

GCSE Psychology Course Information

Course Overview

- **Exam Board** – AQA
- **Usual Age Range** – 14 to 16
- **Qualification** – One GCSE
- **Curriculum Time** – Three 50-minute lessons per week in class plus work in Independent Learning Time
- **Assessment** – Two 1-hour-45-minute examinations taken at the end of the two-year course
- **Grading** – Reformed Linear GCSE Scale of 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
- **Full specification** - <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/psychology/specifications/AQA-8182-SP-2017.PDF>

Curriculum Intent

The **intent** of GCSE Psychology is to furnish UTC students with the fundamentals of psychology, developing critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills. The course has two overarching themes of Cognition and behaviour (Paper 1) and Social context and behaviour (Paper 2). These are further divided into four units each focusing on:

- Memory
- Perception
- Development
- Research Methods
- Social Influence
- Language, thought, and communication
- The brain and neuropsychology
- Psychological problems

The GCSE Psychology course explicitly teaches students critical thinking skills through analysis and evaluation of scientific research. Additionally, students are exposed to a range of theories that seek to explain human behaviour. This knowledge and skills directly link to the world of work with a specific focus on medical and health care careers. Students at the UTC get to explore the discipline of Psychology in the real-world through exciting inhouse project days, meeting with qualified Psychologists in a range of fields to discuss careers in Forensic Psychology, Educational Psychology, and clinical research and more. Psychology has extensive cross-curricular scope that compliments and fortifies learning in Biology, Chemistry, and Maths. At the UTC we motivate all students to pursue further study in psychology beyond GCSE and the suggested **destinations** after completion of this course include progression onto A-level Psychology, A-level Biology, and Medical Science.

Throughout GCSE Psychology students are encouraged to develop their **literacy skills**. Students are regularly exposed to reading material in class and extended writing activities such as development of lab reports, long form exam question practice, and regular Purple Zone formative assessments. Extended response questions allow students to use specialist terminology effectively, and develop clear, coherent, and logically constructed arguments interrogating scientific research and theory. This **love of reading** is further encouraged by both nonfiction and fiction psychology related titles that have been carefully selected by their Psychology teacher that are available to borrow from our Learning Resource Centre and a wider reading list is shared on Google Classroom.

GCSE Psychology develops and strengthens **numeracy** skills that are learnt in GCSE subjects across our UTC. These include:

- Qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering data
- Primary and secondary data
- Correlations
- Descriptive statistics
- Interpretation and display of quantitative data in the form of frequency tables and diagrams, bar charts, histograms and scatter diagrams for correlation
- Normal distributions

All students benefit from a combination of a hands-on approach and written work. Students are well prepared for further study and careers with a practical and procedural component. Students are engaged in Psychology because they have this opportunity.

Remote Learning and Revision

Students will benefit from additional study with the online textbook which they can access at any time using their chromebooks. <https://www.illuminate.digital/aqapsychgcse/>

Students can communicate with the teacher via Google Classroom chat function, email, and in person.

Students should use the following websites:

- Tutor2u - <https://www.tutor2u.net/psychology>
- Simply Psychology – <https://www.simplypsychology.org/>
- AQA Past Papers - <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/gcse/psychology-8182/specification>

GCSE topics covered in Year 10

1. Memory
 - 1.1 Processes of memory
 - 1.2 Structures of memory
 - 1.3 Key research study: Murdock
 - 1.4 Memory as an active process
 - 1.5 Key research study: Bartlett
2. Perception
 - 2.1 Sensation and perception
 - 2.2 Visual cues and consistencies
 - 2.3 Visual illusions
 - 2.4 Theories of perception: Gibson's direct theory of perception
 - 2.5 Theories of perception: Gregory's constructivist theory of perception
 - 2.6 Factors affecting perception: culture, emotion, motivation, expectation
 - 2.7 Key research study: Gilchrist and Nesburg
 - 2.8 Key research study: Bruner and Minturn
3. Development
 - 3.1 Brain development
 - 3.2 Piaget's theory of cognitive development
 - 3.3 Key research study: Hughes
 - 3.4 Key research study: McGarrigle and Donaldson
 - 3.5 Effects of learning on development
4. Research Methods

- 4.1 Experimental method
- 4.2 Sampling methods
- 4.3 Non-experimental methods
- 4.4 Case studies
- 4.5 Observational studies
- 4.6 Correlations
- 4.7 Ethics
- 4.8 Data handling

GCSE topics covered in Year 11

- 5. Social Influence
 - 5.1 Conformity
 - 5.2 Key research study: Asch
 - 5.3 Obedience
 - 5.4 Prosocial behaviour
 - 5.5 Key research study: Piliavin
 - 5.6 Crowd and collective behaviour
- 6. Language, thought, and communication
 - 6.1 Relationship between language and thought
 - 6.2 Differences between humans and animal communication
 - 6.3 Key research study: von Frisch
 - 6.4 Non-verbal communication
 - 6.5 Explanations for non-verbal communication
 - 6.6 Key research study: Yuki
- 7. The brain and neuropsychology
 - 7.1 Nervous system
 - 7.2 Fight or flight
 - 7.3 Neurons
 - 7.4 Brain
 - 7.5 Key research study: Penfield
 - 7.6 Neuropsychology
 - 7.7 Key research study: Tulving
- 8 Psychological problems
 - 8.1 Mental health
 - 8.2 Effects of mental health problems
 - 8.3 Depression
 - 8.4 Explanations for depression
 - 8.5 Key research study: Wiles
 - 8.6 Addiction
 - 8.7 Explanations for addiction
 - 8.8 Key research study: Kaij