

Psychology

Exam Board: EDUQAS

What do I need?

Psychology at Notre Dame is only taught in the sixth form, therefore ideas and concepts will be unfamiliar so this is a perfect opportunity to learn something new. Since 2009 Psychology has been designated as a science subject, and so students need to be able to tackle scientific concepts and use analytical skills. The course includes aspects of Science (particularly Biology) and Maths in topics such as research methods. Students should be self-motivated, disciplined and ready to explore new and stimulating ideas.

You should be confident in Maths, Science and English as the qualification has:

- **Rigorous scientific subject – same assessment objectives used as Biology, Chemistry and Physics from 2016.**
- **Components consists of research methods, with assessment skills in Mathematics.**
- **Essay writing and analytical skills: all exam papers include essay questions requiring scientific knowledge to be thoroughly described and analysed using facts and evidence to structure arguments.**

You should be able to work independently. You should be a confident reader able to read textbooks for information and write detailed but concise answers in exams. You will need to develop the ability to present ideas, supported by evidence, in structured, effective essays and you will need good time management skills.

What will I learn?

Students study material which is examined in three papers:

Component 1: Psychology: Past to Present

The purpose of this component is to give a solid grounding in some of the basic core aspects of psychology. The intention therefore is to allow the learner, through the study of classic research, to gain an appreciation that psychology continues to develop and evolve. The early ideas should not be dismissed but rather studied in context with consideration of the advances made in more recent years. Learners will be asked to explore contemporary debates using their knowledge and understanding of the five approaches (biological, psychodynamic, behaviourist, cognitive and positive); through these approaches learners will also gain an appreciation of the fields of social and developmental psychology.

Component 2: Investigating Behaviour

The purpose of this component is for learners to acquire the skills of working scientifically. The central aspect for this component is that of psychological research, from the initial planning stages through to analysing and evaluating. It is designed to introduce learners to the methodologies used by psychologists and to gain an appreciation of

the impact of choices made on the outcomes of the research. Learners should appreciate the limitations of scientific research and when dealing with the complexities of humans as test material, there are several issues which need to be considered. In order to contextualise some aspects of research methods learners are required to consider the methodologies used by both social and developmental psychology. To ensure true appreciation of the principles of psychological investigation the learners are expected to gain first-hand experience of two research methods. Learners will be required to respond to questions concerning these investigations in the assessment.

Component 3: Implications in the Real World

Having learnt about the various psychological approaches in Component 1, learners are expected to apply this knowledge and understanding to human/animal behaviours. Learners should be able to explain and draw conclusions about the possible causes of these behaviours and understand that psychology has the potential to impact on society as a whole by developing methods of modifying behaviour. In addition, learners should explore five controversies that continue to pose challenges for psychology. These controversies can be considered synoptically and draw on the content from the whole of the specification.

How will I be assessed?

All three examination papers are 2 hours 15 minutes in duration and use a range of question styles.

Is there anything else I need to know?

Psychology is taught as a Science and as such is a useful subject to combine with other Science subjects. It can also fit well with any of the other Social Science subjects; Sociology and Health and Social Care. A-level Psychology can lead to a wide range of career possibilities including careers in Clinical Psychology, Criminal Psychology, Business Management, Education, Health, Sports and Research.