



IBH & IBS Psychology – L6

Curriculum Intent

Psychology is the fascinating science of the human mind and behaviour drawing upon a number of disciplines and approaches to explore why people think and behave the way they do. Based on the same scientific principles as the physical sciences, this subject offers many opportunities to understand and apply principles of good research design. Building on GCSE mathematics and science, the research methodology and mathematical skills element accounts for approximately 30% of the total marks at A-Level in particular – these skills are also required for the IB students' Internal Assessments (coursework).

The curriculum is designed to provide students with a sound understanding of the psychological approaches and research methods that underpin Psychology in a way that covers the content for the examination but also relates to real-life applications and encourages critical thinking. The aim is to provide a rigorous, challenging, relevant and enjoyable course which will develop knowledge, skills and critical thinking as well as providing an effective skills bridge to Higher Education and signposting career next steps for the students.

Within the courses, options are chosen to provide the widest range of synoptic links both within each separate course, but also to provide some opportunities to crossover between them – for example, relationships and abnormality are chosen options for both A-Level and IB which allows teachers to cross-pollinate ideas, resources and studies from the two courses.

"It is not primarily our physical selves that limit us, but rather our mindset about our physical limits" **Ellen J. Langer**

Students will learn:

Psychology courses start by creating a 'toolkit' of the relevant approaches, their key concepts, ideas and applications to real life as well as a thorough grounding in research methodology. These concepts are then applied throughout the course through the content modules and options, finally culminating with an 'issues and debates' module bringing all the big ideas together, whilst being able to apply these skills to wide-ranging examination questions.

Psychology is the science of mind and behaviour. Students study three main psychological approaches-biological, cognitive and sociocultural along with compulsory and choice modules, all examined at the end of the two- year linear course with written examinations-two for standard level students and three for higher level students. The course itself uses a comprehensive digital textbook and resource centre called InThinking to which students are given access throughout their course. Additionally, from time to time printed text book sand study guides are also used to support students.

SL/HL Content:

Biological Approach
Cognitive Approach
Sociocultural Approach
Research Methods
Internal Assessment (start)

Additional HL Content
Abnormal psychology option
Health promotion option

How will we assess impact?

Our teaching will encourage the development and refinement of key evaluative and analytical skills; acquiring knowledge, developing an argument, extended writing and evaluating sources

Students will be assessed predominately through timed essay based assessments, linear knowledge tests, classroom discussion and end of year PPEs.

Key Concepts:

Biological Approach

Understanding how the Biological Approach explains the relationship between:

1. Brain and behaviour
2. Hormones/pheromones and behaviour
3. Genetics and behaviour

Additionally, HL students will apply knowledge in these three areas to the issues of the use of animals in research.

Cognitive Approach

Understanding how the Cognitive Approach explains:

1. Cognitive processes
2. The reliability of cognitive processes
3. The role of emotion in cognitive processes

Additionally, HL students will apply knowledge in these three areas to the influence of digital technology on cognition.

Sociocultural Approach

Understanding how the Sociocultural Approach explains:

1. Cultural influences on identity and attitudes
2. Cultural influences on behaviour and cognition
3. The relationship between the individual and the group

Additionally, HL students will apply knowledge in these three areas to the influence of globalisation on identity, attitudes and behaviour.

Higher Level Option - Abnormality

Students will investigate issues in the diagnosis of mental illness including diagnostic systems and the role of culture in diagnosis.

Higher Level Option – Health

Students will investigate issues around health promotion campaigns, their theoretical underpinnings and judging their effectiveness.

Ethics and Methodology

All students study research methodology and ethics as overarching issues across all modules studied.

How can learning be enriched at home?

InThinking contains many additional resources and activities plus links to videos and TED talks.

Oxford IB Psychology study guide

Hodder IB Psychology Study and Revision guide

There are many free online MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) relating to psychology. So many to choose from including: Future Learn-with free access to most courses for a limited time, Coursera, EdX, and OpenLearn from the Open University

General reference Gross, R. (2020) Psychology: The science of mind and behaviour (8th edn.). London: Hodder Education.

Porter, A. (2018) A degree in a book: Psychology -Everything you need to know to master the subject -in one book.

What does excellence look like?

- Acquisition of knowledge
- Developing the ability to frame big questions about theories, understanding key terms, researching studies and theories, understanding psychological approaches to explaining behaviour, summarising topic content.
- Beginning to explain theory and reality: being able to explain how theories and studies apply to real life behaviour; accepting that there may be multiple explanations for a given behaviour by applying the different psychological approaches.
- Identifying and developing a line of argument: being able to recognise and explain differing perspectives in psychology, comparing and contrasting the value of different theories and studies.
- Evaluating evidence: being able to consider reliability, validity and credibility of sources. To evaluate strengths and limitations of research studies and theories, understanding how bias may be present, and how psychologists work within the scientific paradigm.
- Developing essay writing skills: being able to respond to an issue raised within a question, plan and produce a well-supported and well-argued response to exam style questions with an appropriate balance of description, application and evaluation.

International Opportunities

Internationalism

- Community lectures on international themes
- International Day across the school
- Primary research using student cultural diversity

Diversity within the curriculum

- Ethnocentric theoretical analysis
- Afrocentrism v Eurocentrism
- International research methods

Student impact

Students studying psychology will be equipped to answer all examination questions to the best of their ability at the end of a two-year course which will provide them with a good understanding of the key issues and concepts as well as valuable learning skills such as note-taking, time management, and higher-order application and critical thinking.

They will enjoy studying a challenging and interesting subject with relevance to their own lives and some may feel this is the right next step for them at University or that the course provides useful support for a pathway into a career or further training



“Joy, rather than happiness, is the goal of life, for joy is the emotion which accompanies our fulfilling our natures as human beings. It is based on the experience of one's identity as a being of worth and dignity.”

Rollo May