



## Long Term Plan-A-Level Psychology

**Rationale:** In A-Level Psychology, the aim is to prepare students for their A-Level exams whilst offering students an engaging and effective introduction to Psychology. The course takes students through the fundamentals of the subject, developing skills valued by higher education and employers, including critical analysis, independent research and thinking skills. Each topic with the A level focuses on building knowledge and understanding of psychological approaches, concepts, perspectives and methods in addition to the design of research and research methods, including their strengths and weaknesses. Students will build skills of interpretation, application, analysis and evaluation. The course begins with Social influence which takes students through some of the key research studies, perspectives and concepts which will be needed to study all units to follow. Research Methods is studied in the spring term as it summarises the methodological evaluation learnt throughout the year and adds depth, preparing students for the year 13 content. Retrieval and exam practice are regularly used in lessons and homework tasks focus on revision to secure knowledge in long term memory and ensure learning over time due to this being a two year linear course.

Term	Topic	Knowledge	Skills	Reading /wider reading
<b>Autumn term 1</b>	Social Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Types of conformity: internalisation, and compliance. Explanations for conformity: informational social influence and normative social influence, and variables affecting conformity including group size, unanimity and task difficulty as investigated by Asch.</li> <li>Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority, and situational variables affecting obedience including proximity and location, as investigated by Milgram, and uniform. Dispositional explanation for obedience: the Authoritarian Personality.</li> <li>Explanations of resistance to social influence, including social support and locus of control.</li> </ul>	<p>The assessment objectives for AQA A-Level Psychology are as follows;</p> <p>AO1-Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>AO2-Application</p> <p>AO3-Analysis and evaluation</p>	<p><a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/a-level/psychology-7182/specific-ation">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/a-level/psychology-7182/specific-ation</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology">https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.simplypsychology.org/">https://www.simplypsychology.org/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.physic sandmathstutor.com/psychology-revision/a-level-aqa/">https://www.physic sandmathstutor.com/psychology-revision/a-level-aqa/</a></p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minority influence including reference to consistency, commitment and flexibility.</li> </ul>		
<b>Autumn 2</b>	Memory	<p>The multi-store model of memory: sensory register, short-term memory and long-term memory. Features of each store: coding, capacity and duration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The working memory model: central executive, phonological loop, visuo-spatial sketchpad and episodic buffer. Features of the model: coding and capacity.</li> <li>• Explanations for forgetting proactive and retroactive interference and retrieval failure due to absence of cues.</li> <li>• Factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony: including leading questions and postevent discussion; anxiety.</li> <li>• Improving the accuracy of eyewitness testimony, including the use of the cognitive interview</li> </ul>		<a href="https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/revision-notes/a-level/psychology/aqa">https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/revision-notes/a-level/psychology/aqa</a>
	Attachment	<p>Animal studies of attachment: Lorenz and Harlow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanations of attachment: learning theory and Bowlby's monotropic theory. The</li> </ul>		





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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression: Beck's negative triad and Ellis's ABC model; cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT), including challenging irrational thoughts.</li> <li>• The biological approach to explaining and treating OCD: genetic and neural explanations; drug therapy</li> </ul>		
<b>Spring 2</b>	Research Methods	<p>Research methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experimental method. Types of experiment, laboratory and field experiments; natural and quasi-experiments.</li> <li>• Observational techniques. Types of observation: naturalistic and controlled observation; covert and overt observation; participant and non-participant observation.</li> <li>• Self-report techniques. Questionnaires; interviews, structured and unstructured.</li> <li>• Correlations. Analysis of the relationship between co-variables. The difference between correlations and experiments.</li> <li>• Content analysis.</li> <li>• Case studies.</li> </ul> <p>Scientific processes</p>		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aims: stating aims, the difference between aims and hypotheses.</li><li>• Hypotheses: directional and non-directional.</li><li>• Sampling: the difference between population and sample; sampling methods including: random, systematic, stratified, opportunity and volunteer; implications of sampling techniques, including bias and generalisation.</li><li>• Pilot studies and the aims of piloting.</li><li>• Experimental designs: repeated measures, independent groups, matched pairs.</li><li>• Observational design: behavioural categories; event sampling; time sampling.</li></ul> <p>Questionnaire construction, including use of open and closed questions; design of interviews.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Variables: manipulation and control of variables, including independent, dependent, extraneous,; operationalisation of variables.</li></ul>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Control: random allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation, standardisation and control groups</li><li>• Demand characteristics and investigator effects.</li><li>• Ethics, including the role of the British Psychological Society's code of ethics; ethical issues in the design and conduct of psychological studies; dealing with ethical issues in research.</li><li>• The role of peer review in the scientific process.</li><li>• The implications of psychological research for the economy.</li><li>• Reliability across all methods of investigation. Ways of assessing reliability: test-retest and inter-observer; improving reliability.</li><li>• Types of validity across all methods of investigation: face validity, concurrent validity, ecological validity and temporal validity. Assessment of validity. Improving validity.</li></ul>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Features of science: objectivity and the empirical method; replicability and falsifiability; theory construction and hypothesis testing; paradigms and paradigm shifts.</li><li>• Reporting psychological investigations. Sections of a scientific report: abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion and referencing</li></ul> <p>Data handling and analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quantitative and qualitative data; the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques.</li><li>• Primary and secondary data, including meta-analysis.</li><li>• Descriptive statistics: measures of central tendency – mean, median, mode; calculation of mean, median and mode; measures of dispersion; range and standard deviation; calculation of range; calculation of percentages; positive, negative and zero correlations.</li></ul>		
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation and display of quantitative data: graphs, tables, scattergrams, bar charts, histograms.</li><li>• Distributions: normal and skewed distributions; characteristics of normal and skewed distributions.</li><li>• Analysis and interpretation of correlation, including correlation coefficients.</li><li>• Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval.</li><li>• Content analysis and coding.</li></ul> <p>Inferential testing Students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of inferential testing and be familiar with the use of inferential tests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to statistical testing; the sign test. When to use the sign test; calculation of the sign test.</li><li>• Probability and significance: use of statistical tables and critical values in interpretation of significance; Type I and Type II errors</li></ul>		
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		Factors affecting the choice of statistical test, including level of measurement and experimental design. When to use the following tests: Spearman's rho, Pearson's r, Wilcoxon, MannWhitney, related t-test, unrelated t-test and Chi-Squared test.		
<b>Summer 1</b>	Approaches in Psychology	<p>Learning approaches: i) the behaviourist approach, including classical conditioning and Pavlov's research, operant conditioning, types of reinforcement and Skinner's research; ii) social learning theory including imitation, identification, vicarious reinforcement, the role of mediational processes and Bandura's research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cognitive approach: the study of internal mental processes, the role of schema, the use of models to explain and make inferences about mental processes. Cognitive neuroscience.</li> </ul> <p>The biological approach: the genetic basis of behaviour: genotype, phenotype and evolution. Influence of biological structures and neurochemistry on behaviour. Cognitive neuroscience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The psychodynamic approach: the role of the unconscious, the structure of personality, that is Id, Ego and Superego, defence mechanisms including repression, denial and displacement, psychosexual stages.</li> </ul>		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanistic Psychology: free will, self-actualisation and Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, congruence, the role of conditions of worth.</li> <li>• Comparison of approaches</li> </ul>
<b>Summer 2</b>	Start year 13 content	

Rationale				
Term	Topic	Knowledge	Skills	Reading /wider reading
<i>Autumn term 1</i>	Issues and Debates	<p>Gender and culture in Psychology – universality and bias. Gender bias including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias; cultural bias, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free will and determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism; biological, environmental and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations.</li> <li>• The nature-nurture debate: the relative importance of heredity and environment in determining behaviour; the interactionist approach.</li> <li>• Holism and reductionism: levels of explanation in Psychology. Biological</li> </ul>		

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	Biopsychology	<p>reductionism and environmental (stimulus-response) reductionism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation.</li> <li>• Social sensitivity in psychological research</li> </ul> <p>The divisions of the nervous system: central and peripheral (somatic and autonomic).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons. The process of synaptic transmission, including reference to neurotransmitters, excitation and inhibition.</li> <li>• The function of the endocrine system: glands and hormones.</li> <li>• The fight or flight response including the role of adrenaline.</li> <li>• Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques, including functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI); electroencephalogram (EEGs) and event-related potentials (ERPs); post-mortem examinations.</li> <li>• Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation: motor, somatosensory, visual, auditory and language centres; Broca's and Wernicke's areas, split brain research. Plasticity and functional recovery of the brain after trauma.</li> </ul>		
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<b>Autumn 2</b>	Gender	<p>The role of chromosomes and hormones (testosterone, oestrogen and oxytocin) in biological sex. Diversity in sex development, including androgen insensitivity syndrome, Klinefelter’s syndrome and Turner’s syndrome.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender identities, including binary, non-binary and gender fluid. How gender has been measured using the Bem Sex Role Inventory.</li> <li>• Biological explanations of gender development, including chromosomes and hormones.</li> <li>• Cognitive explanations of gender development, Kohlberg’s theory, gender identity, gender stability and gender constancy; Martin and Halverson’s gender schema theory.</li> <li>• Social learning theory as applied to gender development. The influence of culture and media on gender roles.</li> <li>• Gender incongruence: biological and social/cultural explanations.</li> </ul>		
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	Schizophrenia	<p>Positive symptoms of schizophrenia, including hallucinations and delusions. Negative symptoms of schizophrenia, including speech poverty and avolition. Issues in diagnosis: co-morbidity, culture and gender bias and symptom overlap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biological explanations for schizophrenia: genetics and neural correlates, including the dopamine hypothesis.</li> <li>• Psychological explanations for schizophrenia: family dysfunction and cognitive explanations, including dysfunctional thought processing.</li> </ul>		
Spring 1	<p>Schizophrenia</p> <p>Forensic psychology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug therapy: typical and atypical antipsychotics.</li> <li>• Cognitive behaviour therapy and family therapy as used in the treatment of schizophrenia.</li> <li>• The importance of an interactionist approach in explaining and treating schizophrenia; the diathesis-stress model.</li> </ul> <p>Offender profiling: the typology approach, including organised and disorganised types; the data driven approach, including</p>		



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		<p>investigative psychology; geographical profiling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biological explanations of offending behaviour: genetics and neural explanations.</li> <li>• Psychological explanations of offending behaviour: Eysenck’s theory of the criminal personality; cognitive explanations; level of moral reasoning and cognitive distortions, including hostile attribution bias and minimalisation; differential association theory.</li> <li>• Dealing with offending behaviour: the aims of custodial sentencing and the psychological effects of custodial sentencing. Behaviour modification in custody. Anger management and restorative justice programmes.</li> </ul>		
<b>Spring 2</b>	Revision and exam preparation			
<b>Summer 1</b>	Revision and summer examinations			
<b>Summer 2</b>	Revision and summer examinations.			