

A-Level Psychology: Summer Booklet

Welcome to A-Level Psychology!

This booklet will help you gain a head start before September by introducing core ideas and giving you tasks to build your confidence and curiosity.

We encourage you to work through this booklet at your own pace over the summer. It will help you prepare for the course and hit the ground running in September!

What is Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and behaviour. It's about trying to understand *why* people think, feel, and act the way they do. Psychologists explore a vast range of topics, from how our brains process information and form memories, to why we conform to group pressure, or what causes mental health conditions.

It's a diverse subject that uses scientific methods to gather evidence and test theories. You'll learn about classic studies, groundbreaking theories, and how psychological knowledge is applied in the real world, from therapy to marketing, and even sports performance.

Your AQA A-Level Psychology (7182) Course Overview

Year 1 (AS Level Content - what you'll start with):

- **Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology**
 - Social Influence
 - Memory
 - Attachment
 - Clinical Psychology and Mental Health
- **Paper 2: Psychology in Context**
 - Approaches in Psychology
 - Biopsychology
 - Research Methods

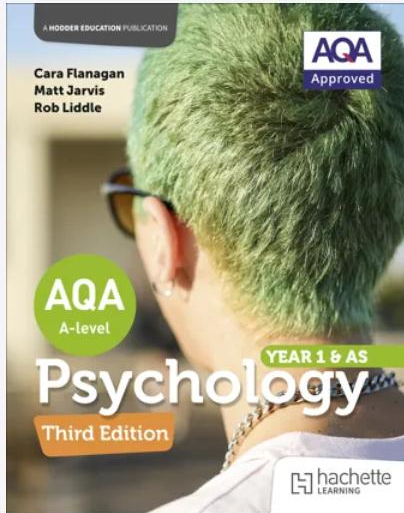
Year 2 (A-Level Content - building on Year 1):

- **Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology**
 - Issues and Debates in Psychology
 - Three options topics: Relationships, Schizophrenia and Addiction

Assessment:

At the end of Year 13, you will sit three exams, each worth 2 hours and 33.3% of your A-Level. All exams include a mix of multiple-choice, short answer, and extended writing questions. Research Methods content will be assessed across all three papers.

Your Essential Textbook



To support your learning throughout the course, you will need to purchase the following textbook:

AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS: Student Book (Third Edition)

- **Authors:** Cara Flanagan, Matt Jarvis, Rob Liddle
- **Publisher:** Illuminate Publishing
- **ISBN:** 978-1-0360-1197-0

This book will be your primary resource for learning the content and completing independent study tasks.

Social Influence - The Power of Others

Have you ever noticed how your behaviour changes depending on who you're with? Or how you might be persuaded by an advert or a friend? This is what Social Influence is all about!

Overview:

Understand how people's behaviour is affected by others. Study types of conformity, obedience, and how individuals resist pressure to conform.

Key Concepts:

- Types of Conformity: Compliance, Identification, Internalisation
- Explanations of Obedience: Milgram's study
- Minority Influence
- Social Change

Tasks:

1. Research **Milgram's obedience experiment** – summarize his method and key findings.
2. Watch this video: [CrashCourse: Conformity & Obedience](#) and write down 5 key takeaways.
3. Real-Life Examples: Think about your own experiences or observations involving social pressure or conformity. Explain how it links to psychology.

Research Methods - The Foundation of Psychology

Psychology is a science, and like all sciences, it relies on systematic and rigorous methods to gather evidence. Research Methods is the bedrock of psychology – it's how we know what we know!

Overview:

Psychology is based on research. You will learn how experiments are designed, how data is analysed, and how to spot flaws in research.

Topics to Explore:

- Aims and Hypotheses
- Sampling Methods
- Variables (IV & DV)
- Types of Experiment (lab, field, natural)
- Descriptive Statistics
- Ethics in Research

Tasks to Explore Research Methods:

1. Match each research term with its definition (create your own flashcards).
2. Try a basic experiment on friends/family: e.g., does music affect memory? Write down aim, method, results, conclusion.
3. Watch: [Research Methods - Simply Psychology Video](#)

Maths Skills for Psychology

Psychology A-Level requires you to apply basic mathematical skills.

Task: Practice Maths Skills

Work through the following problems. Show your working where appropriate.

1. Percentages:

- a) In a study, 40 out of 80 participants showed improved mood. What percentage of participants showed improved mood?
- b) A survey found that 65% of 200 students felt stressed about exams. How many students felt stressed?

2. Ratios:

- a) In an experiment, there were 15 male participants and 25 female participants. Express the ratio of males to females in its simplest form.
- b) If the ratio of people who prefer coffee to tea is 3:2, and 60 people prefer coffee, how many people prefer tea?

3. Fractions to Decimals:

- a. Convert the following fractions to decimals (to 2 decimal places if necessary):

i. a) $\frac{4}{1}$

ii. b) $\frac{5}{3}$

iii. c) $\frac{8}{7}$

4. Significant Figures and Decimal Places:

- a) Round 17.653 to 2 decimal places.
- b) Round 0.0481 to 2 significant figures.
- c) Round 2345 to 3 significant figures.

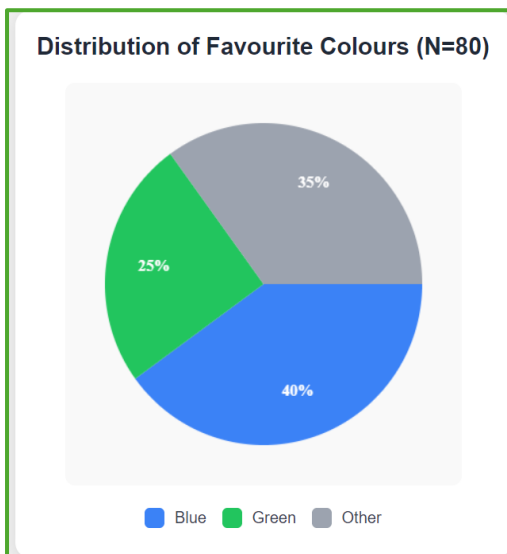
5. Measures of Central Tendency (Mean, Median, Mode):

- a. A psychologist recorded the number of hours of sleep for 10 participants: 7, 8, 6, 9, 7, 8, 5, 10, 7, 8.
 - i. a) Calculate the **mean** number of hours of sleep.
 - ii. b) Find the **median** number of hours of sleep.
 - iii. c) Identify the **mode** number of hours of sleep.

6. Measures of Dispersion (Range):

- a. Using the data from question 5 (7, 8, 6, 9, 7, 8, 5, 10, 7, 8):
 - i. a) Calculate the **range** of the sleep data.

7. Interpreting Data Presentation:



- a) How many students chose Blue as their favourite colour?
- b) How many students chose Green as their favourite colour?

Stretch Yourself – Bonus Tasks!

- Listen to the **Psychology Unlocked Podcast**
- Read the book “*The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*” by Oliver Sacks
- **Articles:** Keep an eye out for psychology-related articles in reputable newspapers (e.g., The Guardian, The Times science sections) or science magazines like Psychology Today

Explore Online:

- **Simply Psychology (simplypsychology.org):** An excellent resource for A-Level topics, providing clear summaries of theories and studies.
- **British Psychological Society (BPS) (bps.org.uk):** The professional body for psychology in the UK. Their website has information on careers, news, and research.
- **Tutor2u (tutor2u.net/psychology):** Offers detailed notes, revision materials, and exam tips for A-Level Psychology.
- **TED Talks (ted.com):** Search for "psychology" to find engaging talks on a huge range of psychological topics.

Psychology Curriculum learning journey



St Michael's Catholic School



Year 13 final exams – 3 papers (2 hours each)

Revision and exam preparation

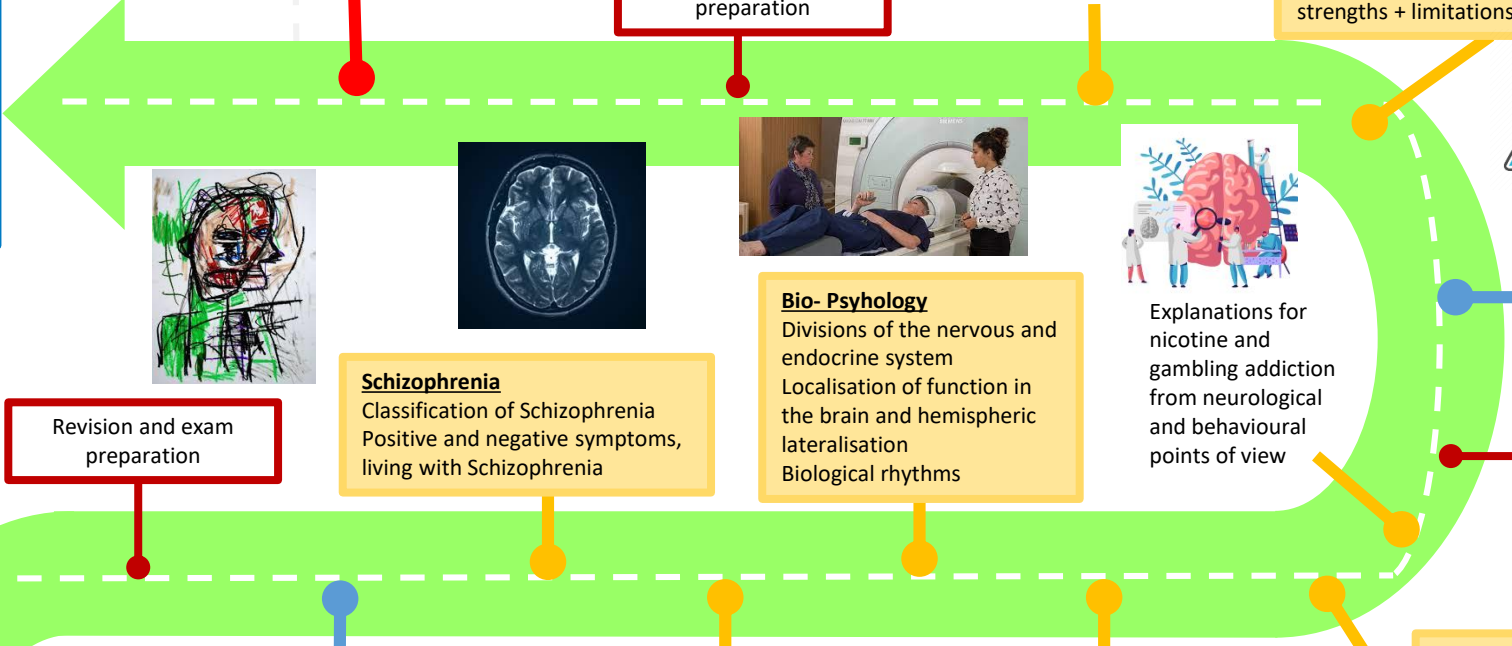
Review and development of all Y12 Research methods content

Research methods
scientific processes and techniques of data handling and analysis and their strengths + limitations

Use your Psychology A-level to get into degree course or career such as Psychiatry, Medicine, Sports Science, counselling, Education etc. Be an individual aware of human behaviour and reasons behind it.

Relationships
Evolutionary explanations, virtual relationships, parasocial relationships

Knowledge check test



Internal assessment - March

Revision and exam preparation

Revision and exam preparation

Schizophrenia
Classification of Schizophrenia
Positive and negative symptoms, living with Schizophrenia

Bio- Psychology
Divisions of the nervous and endocrine system
Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation
Biological rhythms

Explanations for nicotine and gambling addiction from neurological and behavioural points of view

Addiction
Physical and psychological dependence, risk factors, reducing addiction

Do relationships work like a business investment?

Mock exam – December

Insight from Biological, psychological and cognitive approaches.
Forms of therapies to treat disorder

Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques. fMRI, EEGs, ERPs
Recovery of the brain after trauma

Issues and debates:
Gender and culture bias
Free will and determinism
Holism vs. reductionism
Idiographic vs. nomothetic

End of Year 12 Mock Testing all year 12 content

Revision and exam preparation

Year 13

Ethical implications of research studies and theory including reference to social sensitivity

Attachment
Explanations of attachment
Caregiver-infant interactions in humans
Animal studies
maternal deprivation.

Psychopathology
Definitions of abnormality including the behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of:
-OCD - Depression -Phobias



Knowledge check test

Approaches in Psychology
Origins of Psychology
Comparison of approaches

Insight into cognitive, behavioural, learning, biological, psychodynamic, humanistic approaches

Accuracy of eyewitness testimony and how this impacts social justice. Improving EWT.

Are treatments of psychological disorders effective?

Memory
The multi-store model of memory
Types of long-term memory
The working memory model:
Explanations for forgetting

Influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships

Social Influence
Types of conformity, explanations of obedience
Minority influence
Role of social influence



Research methods
scientific processes and techniques of data handling and analysis and their strengths + limitations

What is Psychology?
Introduction to Psychology with key focus on building strong foundation of knowledge relating to key concepts that underly A-Level course. Establish assessment objectives.



Knowledge check test

Investigations by Asch, Zimbardo, Milgram into processes impacting human behavior.

Aims, hypothesis, sampling
Descriptive statistics, probability and significance, statistical testing

Knowledge of Scientific processes, data handling and analysis, inferential testing

Psychological concepts, theories, research methods and ethical considerations

Year 12



Department intent: The Psychology curriculum seeks to develop students' knowledge and understanding of human behaviour by unpacking perspectives on a range of topics such as social influence, psychopathology, relationships, addiction etc. whilst empowering students to have a greater appreciation and awareness of the world around them.