

PSYCHOLOGY

2026 – 2027



THE GRANGE SCHOOL



Psychology

Course Details	Exam Board AQA Level: A-Level Examination Structure: The course is 100% exam based with three 2-hour papers, each with a maximum mark of 96. All the examinations are sat in the summer of Year 13: • Paper 1: Introductory topics in Psychology • Paper 2: Psychology in context • Paper 3: Issues and options in psychology. At least 10% of the overall assessment of Psychology will contain mathematical skills equivalent to GCSE/Level 2 or above. At least 25–30% of the overall assessment will assess skills, knowledge and understanding in relation to research methods. Coursework/Controlled Assessment: N /A
Key Learning Objectives	To develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other. To develop and demonstrate a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods. To develop competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical, and problem-solving skills. To develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject. To understand how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society. To carry out assessments to draw together their skills, knowledge and understanding from across the full course of study of psychology so they can provide extended responses.
Curriculum Content – Year 12	
Autumn & Spring Term (September – February)	Approaches in psychology • Learning approaches, including the behaviourist approach and social learning theory • The cognitive approach • The biological approach and cognitive neuroscience • The psychodynamic approach • The humanistic approach • Comparison of approaches Research Methods • Experimental method and types of experiment • Observational techniques and types of observation • Self-report techniques • Correlations and the difference between correlations and experiments • Content analysis. Case studies • Scientific processes including: • Aims: stating aims, the difference between aims and hypotheses • Hypotheses • Sampling Techniques • Pilot studies • Experimental designs • Observational design

	• Questionnaire construction • Variables • Control (Random allocation and counterbalancing, randomisation, standardisation) • Demand characteristics and investigator effects • Ethical Issues • The role of peer review in the scientific process • The implications of psychological research for the economy • Data handling and analysis. • Quantitative and qualitative data. • Primary and secondary data, including meta-analysis. • Descriptive statistics: measures of central tendency and measures of dispersion; range and standard deviation; calculation of range; calculation of percentages. • Presentation and display of quantitative data. • Distributions: normal and skewed distributions. • Analysis and interpretation of correlation, including correlation coefficients. Social influence • Types of conformity • Explanations for obedience • Explanations of resistance to social influence, including social support and locus of control • Minority influence
Spring & Summer Term (March - May)	Attachment • Animal studies of attachment • Explanations of attachment (learning theory and Bowlby's monotropic theory) • Ainsworth's 'Strange Situation' and cultural variations • Bowlby's theory of maternal deprivation. • Romanian orphan studies: the effects of institutionalisation • The influence of early attachment on childhood and adult relationships, including the role of an internal working model. Memory • The multi-store model of memory • The working memory model • Explanations for forgetting • Factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony • The use of the cognitive interview.
Summer Term (June - July)	Exam question practice and preparation for mock exam. Clinical Psychology and Mental Health • Definitions in the field of mental health • The behavioural, emotional and cognitive characteristics of phobias, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) • The behavioural approach to explaining and treating phobias • The cognitive approach to explaining and treating depression • The biological approach to explaining and treating OCD. Issues and Debates in psychology • Gender and culture in psychology – universality and bias. Gender bias including androcentrism and alpha and beta bias; cultural bias, including ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. • Free will and determinism: hard determinism and soft determinism; biological, environmental, and psychic determinism. The scientific emphasis on causal explanations. • The nature-nurture debate: the relative importance of heredity and environment in

	determining behaviour. • The interactionist approach. • Holism and reductionism: levels of explanation in Psychology. Biological reductionism and environmental (stimulus-response) reductionism. • Idiographic and nomothetic approaches to psychological investigation. • Social Sensitivity in Psychological Research
Curriculum Content – Year 13	
Autumn Term (September – December)	Biopsychology • The divisions of the nervous system • The structure and function of sensory, relay and motor neurons, including the process of synaptic transmission • The function of the endocrine system • The fight or flight response, including the role of adrenaline • Localisation of function in the brain and hemispheric lateralisation • Plasticity and functional recovery • Ways of studying the brain: scanning techniques Option unit: Forensic psychology • Offender profiling: the typology approach, including organised and disorganised types; the data driven approach, including investigative Psychology; geographical profiling. • Biological explanations of offending behaviour: genetics and neural explanations. • 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. • 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. Continue with Research Methods. • Types of reliability and validity. Ways of assessing these and improving them. • Levels of measurement: nominal, ordinal, and interval. • Coding in content analysis • Introduction to statistical testing; the sign test. • Probability and significance: use of statistical tables and critical values in interpretation of significance; Type I and Type II errors. • 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, Mann-Whitney, related t-test, unrelated t-test, and Chi-Squared test. • Features of Science: objectivity, replicability and falsifiability, paradigms and paradigm shift. • Reporting psychological investigations.
Spring Term (January - April)	Option unit: Gender • The role of chromosomes and hormones in biological sex • Diversity in sex development (Klinefelter's and Turner's syndromes) • Gender Identities • Bem Sex Role Inventory • Biological explanations of gender development • Cognitive explanations of gender development • Social Learning theory of gender development • Influence of culture and media on gender • Gender Incongruence: biological and social/cultural explanations.

Summer Term (May & June)	Option unit: Schizophrenia • Positive symptoms of schizophrenia, Negative symptoms of schizophrenia. • Issues in diagnosis (co-morbidity, culture and gender bias and symptom overlap) • Biological explanations for schizophrenia: genetics, the dopamine hypothesis, and neural correlates. • Psychological explanations for schizophrenia: family dysfunction and cognitive explanations, including dysfunctional thought processing. • Drug therapy: typical and atypical antipsychotics. • Cognitive behaviour therapy and family therapy as used in the treatment of schizophrenia. • The importance of an interactionist approach in explaining and treating schizophrenia; the diathesis-stress model. Revision and completion of practice papers for final examinations.
Assessments	As the course is 100% exam based, there will be ongoing assessment in the form of essay writing as well as the practice of short and long answer questions in preparation for the range of examination questions that may arise. There will be regular end-of-topic progress tests throughout the two-year course. Students will also complete full mocks at the end of Year 12 and mid-way through Year 13. Students will also be assessed on their mathematics skills throughout the course.
Homework / independent study	Homework will be set regularly and will be published on Satchel One. The homework tasks may consist of additional reading around the topic being studied, extra research, short question and answer activities, or answering longer style exam style questions. Further independent study will be encouraged for assessments to be completed to a high standard. Students are expected to re-read their notes at the end of each lesson and to revise regularly in addition to the set homework. It is advised that students spend a total of 5 hours every week completing extra work alongside the guided lesson time.
Equipment required	Scientific Calculator. A4 Folders for notes. Textbook Year 1: AQA Psychology for A Level: Year 1 and AS Third edition by Cara Flanagan, Matt Jarvis and Rob Liddle (Illuminate Publishing) ISBN: 9781036011970 Textbook Year 2: AQA Psychology for A Level Year 2 Student Book: 2nd Edition by Cara Flanagan, Matt Jarvis and Rob Liddle (Illuminate Publishing) ISBN: 9781912820467 Essential Maths Skills for AS/A Level Psychology Paperback by Molly Marshall (Hodder Education) ISBN: 9781471863530
School-based enrichment opportunities	Trip to the Clink Museum in London. Freud Museum in London. Visits from outside speakers and agencies. AQA A-Level Psychology student conference.