🧠 Psychology Learning Journey: What We Learn and Why

Psychology is the study of how people think, feel, and behave. In our course, students explore big ideas about the mind and behaviour, building their knowledge step by step. Here's a guide to what we learn in each year and why it matters.

📘 Year 12

Introduction to Psychology

What we learn:

- What psychology is and what psychologists do.
- Key factors know to interest psychologists and affect behaviour.
- How it works like a science.
- Why it matters in real life.

Why it matters: Students learn important psychological language that will be used throughout the course. Students understand why what they are studying is relevant.

Approaches

What we learn:

- The psychology timeline showing how ideas have changed.
- Students learn core psychological theories.
- Student learn key studies.

Why it matters: These theories are the building blocks for understanding everything else in psychology.

Memory

What we learn:

- How memory works
- Why we forget things.
- How reliable is eye witness testimonies

Why it matters: Helps students understand how we learn and remember, giving insight into their own learning and revision strategies.

Research Methods

What we learn:

- The scientific method
- How psychologists measure behaviour
- How psychologists collect data and draw conclusions.
- Students get to design their own research.

Why it matters: Students learn to think like scientists and understand how we know what we know.

Biopsychology

What we learn:

- How the brain works
- How the nervous system controls behaviour
- How the endocrine system controls behaviour.

Why it matters: Prepares students to understand explanations of mental health, criminality, gender and treatments later on in the course.

Attachment

What we learn:

- How early relationships with primary caregivers shape who we become
- The consequences of poor quality attachments.

Why it matters: Shows how childhood experiences affect behaviour and mental health, and helps to understand the purpose of the care system in the UK.

Mental Health and Clinical Psychology

What we learn:

- How mental illness is defined.
- The causes of depression, phobias and OCD
- Treatments for phobias, depression and OCD

Why it matters: Helps students understand mental health and how psychology supports people in the community.

📓 Year 13 – Deepening Understanding

Introduction to Issues & Debates Concepts

What we learn:

- Key ideas like determinism and reductionism.

Why it matters: These ideas are used throughout Year 13 to help students write strong essays.

Evaluating Approaches

What we learn:

- Considering the benefits and issues of different psychological approaches.
- Students compare different psychological theories.

Why it matters: Develops critical thinking and broadening their knowledge to assess the societal impact.

Social Influence

What we learn:

- How people are influenced by others through conformity, obedience and minority influence.
- Key psychological studies that raised ethical concerns.

Why it matters: Encourages students to think about their own behaviour and society.

Schizophrenia

What we learn:

- What schizophrenia is
- Wwhat causes schizophrenia
- How schizophrenia is treated.

Why it matters: Breaks down common myths about schizophrenia and builds empathy for people with mental illness.

Forensic Psychology

What we learn:

- Why people commit crimes

- How psychology helps solve and prevent crime.

Why it matters: A popular topic that links psychology to real-world problems.

Gender

What we learn:

- How gender identity develops
- How society and biology influence gender.
- Consider causes of gender incongruence e.g. transgender

Why it matters: Helps students understand current social issues around gender and apply earlier learning.

Issues & Debates

What we learn:

- Big questions like “Are we born the way we are?” or “Do we have free will?”
- Learning to debate and discuss ideas using evidence and theory

Why it matters: Encourages critical thinking and prepares students for university-level study.