Cornwallis Academy
Ambitions for All

SMILE
SUCCESSFUL | MOTIVATED | INSPIRED | LEARNING | EXCITED & ENGAGED

Psychology

Curriculum Intent

The aim of the Psychology curriculum is to ensure that all students have equal access to the full specification and are supported in developing a secure, coherent and in-depth understanding of psychological theory, research methods and contemporary debates. A range of evidence-informed approaches are utilised to develop students' knowledge and understanding, analytical skills and ability to evaluate psychological explanations. Students are provided with regular opportunities to engage in academic discussion, articulate psychological arguments and apply subject-specific terminology, enabling them to develop confidence and critical thinking skills.

The Year 12 and Year 13 Psychology curriculum is designed to promote the application of psychological knowledge to real-world contexts, supporting students in understanding the complex interactions between biological, cognitive, social and developmental factors that influence human behaviour and mental processes. Through the study of key theories, research evidence and methodological approaches, students develop the ability to critically analyse explanations of behaviour and evaluate the strengths and limitations of psychological research.

The sequencing of curriculum content is carefully considered to support progression and build upon prior learning; however, the order of teaching may be adapted where necessary to respond to student needs, curriculum development priorities and opportunities to enhance learning.

Homework

Homework is an important part of the Psychology curriculum and is designed to consolidate classroom learning, strengthen students' understanding of key psychological concepts and develop independent learning habits. The department sets a range of purposeful homework activities, including essays, structured notes, application questions, multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions. All assignments are carefully aligned to the AQA assessment objectives and course content. These tasks provide opportunities for students to retrieve knowledge, apply psychological theories to unfamiliar contexts, develop evaluative skills and practise exam technique. Homework supports students in building confidence, improving academic literacy and making progress towards becoming independent, reflective learners who are prepared for success in Psychology and beyond.

Links to National Curriculum / Syllabus Specifications

A-Level Psychology Specification. Research methods - Mathematics. Biopsychology - Biology. Attachment – Health and social care. Aggression – Criminology, Social influence - Sociology

Exam Support & Revision Resources

Exam support within the Psychology department is designed to provide students with structured opportunities to consolidate knowledge, develop exam technique and build confidence in preparation for exams. Throughout the course, students complete a timed examination-style assessment at the end of each unit, allowing teachers to identify areas of strength and development while providing students with regular opportunities to practise applying knowledge under exam conditions. Year 13 students are supported through targeted after-school revision sessions, which focus on addressing individual areas for development, revisiting key content and refining the skills required for exam success. Year 12 students have access to lunchtime revision sessions to encourage early engagement with independent revision strategies and strengthen understanding of core concepts. In the lead-up to examinations, designated exam preparation lessons are incorporated to allow students to practise applying knowledge, develop evaluative responses, improve extended writing skills and become familiar with assessment requirements. These opportunities ensure that students are supported in making sustained progress and are equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence required to achieve their potential.

Extracurricular and Enrichment Opportunities

- Academic interventions – afterschool and lunchtime sessions
- Educational trips and visits – CCCU Psychology department visit

Interested to know more?

To read:

- *Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS* Cardwell and Flanagan Psychology Textbooks - 6th edition
- *Psychology for A Level Year 2* Cardwell and Flanagan Psychology Textbooks – 6th edition
- The Complete Companions for AQA Psychology A Level: Year 1 and AS Student Book, 6th Edition (The Complete Companions for AQA, 6th Edition)
- The Complete Companions for AQA Psychology A Level: Year 2 Student Book, 6th Edition (The Complete Companions for AQA, 6th Edition)

To watch:

- *The Secret Life of the Brain* (The Secret Life of the Brain) - BBC iPlayer
- *CrashCourse Psychology* available via YouTube offers structured coverage of core psychological theories, research methods and key studies in line with A Level specifications.
- *Explained* on Netflix includes episodes relevant to psychology, such as decision-making, mental health and social behaviour.

To listen:

- *The Psychology Podcast* hosted by Scott Barry Kaufman
- *All in the Mind* from BBC Radio
- *The Psychology in Action Podcast* (UK-based academic-led content)

To visit:

- Science Museum, which includes exhibitions on neuroscience and cognition
- Natural History Museum also supports understanding of evolutionary psychology and human development through its human biology and evolution exhibits.
- The Wellcome Collection, which explores the relationship between medicine, mental health and the human mind, making it highly relevant to psychopathology and biopsychology topics.