

Curriculum Rationale

Subject	GCSE Psychology
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	Key Stage 4	
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Intent

The educational purpose of Psychology is to enhance students' awareness about themselves and others. Psychology students will learn about all aspects of human thoughts, emotions and behaviours. This will help Students in all areas of their lives by improving their interactions with other people and enhancing their ability to understand and regulate their own emotions and behaviour. Additionally by learning about mental illness, the young people will be better equipped to fight stigmatisation and ignorance in this area.

Apart from the direct benefits of learning psychology, it also indirectly facilitates learning in many other subjects. Students will obtain skills which enhance learning and memory performance and improve their ability to cope with stress. Psychology modules learnt comprise an important part of other lessons like Business, sport, biology and lessons from the Humanities and Social Sciences. Psychology generally provides excellent training in analytical thinking and scientific research methods that are applicable to a broad range of academic topics.

Similarly diverse are the occupational areas in which psychology is relevant and important. Psychologists are needed in a variety of contexts which include research, healthcare and educational posts in the private and public sector, various organisations and corporations, legal and clinical settings, charities, social services and more. Having a background in psychology is of considerable benefit in any work setting which includes team work, working with clients, advertising, and working under pressure.

The students will explore a variety of perspectives on the study of human behaviour. They will learn how to analyse and evaluate psychological concepts, evaluate therapies, and understand the historical development of theories and the social impact of them. Topics explored initially include memory, perception, human development and research methods. Following this, learning will focus on social influence, language thought and communication, brain and neuropsychology and psychological problems. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on the development of research skills and students will become competent in methodologies commonly used for the investigation of human behaviour.

The AQA syllabus has been chosen because it has proven to be clear, engaging and easy-to-use, ensuring that students are helped as much as possible in their learning. This qualification introduces students to basic knowledge of all areas of psychology and it promotes the development of critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills. The AQA specification ensures that the topics have been updated so that they include the latest advances in the subject.

Implementation

Lessons will include power point presentations by the teacher, relevant videos, activities, classroom debates and discussions, independent revision, self and peer assessment, homework, exam preparation, mock tests and more.

They will be structured in a way that aims at maximising classroom learning to better prepare the Students for their GCSE exams and to lessen their final workload. Students will be required to keep their personalised portfolios organised and up to date in a way that will facilitate revision. Each lesson will provide the opportunity for students to link the information learnt to possible exam questions, so that by the end of the course they will be fully competent in performing at GCSE standard. Their work will be assessed and Students will be expected to respond to comments made by correcting and completing their tasks.

The GCSE assessment is comprised of 2 papers. The assessments will use multiple choice, short answer and extended writing/essays to assess knowledge, understanding, and application and evaluation skills.

The first written paper is on 'cognition and behaviour' and it focuses on topics related to 1) memory, 2) perception, 3) development and 4) research methods. This exam will last 1 hour 45 minutes and it accounts for 50% of the final GCSE result. Each of the 4 sections will include multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions and will receive a maximum of 25 marks (100 in total).

The second written paper is on 'social context and behaviour' and it focuses on topics related to 1) social influence, 2) language thought and communication, 3) brain and neuropsychology and 4) psychological problems. This exam will last 1 hour 45 minutes and it accounts for 50% of the final GCSE result. Each of the 4 sections will include multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions and will receive a maximum of 25 marks (100 in total).

Impact

Students of psychology will obtain a better understanding of why people think, feel and behave the way they do. This will result in increased self-confidence, successful careers, optimum relationships, improved communication and overall better wellbeing.

This kind of in depth insight into human nature could help our students to improve their decision making, to understand and manage stress and emotional dysregulation, to increase their social skills and to understand and combat prejudice, discrimination and stigmatisation. The importance of these skills is clear in all areas of the academic, professional and personal lives of our students. In Leaf Studio this is emphasised due to students' dedication to their specialisms.

Our students work extremely hard in challenging environments, in various teams of different backgrounds and are quite often exposed to high levels of stress and distress. The development of social skills, and of techniques for stress management and emotion regulation in these circumstances is indispensable.

Students of psychology will ultimately be given the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills which will promote their overall wellbeing and enable them to perform optimally in all areas of their daily lives, currently and in the future.