

Subject: Psychology

Curriculum vision

The two-year Psychology curriculum at United Sixth Form ensures that students develop a broad understanding of the brain and human behaviour. Every lesson, the students are challenged on their scientific understanding and critical thinking skills which are important for pursuing a career in Psychology. To understand Psychology is to understand people which allows students to use these transferable skills in all aspects of life and their development. Psychology is the only course which gives students an understanding and appreciation of the complexity of the mental processes they undergo every day, providing students with a unique and enriching experience. Gaining a richer and deeper understanding of Psychology can help students achieve insights into their own actions as well as a better understanding of others. Psychology is everywhere and can be applied to every subject which further collaborates their learning experiences whether that be in Maths for statistical analysis or Biology for neuroanatomy and neurochemistry. Our diverse curriculum explains the origins of Psychology all the way to how it is studied today. Students will have context for their learning and will see this demonstrated in the world around them using key studies and relevant topical cases. Students will be up to date on current issues and debates in the scientific community to further expand their knowledge and application skills. These debates challenge students to look at things from a different perspective, further aiding their maturity and development. Students study a range of topics which can be applied to everyday life such as memory, biopsychology, and social influence. As a result, students become more tolerant and understanding towards different points of view. Learning about Psychology helps to eradicate the stigma around mental health, making seeking help more accessible and inclusive for everybody. Students learn how to conduct research and critically evaluate scientific literature ensuring valuable skills are learnt. Studying Psychology at USF prepares students for challenges they will face in later life. Having the ability to critically evaluate information is an invaluable transferable skill for university meaning that students will be well-prepared for higher education. The topics taught at USF incorporates the modules which are taught by universities accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS), demonstrating their relevance and mastery of their subject knowledge. Psychology enriches students to be proactive outside of the classroom, to make connections with other people, and to understand how Psychology can have positive changes on society and people's lives. The Psychology curriculum provides intellectual stimulation to broaden their future capabilities and promote growth. We want students to have positive impacts on the world and people around them to make further contributions to society and science. Regardless of if the student wishes to pursue Psychology as a career or at university, this course offers an invaluable skillset whatever direction they want to go in.



Curriculum Overview



Term 1

	Autumn 1	Why this? Why now?	Autumn 2	Why this? Why now?
Year 12	Social influence and research methods	Psychology is a new subject to most students. With limited knowledge, it is important to start with basic psychological concepts and to create a foundation to build upon. Social influence can be applied to everyday life, and students can draw upon their own experiences to understand topics. Students are introduced to ethical decision making based on analysis of social influence research. Alongside social influence, students will be introduced to research methods. Research methods are fundamental to understanding psychology, and students must have a strong understanding of research methods in order to effectively analyse and evaluate psychological research elsewhere in the course.	Memory	A new unit, students are introduced to memory and will learn the various components that make up memory in relation to specific models and psychological experiments. With an understanding of methodological processes gained from Autumn 1 research methods, students can apply these concepts to the memory unit, starting to develop their critical evaluation skills to evaluate psychological experiments, as well as the use of research evidence to evaluate psychological theories and models.
Year 13	Further approaches, issues and debates	Students will continue to develop their knowledge of psychological approaches, using key examples from Year 1 topics thereby offering the opportunity to review Year 1 content. The Issues and Debates topic introduces students to key psychological concepts. For example, students will learn aspects of determinism and consider the nature vs nurture debate to understand and study human behaviour. An understanding of these debates will allow students to apply their knowledge to effectively compare and contrast different psychological approaches.	Biopsychology	Once students have established the main approaches in psychology, they will apply aspects to biopsychology. Students can make synoptic links to clinical psychology and approaches from Year 1 and will apply scientific knowledge to options in paper 3, which cover biology in depth.

Term 2

	Spring 1	Why this? Why now?	Spring 2	Why this? Why now?
Year 12	Attachment	A new unit, students are introduced to attachment, and will learn the various stages of human interaction, relationships, and attachment during the first few years of life. The sequence of the curriculum positions attachment in a place where students have started to develop essay writing skills which enables students to outline subject knowledge and apply their understanding to real life scenarios. Students can also apply	Approaches	Students will transition to paper 2, and focus on module 1, psychological approaches. Students will be introduced to common themes that trickle into paper 3 in relation to cognition, behaviour and biology, and will be able to apply their knowledge from previous topics, such as memory and attachment, in



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		their critical thinking skills to the debate around the role of animal research in psychology.		order to give examples of the different approaches in psychology.
Year 13	Schizophrenia	The first options topic, students will cover approaches to schizophrenia, including biological treatments, applying knowledge from paper 1 and 2. Students can also apply their knowledge from the recent biopsychology and approaches topics to understand the biological explanations and treatments for schizophrenia.	Forensic psychology	The second options topic, forensic psychology has topic links to approaches, issues and debates and memory topics. It allows students to apply and expand their prior knowledge from these areas.

Term 3

	Summer 1	Why this? Why now?	Summer 2	Why this? Why now?
Year 12	Clinical psychology	A new unit, students are introduced to the concept of clinical psychology and mental health. Students will learn definitions in the field of mental health in relation to culture and biology. They will make synoptic links to previous modules and build upon their knowledge foundation. This topic prepares students for upcoming biological based units. It also allows for students to begin to see how psychological theories of human behaviour can be applied to develop successful therapies and treatments.	Further research methods	Students will review research methods and build upon their knowledge, due to greater familiarity with the experimental method as a result of increased knowledge from other topics. They will learn how to statistically analyse psychological research and begin to apply their knowledge to designing experiments.
Year 13	Relationships	The final options module, relationships, is a new topic that links to paper 1 and 2. Students will be encouraged to review theories of attachment, and other approaches to develop a strong understanding of relationships in contemporary society.	Revision	Students will work on essay plans, exam structure and technique in preparation for exams.



Extracurricular Opportunities (competitions, associations and clubs)

Year 12 – the Royal Holloway University of London competition

[National psychology competition \(royalholloway.ac.uk\)](http://royalholloway.ac.uk)

We run a national Psychology competition for schools, enabling Year 12 students to pit their psychology skills against pupils from across the UK. To enter the competition, students answer the competition question with a two-minute video (submitted before the event) and a corresponding poster (to be presented at the on-campus event).

Students may want to look at findings from psychological studies, think about the implications of a psychological theory, or approach it completely differently. It's an opportunity for you to showcase your understanding of Psychology.

Students will be allocated a psychological question or topic and must present their answer through a 2-minute video and corresponding poster. Students work in groups of 2-5.

Minds underground psychology competition

[Psychology Essay Competition — Minds Underground](#)

OpenLearn – The Open University

[Open Learning - OpenLearn - Open University](#)

TedTalks (Psychology)

[TED - YouTube](#)

All in the mind podcast

[BBC Radio 4 - All in the Mind](#)

Revision Guides

AQA Psychology Year 1 Revision Guide

[AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS - Revision Guide: Amazon.co.uk: Flanagan, Cara, Berry, Dave, Griffin, Michael, Liddle, Rob: 9781908682444: Books](#)

AQA Psychology Year 2 Revision Guide

[AQA Psychology for A Level Year 2 Revision Guide: 2nd Edition: Amazon.co.uk: Mohamedbhai, Arwa, Flanagan, Cara, Haycock, Jo, Jarvis, Matt, Griffin, Michael, Liddle, Rob: 9781912820474: Books](#)

Academic Reading

Articles:

Psychology Today www.psychologytoday.com/gb

Psychology Review Psychology Review Magazine: Hodder Education www.hoddereducation.co.uk/subjects/psychology/products/16-18/psychology-review

British Psychological Society, reader's digest

<https://www.bps.org.uk>

<https://digest.bps.org.uk>

Books:



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The man who mistook his wife for a hat by Oliver Sacks

The Tell-tale Brain by VS Ramachandran

Thinking fast and slow by Daniel Kahneman

The Lucifer Effect by Zimbardo

Reaching Down the Rabbit Hole by Ropper and Burrell

Opening Skinner's Box: Great Psychological Experiments of the Twentieth Century by Lauren Slater

Mindwatching: Why we behave the way we do by Eysenck and Eysenck

The Memory Illusion by Julia Shaw