

Change to all A Levels

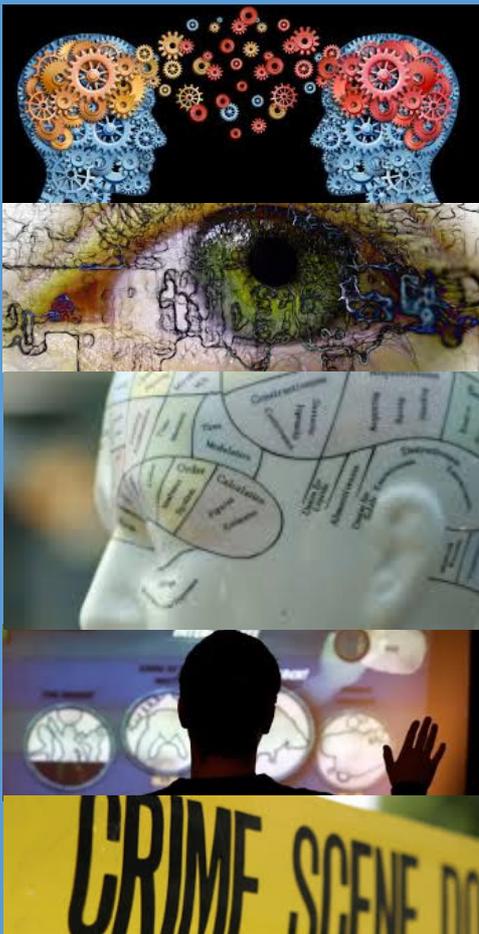
Changes are under way for all A levels in all schools and colleges and some awarding bodies have still not finalised their syllabuses for 2015. As a result, this guide is an illustration of the content but the exact details may change.

The most significant changes in A Levels and AS exams are:

- All assessment for A Levels will be through end of course exams with no practical element in most subjects.
- There will still be AS as one year “half A Levels” but you won’t be able to add an A2 to make them into a full A Level.
- This means if you want a full A Level you will need to decide that at the start of your course.
- You will still be able to combine A Levels with other types of qualifications such as BTECs.
- These changes are happening at different times for different subjects.
- These reforms may be halted depending on the result of the May 2015 General Election.
- You’ll have lots of support from us before you have to make your final choice of subjects.

Specifics for this subject:

The first teaching for the new examinations is in September 2015 leading to an end of course exam in 2017.



What is Psychology?

Psychology is the study of human behaviour and the mind, using a range of scientific methods to research and analyse the way we think, feel, act and interact with others.

Psychologists study human behaviour by observation, experimentation and testing. This in turn leads to the development of theories that are then the subject of further testing to establish if they are robust.

As an A Level subject, Psychology reflects the wide variety of applications of the subject in society including:

- Mental health;
- Child Psychology;
- Criminal Psychology;
- Environmental Psychology; and
- Sports Psychology.

By studying Psychology you will develop a strong understanding of research methods and the social, legal and ethical considerations Psychologists need to take into account in planning their studies.

What GCSEs do I need to study Psychology?

You do not need to have studied Psychology at GCSE to succeed at A Level. Subjects that will help you do well in Psychology are English (for essay and report writing), Maths (to ensure you are confident in statistical analysis and Science (especially Biology and Chemistry).

Psychology combines well with most subjects because it helps explain the social and professional behaviour of people in society.



What could I do with it afterwards?

Psychology is a very popular university subject because it is all about human behaviour and motivation.

Professional Psychologists work in a wide range of careers including medicine, business, education and child development, sports science, forensics and criminology, counselling, design and research.



What form does the assessment take?

All assessment is based on examinations at the end of the course.

The examinations are generally a combination of multiple choice questions, data analysis, short responses on research methodology and longer essay questions on practical applications of Psychology.

Course details

- **Research Methods**
 - Planning, conducting, analysing and reporting Psychological research
 - Experimental and non-experimental techniques
 - Choosing appropriate methods
- **Psychological themes through core studies**
 - Classic research studies (landmarks in the development of Psychology)
 - Contemporary studies that explore modern issues linked to classical studies
- **Applied Psychology**
 - Issues in mental health
 - Two themes chosen from:
 - ◇ Child Psychology
 - ◇ Criminal Psychology
 - ◇ Environmental Psychology
 - ◇ Sport and exercise Psychology
 - Underpinning methodological themes across all issues:
 - ◇ Does behaviour derive from nature or nurture?
 - ◇ Do we have free will or is our behaviour pre-determined?
 - ◇ Reductionism (breaking behaviour into small segments) v holism (viewing the whole behaviour pattern)
 - ◇ The influence of context
 - ◇ Ethical considerations in experimentation and observation
 - ◇ Social sensitivities in research and reporting
 - ◇ Scientific technique in the context of Psychology