

## **Psychology: Higher**

This course seeks to develop skills that will enable learners to understand the role of psychology in explaining the human mind and behaviour. We will explore the approaches taken by different psychologists to help us achieve a broad understanding of the subject.

**The course comprises 3 units:**

### **1. Individual Behaviour**

Here we look at how Psychology seeks to explain key aspects of an individual's behaviour

**We study 2 topics :**

#### **( a) Sleep, dreams and sleep disorders**

In this topic we explore how the biological approach seeks to explain these issues , including the role of the brain. In addition, the cognitive approach is also studied to explore the role of thought processes .

**(b) The second topic studied** is chosen from a list of options which includes stress, psychopathology, addiction and happiness. This topic provides the student with the opportunity to analyse how various psychological approaches have a real world application relevant to an individual's well being.

### **2. Research In Psychology**

Throughout the course we will be exploring how Psychologists carry out research and come to their conclusions. In this unit we look more closely at the different methodologies employed ( e.g. experiment, observation, case study, survey), sampling and data analysis techniques. The skills developed here will be used towards writing a research report which will count as 40% towards the final course award.

### **3.Social Behaviour**

As in unit one we study 2 topics.

#### **Conformity and Obedience**

This is a mandatory topic. We investigate what makes people want to conform to social norms as well as what individual and situational factors help explain obedience. We evaluate and use famous studies such as the Stanford prison experiment and Milgram's research on obedience.

The **second optional topic** we study is **aggression**. Here we try to understand its origins, the role of the media in aggression, personal and situation factors and evaluate strategies to

control and reduce aggressive behaviour. Once again, a key purpose of this research is to show how psychology contributes to an understanding of human behaviour and has real-world application relevant to everyday situations.

## **Psychology: Level 5**

This course is designed to provide the learner with an insight into the role of psychology in helping us understand individual and social behaviour. The course comprises three units whose content overlaps with the Higher Grade Psychology, although the level of difficulty and course award requirements vary.

### **Unit One : Individual Behaviour**

A key purpose of the course is to introduce the different ways psychologists go about explaining and analysing an issue. In this unit we look at the biological, psychoanalytic and cognitive approaches to 2 topics.

**Sleep and dreams is a mandatory topic** which looks at how the biopsychologist understands the role of the brain in behaviour and factors that affect brain function ( e.g. stimulants, depressants). In addition, we explore the psychoanalytic approach which seeks to explain the structure of the human mind, including unconscious processes which affect behaviour.

**The second topic we study is stress.** This involves researching the biological process underlying stress and how the cognitive approach explains why we become stressed.

In both these topics a key purpose is to show how Psychology has real-world application supported by research evidence.

### **Unit Two : Research Methods**

Throughout the course we will explore and analyse how Psychologists go about their research. In this unit we look more closely at the range of methodologies employed. These include experiment, observation, case study, surveys. We will seek to think about each one's strengths and weaknesses. Also, the student will be expected to use research terminology accurately and learn how to structure a basic psychological plan.

### **Unit Three: Social Behaviour**

**'Why do we conform ?'** , is a key question for the social psychologist. Here we try to explain why we conform, including what factors can influence our decision. We look at famous studies on conformity such as the Stanford Prison experiment.

**As well as the mandatory topic on conformity we study aggression.** This topic explores different theories of aggression and looks at the role of the media, video games and personal or situational factors in influencing aggressive behaviour.

By the end of this course it is hoped the student will gain an insight into how psychology is relevant across all aspects of school learning as well as real-world application.

