and laws about human behaviour.
- You will then go on to explore the many different strands of Psychology such as Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Forensic Psychology, Psychopathology and Biological Psychology. Furthermore, you will also consider issues and debates that psychologists consider when attempting to explain complex and abstract human behaviours, such as schizophrenia.



Why study Psychology at Solihull Sixth Form College?

- You will develop skills highly valued by Higher Education (HE) and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills.
- Being an independent learner is vital to your success in A level Psychology. You will be expected to prepare before all lessons. In class, we will use group work, presentations and discussions to support / stretch and extend your understanding.
- You will be taught by highly experienced teachers many of whom are also examiners. They will therefore provide you with expertise that will enable you to maximise your potential and make progress in every lesson.
- The Psychology department at Solihull Sixth Form College is highly resourced; teachers are passionate about this subject and in lessons bring the subject to life.

Case Study

Among the recent successful learners to have taken this course is **Jennifer Wright**.



She came to the College from Heart of England School and excelled at A level, achieving an A* grade in Psychology, as well as A grades in English Language and Fine Art. She has elected to pursue a Digital Media apprenticeship instead of going to university.

“My teachers were so supportive. No question was too small for them to make time for me and direct me to textbooks or past examples to help me. Their friendliness and knowledge helped bring me out of my shell and unlock my full potential.”

- student Jennifer Wright



Course Outline

This is a two year A level course which is divided into 3 papers:

Paper 1 Introductory topics in Psychology – This paper will explore answers to the following questions:

Why do we conform to others despite privately disagreeing with them?

Why does anonymity lead to conformity?

Why do we forget?

What are the effects of childhood deprivation?

Does early attachment influence later adult relationships?

What are the characteristics of obsessive compulsive disorders?

Can therapy help people with phobias?

Paper 2 Psychology in context – This paper will explore answers to the following questions:

Can non-scientific research methods generate data that explains human behaviour?

What types of questions would you include in a questionnaire?

Do role models influence our behaviour?

Can our unconscious mind influence our behaviour?

Can animal behaviour explain human behaviour?

Which areas of the brain are responsible for speech, language and spatial tasks?

Paper 3 Issues and options in Psychology – This paper will explore answers to the following questions:

What explains the acquisition of human behaviours like depression – is it nature or nurture?

Do we have free will ?

What is the role of hormones and chromosomes in sex and gender acquisition?

What influences our gender identity?

What is schizophrenia?

Can schizophrenia be treated with drugs?

How can we profile a criminal?

Why do people commit crimes?

Assessment

No Coursework

Examination (100%) – There will be three two-hour papers at the end of the course (each worth 33.3% of the A level), for which we will prepare you thoroughly. Paper 1 will examine 4 topics which are Social Influence, Memory, Attachment & Psychopathology. Paper 2 will examine 3 topics which are Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology & Research Methods. The third paper will examine 4 topics which are Issues and Debates, Gender, Schizophrenia and Forensic Psychology. Each paper will consist of multiple choice, short answer, extended writing and research methods questions.

Exam Board - AQA

Special Entry Requirements

Psychology is a science subject which requires scientific thinking and writing throughout, and therefore a minimum grade 4 in Biology or 4-4 in Combined Science is required. Standard A level entry requirements also apply - www.solihullsfc.ac.uk/courses/entry-requirements. There is also a need to be genuinely numerate, as we will be analysing and interpreting data and making simple statistical calculations. Overall, at least 10% of the marks in assessments for Psychology will require the use of mathematical skills. Science and mathematics accounts for 25% of the final examinations.

Prohibited Options

None. Psychology goes well with all subjects.

What do our learners go on to do?

A high proportion of our Psychologists go on to study Psychology or a closely related course at university. Psychology can help your career either directly or indirectly. If you wish to become a psychologist, therapist or mental health worker, this A-Level is of direct value. Psychology can also be used alongside other science subjects to gain entry to medicine and other related professions. Many Psychology graduates tend to build careers in education, the police, social work and further research.

Cost Implications

There may be some travel costs for those learners who go on the visits to the universities with the Psychology Research School.

Complementary Subjects or Enrichment Courses

The College runs a Psychology Research School, which is an exciting Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) for learners interested in all aspects of psychology. The Psychology Research School involves learners conducting real psychological research with well-regarded universities e.g. University of Birmingham and Aston University.

Examination Results

In the past two years, this course has seen high levels of achievement:

Year	Pass Rate A*-E%	A*-C%
2022	100%	84%
2023	99%	69%

Contact

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