|  |
| --- |
| Picture of DCG Logo. |
| **A-Level Psychology**  **Year 1 and 2** |
| **Course Handbook 2024-2025** |

A colorful watercolor drawing of a person's head

Description automatically generated

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Start Date** | **9th September 2024** |
| **End Date** | **Year 1: 7th July 2025**  **Year 2: 26th May 2025** |
| **Level of course** | **Level 3** |
| **Year of course** | 2024-2025 |
| **Awarding Body** | **AQA** |
| **Specification** | [AQA | AS and A-level | Psychology | Subject content – A-level](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology-7181-7182/subject-content-a-level) |

|  |
| --- |
| CONTENTS |

**​​​​**A list of students

Description automatically generated

**​**

**​**

**​**

**​**

|  |
| --- |
| YOUR TEACHERS AND THE TEAM AROUND YOU |

**Psychology Co-ordinator: Rajni Rampal**

Rajni has a BSc (Hon) degree in Psychology from Sheffield Hallam University. She studied for her PGCE at the Institute of Education (education school of UCL) which specialised in Post-Compulsory Education in Psychology. She has over 20 years of A-Level teaching experience in London, Surrey, Nottingham and Derby. She is also a Team Leader and A-Level examiner for AQA.

Email: [Rajni.rampal@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:Rajni.rampal@derby-college.ac.uk)

Room: F26

A person smiling for the camera

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

![A person wearing sunglasses

Description automatically generated with medium confidence]()

**Jessica O’Reilly** has a Psychology BSc (Hon) degree from Nottingham Trent University where she also completed her PGCE. She went on to further complete a Master’s in Education (MA) from the University of Nottingham. Jessica has taught GCSE and A-Level across Nottingham and Derby. She also is an examiner for AQA.

Email: [Jessica.turnbull@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:Jessica.turnbull@derby-college.ac.uk)

A person with a long beard

Description automatically generated

**Glyn Pickering** has taught A-Level Psychology for nearly 25 years and is a Chartered Psychologist, Chartered Scientist, and an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society. Studying a BSc (Hons) in Psychology at Loughborough University and completing the PGCE via the University of Greenwich in London. Glyn also supports the Applied Psychology programme as the Lead Internal Quality Assessor.

Email: [glyn.pickering@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:glyn.pickering@derby-college.ac.uk)

A person with long hair

Description automatically generated

Monisha has a BSc (Hon) degree in Psychology from University of Birmingham. She studied for her PGCE at the University of Wolverhampton which specialised in Psychology. Monisha has taught GCSE, A level and Applied psychology in Birmingham and now Derby. She has a particular passion for Biopsychology and Attachment.

Email: [Monisha.Daley@derby-college.ac.uk](mailto:Monisha.Daley@derby-college.ac.uk)

|  |
| --- |
| INTRODUCTION AND COURSE CONTENT |

About the Course

Welcome to A Level Psychology and well done for selecting Psychology as an area of study. Whatever the reasons for your choice I hope that you enjoy this course, and you gain much knowledge and pleasure from it. Psychology is a popular choice among students, it is the science of the mind (do not let anyone else tell you otherwise!).   
Studying A-Level Psychology requires you to be develop your analysis skills as well as draw upon your knowledge and understanding of psychological theories, approaches, and studies. [Psychology](https://www.learndirect.com/blog/should-i-take-gcse-psychology)explores why we behave the way we do as it helps us to understand the human mind and gives us insight into the motives behind our actions.  Through the work psychologists do we have gained a greater understanding of how the mind functions. The insight you will gain from studying Psychology A Level can help you better understand the people around you and as a result, this will make you more compassionate and give you real-life skills to apply in everyday situations.

**Which subjects does Psychology work well with?**

* **STEM Subjects: Biology, Chemistry and Maths**

It complements other science-based A Level subject which apply similar scientific methods of research investigation and lab-report write-up. The brain is the main organ of interest for psychologists and therefore the module of ***Biopsychology*** overlaps with the ‘hard’ sciences.

A substantial part of the ***Research Methods*** module involves understanding mathematical operations and statistics. This is not as advanced as Maths A Level, GCSE knowledge is sufficient.

* **Social Sciences: Criminology and Sociology**

Similarly, it complements other social sciences which aim to investigate human behaviour on a more applied and wider basis. ***Forensic Psychology*** is a year 2 module, and topics within ***Memory*** look at Eyewitness Testimony. These aim to answer questions about reasons criminals offend and how to improve the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. The application to forensics overlaps significantly with Criminology. Also, psychology aims to look at group behaviours and wider applications for society. Specifically, ***Social Influence*** in year 1 and ***Gender*** in year 2 overlap with Sociology.

* **Humanities: Law, Applied Law, Philosophy**

Law and Applied Law overlap in a similar way to Criminology. There is also an emphasis on implications for policy and the judicial system in some areas of the course. Before psychology became a subject, there was biology and philosophy. Therefore, philosophical underpinnings form the backbone of the subject and famous philosophers such as Ren**é** Descartes and John Locke have initial influence in later psychological theories. These are discussed in the ***Approaches*** module

|  |
| --- |
| OVERVIEW OF UNITS/MODULES/TOPICS |

Assessment overview – [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

In Year 1:

You will study the following topics:

* Approaches in Psychology  
  Research Methods
* Social Influence
* Memory
* Psychopathology
* Attachment
* Biopsychology (Nervous system, synaptic transmission, neurons and endocrine system)

**In Year 2:**

**You will study the following topics:**

* **Biopsychology**
* **Issues and Debates**
* **Gender**
* **Stress**
* **Forensic Psychology**

**AQA 7182 Exam structure:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Paper 1 (2hours, 33.3%, 96 Marks)** | **Paper 2 (2 hours, 33.3%, 96 Marks)** | **Paper 3 (2 hours, 33.3%, 96 Marks)** |
| Social Influence (24 marks) | Approaches (24 marks) | Issues and debates (24 marks) |
| Memory (24 marks) | Biopsychology (24 marks) | Gender (24 marks) |
| Attachment (24 marks) | Research Methods (48marks) | Stress (24 marks) |
| Psychopathology (24 marks) |  | Forensic (24 marks) |

**\*\*All sections of the exam can include multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing questions. The longest question you will have to answer in psychology is worth 16 marks.**

**All questions are marked using Assessment objectives and for psychology they are the following:**

* AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques, and procedures.
* AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques, and procedures:
* AO3: Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas, and evidence, including in relation to issues, to make judgements and reach conclusions as well as develop and refine practical design and procedures.

|  |
| --- |
| YEAR PLAN OF STUDY |

**Year 1 Weekly Plan of Study 2024-2025**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wk** | **Date** | **P1** | **P2** | **P3** |
| **0** | **2.9.24** | Induction | | |
| **1** | **9.9.24** | Types of conformity | Variations of conformity/Asch | Conformity to social roles |
| **2** | **16.9.24 (Initial assessment)** | Conformity | Milgram Baseline | Situational Variations |
| **3** | **23.9.24** | Situational Variations | Dispositional explanations | Resistance to social influence |
| **4** | **30.09.24** | Minority Influence | Social Change |  |
| **5** | **07.10.24** | RM (experimental method; hypotheses, IV DV, operationalisation, EVs, confounding, double blind, single blind) | RM (Reliability versus validity, types of validity, types of experiments) | RM (Experimental designs, order effects, counterbalancing, ppt variables, random allocation) |
| **6** | **14.10.24** | RM (Sampling methods and evaluation) | RM (Ethics, examples of unethical i.e. Milgram/Zimbardo, writing a debrief and consent form) | RM (Pilot studies, peer review, mini practical i.e. stroop test) |
| **7** | **21.10.24** | RM (Self-report, questionnaires and interviews with evaluation) | RM (Observations, types of observations, behaviour categories, evaluation) | RM (Correlations, with exam prep) |
|  | **28.10.24** | **HALF TERM** | **HALF TERM** | **HALF TERM** |
| **8** | **4.11.24** | **FA1** | RM (Analysing quantitative data, measures of central tendencies and dispersion) | RM (Graphs, Tables, Distributions) |
| **9** | **11.11.24** | RM (Types of data, nominal, ordinal, ratio, interval, Sign test with exam questions) | RM (Case studies/ content, thematic analysis) | RM (Intro to stats tests, when to use when not to use) |
| **10** | **18.11.24** | RM (Features of science) | RM (Design an observational study) | RM (Design a self-report study) |
| **11** | **25.11.24** | **DIRT FEEDBACK** | **RM (Exam prep and buffer)** | **RM (Exam prep and buffer)** |
| **12** | **2.12.24** | Coding, capacity and duration of STM | MSM | LTM |
| **13** | **9.12.24** | WMM | Forgetting; interference | Forgetting: retrieval failure |
| **14** | **16.12.24** | EWT: Misleading information | EWT: Anxiety | Cognitive Interview |
|  | **23.12.24** | Christmas Hols | | |
|  | **30. 1.25** | Christmas Hols | | |
| **15** | **6.1.25 (Monday INSET)** | FA2 revision | **FA2** | Caregiver-infant interactions |
| **16** | **13.1.25** | Stages of development | Role of the father | Animal studies |
| **17** | **20.1.25** | Learning Theory | Bowlby’s monotropic theory | Types of attachment |
| **18** | **27.1.25** | DIRT FEEDBACK | Cultural variations | Bowlby’s maternal deprivation |
| **19** | **03.2.25** | Institutionalisation | Childhood effects of attachment | Attachment revision |
| **20** | **10.2.25** | FA3 revision | FA3 revision | FA3 revision |
|  | **17.2.25** | Half Term | | |
| **21** | **24.2.25** | **FA3** | Definitions of abnormality | Definitions of abnormality |
| **22** | **3.3.25** | Characteristics of phobias | Explanations of phobias | Treatments of phobias |
| **23** | **10.3.25** | Characteristics of depression | Explanations of depression | Treatment of depression |
| **24** | **17.3.25** | DIRT FEEDBACK | Characteristics of OCD | Explanations of OCD |
| **25** | **24.3.25** | Treatments of OCD | Revision | Revision |
| **26** | **31.4.25** | Introduction to approaches | Origins of Psychology | Behaviourist approach |
|  | **7.4.25** | **Easter Hols** | | |
|  | **14.4.25** | **Easter Hols** | | |
| **27** | **21.4.25 (Mon Bank Hol)** | **Revision** | **FA4** | Social learning theory |
| **28** | **28.4.25** | Intro to debates | Intro to debates | Cognitive approach |
| **29** | **5.5.25 (Mon Bank hol)** | Biological approach | Psychodynamic approach | Psychodynamic approach |
| **30** | **12.5.25** | Humanistic approach | Humanistic approach | Comparison |
| **31** | **19.5.25** | Comparison | Progression exam revision | Progression exam revision |
|  | **26.5.25** | **Half Term Whit Week** | | |
| **32** | **2.6.25** | **Progression exams** | | |
| **33** | **9.6.25** | Nervous system | Functions and structures of neurons | Synaptic transmission |
| **34** | **16.6.25** | DIRT FEEDBACK | Endocrine system including fight or fight | Brain Localisation |
| **35** | **23.6.25** | Revision | Revision | Revision |
| **36** | **30.6.25** | RM Practical | RM Practical | RM Practical |
|  | **07.7.25** | Work experience/ Admin week | | |

**Year 2 Plan of study**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wk** | **Date** | **P1** | **P2** | **P3** |
| **0** | **2.9.24** | Induction | | |
| **1** | **9.9.24** | Brain localisation | Hemispheric lateralisation | Split Brain |
| **2** | **16.9.24** | Plasticity and functional recovery | Plasticity and functional recovery | Ways of studying the brain |
| **3** | **23.9.24** | Exogeneous Factors | Endogenous Factors | Circadian Rhythms |
| **4** | **30.09.24** | Infradian Rhythms | Ultradian Rhythms | REVISION |
| **5** | **07.10.24** | FA1 | Free will vs determinism | Holism vs Reductionism |
| **6** | **14.10.24** | Nature vs Nurture | Idiographic vs nomothetic | DIRT FEEDBACK |
| **7** | **21.10.24** | Gender Bias | Culture Bias | Ethical implications |
|  | **28.10.24** | **HALF TERM** | **HALF TERM** | **HALF TERM** |
| **8** | **4.11.24** | RM – reliability and validity | RM – stats tests | RM – correlations |
| **9** | **11.11.24** | Designing an experiment and write up (RM REVISION) | Designing an experiment and write up (RM REVISION) | Designing an experiment and write up (RM REVISION) |
| **10** | **18.11.24** | RM REVISION for paper 2 | RM REVISION for paper 1 | RM REVISION for paper 3 |
| **11** | **25.11.24** | **FA2** | Sex and gender | Androgyny |
| **12** | **2.12.24** | Role of chromosomes and hormones | Atypical sex chromosomes | DIRT FEEDBACK |
| **13** | **9.12.24** | Kohlberg’s theory | Gender schema Theory | Psychodynamic explanations |
| **14** | **16.12.24** | Social learning theory explanation | Culture and media | Atypical gender development |
|  | **23.12.24** | Christmas Hols | | |
|  | **30. 1.25** | Christmas Hols | | |
| **15** | **6.1.25 (Monday INSET)** | Physiology of stress | Stress and Illness | Life changes |
| **16** | **13.1.25** | Daily hassles | Workplace Stressors | Measuring stress |
| **17** | **20.1.25** | Personality Type | Hardiness | Drug therapy |
| **18** | **27.1.25** | FA3 | SIT | Biofeedback |
| **19** | **03.2.25** | Gender differences | Social Support | DIRT FEEDBACK |
| **20** | **10.2.25** | Revision | Preparation for serial killer presentations | Preparation for serial killer presentations |
|  | **17.2.25** | Half Term | | |
| **21** | **24.2.25** | Offender profiling | Biological explanations | Biological explanations |
| **22** | **3.3.25** | Eysenck’s theory | Cognitive theory | Psychodynamic approach |
| **23** | **10.3.25** | FA4 | Differential association | Custodial sentencing |
| **24** | **17.3.25** | Behaviour modification | Anger management | DIRT FEEDBACK |
| **25** | **24.3.25** | REVISION | REVISION | REVISION |
| **26** | **31.4.25** | REVISION | REVISION | REVISION |
|  | **7.4.25** | **Easter Hols** | | |
|  | **14.4.25** | **Easter Hols** | | |
| **27** | **21.4.25 (Mon Bank Hol)** | REVISION | REVISION | REVISION |
| **28** | **28.4.25** | REVISION | REVISION | REVISION |
| **29** | **5.5.25 (Mon Bank hol)** | REVISION | REVISION | REVISION |
| **30** | **12.5.25** | EXAMS | EXAMS | EXAMS |
| **31** | **19.5.25** | EXAMS | EXAMS | EXAMS |
|  | **26.5.25** | **Half Term Whit Week** | | |
| **32** | **2.6.25** | EXAMS | | |
| **33** | **9.6.25** | EXAMS | EXAMS | EXAMS |
| **34** | **16.6.25** | EXAMS | EXAMS | EXAMS |
| **35** | **23.6.25** | EXAMS | EXAMS | EXAMS |
| **36** | **30.6.25** |  |  |  |
|  | **07.7.25** | Work experience/ Admin week | | |

|  |
| --- |
| KEY INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COURSE |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Length of Study** | A-Level Psychology is a 2-year course. You will have 3 lessons a week which total 5 hours. Year 1 study for 36 weeks and Year 2 for 31 weeks. |
| **Your classrooms** | S20 and S18 |
| **Key skills you will be developing during the course to be successful** | In psychology at least 10% of the overall assessment will contain Maths. This includes level 2 numeracy as well as analysing data and statistics. Psychology requires you to have a good level of analytical writing skills which are reinforced and embedded in each area of study.  Psychology allows students to explore all aspects of life which mean the subject successfully explores individual liberty throughout the whole course. For example, through the study of approaches in Psychology students are encouraged to see that, whilst we may all be similar in many respects, there are always anomalies in human behaviour that cannot be predicted. |
| **What will lessons look like?** | Psychology lessons use a variety to techniques to support your learning and your participation is crucial. This may be through your feedback on independent tasks, collaborative tasks, psychology practical’s and written based activities. |
| **Formal Assessment Methods** | \*\***You will be completing formal assessments every 6 weeks.** |
| **Essential Equipment/ Resources** | For each topic you are required to have a ‘topic folder’, regularly access Teams for resources and a revision table to organise all your notes. A digital textbook will be provided for you and a calculator is needed. |

|  |
| --- |
| ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK |

**Assessment and Feedback**

**Year 1 Assessment Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment** | **Content** | **Date** |
| **Initial Assessment** | Initial Assessment on conformity | **16.9.24** |
| **FA1** | **FA1 (RM, hypothesis, IV, DV, EV, designs, correlations, sampling and Social influence)** | **4.11.24** |
| **FA2** | **FA2 (memory and RM)** | **6.1.25** |
| **FA3** | **FA3 (attachment and RM - observations and reliability)** | **24.2.25** |
| **FA4** | **FA4 (Psychopathology and RM)** | **21.4.25** |
| **(FA5) Progression Exam** | **Progression exam – paper 1** | **2.6.25** |

**Year 2 Assessment Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment** | **Content** | **Date** |
| **FA1** | RM, Biopsychology and Approaches | **7.10.24** |
| **FA2** | Attachment, Memory, Social and Psychopathology | **25.11.24** |
| **FA3 (FULL MOCK) (PAPER 2)** | Gender, RM, Approaches | **27.1.25** |
| **FA4** | Paper 3 | **10.3.25** |

After each assessment, your teacher will feedback on your work through DIRT sessions (**D**edicated **I**ndependent, **R**eflection **T**ime). In these sessions you will have input from your teacher, have the opportunity to look at marked answers and reflect on what has worked well in your assessments as well as what needs to be improved in the future.

You should expect all formal assessments marked within 2 weeks of competition.

|  |
| --- |
| KEY EXPECTATIONS |

**Key Expectations for A-Level psychology:**

* Psychology has a lot of content to remember. This includes names of theorists, studies, specialist terminology and evaluation points. It is therefore very important for students to be consistently organised with their notes. This includes completing revision tasks as you learn.
* You will be provided with revision tables for each topic you study, this will help you condense your notes.
* Each student will be allocated to a Teams site which will have all the resources for lessons as well as revision aids. There will also be revision workshops twice a week during your lunch breaks for you to seek extra support.
* The expectation is for you to complete 4-5 hours of independent work outside the classroom, this is per A-Level subject, therefore manage your time effectively.
* Successful students always look at the exam board mark schemes for each area, so they know the exact requirements of the question.
* TOP TIP – Never leave revision until the end!

**Specific resources and recommended reading lists to support your learning can be found below:**

Year 1 online textbook - [Login Screen (illuminate.digital)](https://illuminate.digital/aqapsych2edy1/) (username: Student7 Password: Green7)

[A person with green hair

Description automatically generated with medium confidence](file:///C:/Users/Jessica.Turnbull/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/F892OQ5C/-%20Login%20Screen%20(illuminate.digital))

Year 2 online textbook - [Login Screen (illuminate.digital)](https://illuminate.digital/aqapsych2edy2/) (username: Student8 Password: Pink8)

Graphical user interface

Description automatically generated with low confidence

These are AQA endorsed textbooks which will be used in lessons and for independent work. It has all the information for Year 1 and Year 2 and available via the log in above

**Important websites:**

[AQA | Psychology | AS and A-Level | Psychology](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology-7181-7182) – access past papers and mark schemes, candidate responses and examiner comments to improve your exam skills as well as all specification information.

[Free Homework & Revision for A Level, GCSE, KS3 & KS2 (senecalearning.com)](https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/) – very useful to consolidate your A01 – knowledge and understanding of studies and theories.

[Psych Boost - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/c/PsychBoost/about) – video based learning on all the topics covered in A-Level

[tutor2u | A-Level, GCSE & vocational qualification support resources](https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology/reference) – exam based support on many topic areas. For example essays with model answers.

<https://quizlet.com/> - create your own or access the vast library of revision resources and test yourself

**Reading list for Psychology available via the library:**

<https://moodle.derby-college.ac.uk/mod/glossary/view.php?id=174783&mode=letter&hook=P&sortkey&sortorder&fullsearch=0&page=1>

|  |
| --- |
| GLOSSARY OF TECHNICAL TERMS |

The following list is a brief glossary of terms you will learn or be exposed to during your learning in order to develop your psychological vocabulary. These are AQA Command Words for Psychology. Command words are the words and phrases used in exams and other assessment tasks that tell students how they should answer the question. The following command words are taken from Ofqual’s official list of command words and their meanings that are relevant to this subject.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Analyse** | Separate information into components and identify their characteristics. |
| **Calculate** | Work out the value of something. |
| **Choose** | Select from a range of alternatives. |
| **Comment** | Present an informed opinion. |
| **Compare** | Identify similarities and/or differences. |
| **Complete** | Finish a task by adding to given information. |
| **Consider** | Review and respond to given information. |
| **Describe** | Give an account of. |
| **Design** | Set out how something will be done. |
| **Discuss** | Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea. |
| **Distinguish** | Explain ways in which two things differ. Provide detail of characteristic that enable a person to know the difference between … |
| **Evaluate** | Judge from available evidence. |
| **Explain** | Set out purposes or reasons. |
| **Explain how** | Give a detailed account of a process or way of doing something. |
| **Explain why** | Give a detailed account of reasons in relation to a particular situation. |
| **Identify** | Name or otherwise characterise. |
| **Justify** | Provide reasons, reasoned argument to support, possibly provide evidence. |
| **Outline** | Set out main characteristics. |
| **What is meant by** | Give a definition. |

|  |
| --- |
| YOUR NEXT STEPS OPPORTUNITIES |

**Your next steps opportunities when you successfully achieve your chosen study program / course.**