

## Topic Sequencing and Rationale

### Key Stage 5 A Level Psychology

	Year	What is taught? Overview of Topics	Why this? Why then?
KS5	12	<p><b>Topic 1: Social psychology (Paper 1)</b></p> <p>This is about aspects of human behaviour that involve the individual's relationship to other persons, groups, and society, including cultural influences on behaviour.</p> <p><b>Topic 2: Cognitive psychology (Paper 1)</b></p> <p>This is about the role of cognition/cognitive processes in human behaviour. Processes include perception, memory, selective attention, language, and problem solving. The cognitive topic area draws on the likeness of cognitive processing to computer processing.</p> <p><b>Topic 3: Biological psychology (Paper 1)</b></p> <p>This is about the mechanisms within our body and understand how they affect our behaviour, focusing on aggression.</p> <p><b>Topic 4: Learning theories (Paper 1)</b></p> <p>This is about learning from the environment and of the effects of conditioning, reinforcement, punishment, the role of reward and social learning on the organism. Individual differences and developmental psychology must be considered throughout all these topics.</p> <p><b>Topic 5: Issues and Debates (All papers)</b></p> <p>Student must apply these to topic areas covered and real-life situations. Issues and debates run throughout the course and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ethical issues in research (animal and human)</li><li>• Practical issues in the design and implementation of research.</li><li>• Reductionism in the explanation of behaviour.</li><li>• Comparisons of ways of explaining behaviour using different themes.</li></ul>	<p>Completing these 4 topics first is essential and provides foundational skills to our students allowing them to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other and subsequent topics (6 and 7)</li><li>• a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods</li><li>• competence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem-solving skills</li><li>• their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject</li></ul>

	<p>Psychology as a science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural and gender issues in psychological research</li> <li>• The role of both nature and nurture in psychology.</li> <li>• An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time.</li> <li>• The use of psychology in social control.</li> <li>• The use of psychological knowledge in society.</li> <li>• Issues related to socially-sensitive research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an appreciation of how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.</li> </ul>
13	<p><b>Topic 6: Clinical psychology (Paper 2)</b></p> <p>This is about explaining and treating mental health issues, and of the different ways of treating them, including counselling and drug treatments. Individual differences and developmental psychology must be considered when learning about links between personality factors and mental disorders and genetic influences (nature) or environmental influences (nurture) within different explanations for mental health disorders.</p> <p><b>Topic 7: Criminological psychology (Paper 2)</b></p> <p>This is about the definition and causes of crime and anti-social behaviour, and of the identification and treatment of offenders undertaken by forensic investigators. Individual differences and developmental psychology must be considered when learning about the possible causes of criminal behaviour, such as labelling, self-fulfilling prophecy and social learning.</p> <p><b>Topic 8: Psychological Skills (Paper 3)</b></p> <p>This is a synoptic section in which students will be asked to draw on other topic areas in order to understand conceptual and methodological issues. Students will develop an understanding of how to use theories and evidence from many areas of psychology and apply them to the issues. This topic collects all topics together in order to ensure that all content has been covered. Students must consider issues and debates from across all topics in order to develop a general knowledge of key issues and debates</p>	<p>The students then feel confident building on skills and knowledge acquired from the year 12 content with more complex units such as Clinical and Criminological Psychology.</p>