



PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology is defined as "the scientific study of mind and behaviour" (Gross 1981)

This challenging and academically demanding subject has proved to be extremely popular in the Sixth Form at KGS and since its introduction to the Sixth Form in 1995 it has attracted many students each year. It is a versatile subject to study at A-level and is classed as a scientific subject at the majority of UK universities where competition for undergraduate places in Psychology is high. It is accepted as an appropriate A-level for 99% of undergraduate courses including Psychology and allied medical careers, Law, Business related, Sports related and Mathematics degrees (students must check the individual subject requirements at their chosen university because university undergraduate requirements will vary). It is a highly desirable A-level for most apprenticeships and for anyone wanting to join the police, fire or prison service.

THE COURSE

Psychology gives an insight into why people behave as they do. Investigations, research design and statistics are an integral part of both Year 1 and Year 2 of the course. Biological knowledge is also developed throughout the course, particularly in terms of investigating the central nervous system, hormones and neurotransmitters and the effects of all these factors on typical/atypical behaviour. Students will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Psychological concepts and theories and are required to develop the skills to undertake and analyse research. In Year 1 students will study social influence, memory, attachment, approaches in Psychology, BioPsychology, Psychopathology and research methods. In Year 2 there are optional areas to study in addition to a compulsory section on issues and debates. The current choice of areas to study are: Relationships, Forensic Psychology and Schizophrenia (please note that these topics are subject to change). Research design and statistics may be examined on all three papers but it is always examined thoroughly on Paper 2.

The approved AQA A-level specification (7181 and 7182) is taught over two years. The underlying principle of the course is to engage students in the subject and provide effective assessment across the ability range. Year 1 and Year 2 subject content will be examined in 3 papers at the end of Year 2.

This linear method of examination will consist of three two hour examinations (Papers 1, 2 and 3). All papers will consist of compulsory sections with Paper 3 also containing three subject options. The government requirements are that 25-30% of psychology assessment should focus on research methods and statistics and 10% (within the 25%) should be mathematical content.

Psychology A-level combines well with many other A-level subjects but particularly Biology, Mathematics and Physical Education. Students who wish to go into Medicine or Dentistry should study Psychology at least to AS level if not beyond.

CAREERS

Potential careers for A-level students:

Educational Psychology

Clinical Psychology

Forensic Psychology

Criminal Psychology

Sport Psychology

Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy

Academic (Teacher/Lecturer)

Research Psychologist

Occupational Psychologist

Industrial/Organisational Psychology

Psychopharmacology

Consumer Psychology/Marketing

Personnel

Human Resource Management

Armed Forces

Medicine/Dentistry/Vet Science

Law