

# Harington School

## Transition pack for A Level Psychology



**Get ready for studying Psychology at A level in 2020**

This guide aims to provide you with:

- Basic information about the course
- Relevant information about the course including books and websites
- Tasks to complete from two relevant topics on the course
- An additional OPTIONAL READING LIST should you wish to explore the subject further

## **Information about the A level Psychology course**

Welcome to A level Psychology at Harington School. You have decided to study A-Level Psychology - congratulations!

Studying Psychology really develops your critical thinking, research, scientific, extended writing and mathematical skills. If you enjoy a little bit of everything all rolled into one, you'll love it; whether you are a humanities or science student. It is a hybrid subject but is classified by the government and most universities as a science.

The word psychology literally mean the study of the soul. As such, it is unique in the way it straddles the sciences (natural and social) and the humanities. Psychology is an academic discipline is exceptionally diverse. Apart from being an inherently fascinating subject, the ideas of psychologists hold great sway in society and are of the foremost practical importance for public policy, especially in areas like criminal justice and economics. To bring the subject to life, you will be encouraged in the following pages to read about the distortion of eyewitness testimony, the impact of early attachment on later relationships and why past events such as the Holocaust took place.

Remember that Psychology can be a controversial and sensitive topic to study – your teachers will discuss potential issues with you prior to each module but you will need to approach the study of the subject in an objective and mature way.

## **What does A Level Psychology look like at Harington School?**

In Year 12 and 13 you will have two teachers and be taught 5¼ hours a week. This will consist of taught lessons and some practical work, such as research investigations. Homework or prep will be set after each lesson by the teacher you have been taught by and as well as completing this you will be expected to complete your own independent work. Teachers may direct you to some reading material or give you suggestions for this.

### **What specification will you follow?**

At Harington School we follow the AQA Specification. You can find the specification and supporting documents at: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology/as-and-a-level/psychology-7181-7182/specification-at-a-glance>

Your Psychology A Level will cover the following topics:

#### **Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology**

- Social Influence
- Memory
- Attachment
- Psychopathology (Phobias, Depression, OCD)

#### **Paper 2: Psychology in Context**

- Approaches
- Biopsychology
- Research Methods (double-weighted)

#### **Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology**

- Issues and Debates
- Gender
- Schizophrenia
- Forensic Psychology

You will sit three examination papers of 2 hours each at the end of Year 13 which will consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended essay questions. A minimum of 30% of your final assessment will be on the topic of Research Methods and at least 10% will consist of mathematical skills and statistics. There is no coursework in A Level Psychology; it is examination assessed only.

## PSYCHOLOGY TEXTBOOK:

[https://www.illuminatepublishing.com/index.php?main\\_page=page&id=16](https://www.illuminatepublishing.com/index.php?main_page=page&id=16)

A second edition will be published in early May 2020:

We advise that you wait to purchase the most updated version of the textbook.



The first two topics studied in the course are **Social Influence** and **Research Methods**. Below please find relevant links to online resources to peruse prior to September.

### Social Influence

- BBC Radio 4: Solomon Asch and conformity: (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00f8mzr>)
- Experimenter (2015): (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3726704/>)
- ABC Channel: Milgram Experiment remake: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnYUI6wIBF4&list=PL7B12D4D99E4FCC8B>)
- The Stanford Prison Experiment (2015): (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0420293/>)
- BBC Radio 4 : The Stanford Prison Experiment: (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008crhv>)
- BBC Radio 4: Julian Rotter and Locus of Control: (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01gf5sr>)
- Philip Zimbardo: [https://www.ted.com/talks/philip\\_zimbardo\\_the\\_psychology\\_of\\_evil](https://www.ted.com/talks/philip_zimbardo_the_psychology_of_evil)
- Social Change: [https://www.ted.com/talks/zeynep\\_tufekci\\_online\\_social\\_change\\_easy\\_to\\_organize\\_hard\\_to\\_win](https://www.ted.com/talks/zeynep_tufekci_online_social_change_easy_to_organize_hard_to_win)

### Research Methods

- Introduction to basic Research Methods: [https://www.ted.com/talks/ben\\_ambridge\\_9\\_myths\\_about\\_psychology\\_debunked](https://www.ted.com/talks/ben_ambridge_9_myths_about_psychology_debunked)
- The Hawthorne Effect: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00lv0wx>
- Ethical guidelines in Psychology: <https://www.bps.org.uk/news-and-policy/practice-guidelines>
- Types of research methods: <https://psychologenie.com/psychological-research-methods>

PLEASE COMPLETE THE TWO SECTIONS OF WORK BELOW TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. THIS WORK IS DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU A FLAVOUR OF THE SUBJECT, NOT TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING.

### **Section A: Social Influence**

Watch the following documentary and write an essay of 300-400 words which summarises Milgram's experiment. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ek4pWJ0\\_XNo&t=1252s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ek4pWJ0_XNo&t=1252s)).

Refer to the following points in your answer:

- Who were the participants of this study? How were they selected?
- What were the roles assigned to the participants?
- What was the task of the 'teacher'? What was the task of the 'learner'?
- What was the shock generator?
- What was the real aim of the study?
- What were the predictions of the results before the study? What were the actual results of the study?

#### **Critical thinking:**

- Why was the 'teacher' deceived?
- Why did the 'student' mentioned his medical condition?
- Why did the 'teacher' received a sample shock?
- Why did the experimenter prompt the 'teacher' by saying "The experiment requires you to continue, Teacher"?
- How did different 'teachers' react when they were delivering the shocks? Did they all obey the experimenter's orders? If not, why?
- When the 'teacher' asked the experimenter who was responsible if something happened to the 'learner' why did the experimenter say "The responsibility is mine"?
- How did the Milgram protect the welfare and dignity of the participants?

**TOTAL: /16**

## Section B: Research Methods

A psychologist wanted to find out whether males or females have better mathematical skills. 20 students, 10 boys and 10 girls, from a Sixth Form college were selected to take part in the study. The psychologist gave a mathematical test to the students. The maximum score that a student could take on the test was 20. The results of the study are mentioned in the table below.

	The scores boys and girls got on the test
BOYS	12, 13, 12, 20, 10, 20, 17, 19, 10, 12
GIRLS	15, 16, 8, 11, 11, 10, 5, 12, 8, 7

1. Calculate the mode for both males and females. (2 marks)

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2. Calculate the median score for males and females. (2 marks)

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3. Calculate the mean score for males and females. Show your workings. (2 marks)

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4. Calculate the percentage of boys who scored <15. Show your workings. (2 marks)

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5. Calculate the fraction of girls who scored 8. Write the fraction in its simplest form and show your workings. (2 marks)

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6. Calculate the ratio of boys to girls who scored 15 or more. Write the ratio in its simplest form and show your workings. (2 marks)

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7. What is the independent variable in this experiment? (2 marks)

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8. What is the dependent variable? (2 marks)

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9. What do the results suggest? (2 marks)

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10. What conclusions could you draw from these results? (2 marks)

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TOTAL:    /20

### **OPTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY READING LIST**

Kevin Wren, Social Influences (1999) ISBN 978-0415186599

The Lucifer effect, Philip Zimbardo, 978-1846041037

Behind the shock machine, Gina Perry, 978-1922247094

The memory illusion, Dr Julia Shaw, 978-1847947611

Forever today, Debra Wearing, 2011, 978-0552771696

Opening Skinner's box, Lauren Slater, 978-0747568605

The bigamist, Mary Thompson, 978-1909797529

The psychopath test, Jon Ronson, 978-0330492270

The man who couldn't stop, David Adam, 978-1447277682

The tell-tale brain, Vs Ramachandran, 978-0099537595

The brain story of you, David Eagleman, 978-1782116615

Trick or treatment, Singh and Ernst, 978-0552157629

Pioneers of psychology, Raymond Fancher, 978-0393913378

Couple relationship in the 21st century, J Gabb and J Fink, 978-1137434425

The center cannot hold, Elyn Saks, 978-1401309442

The trouble with testosterone, Robert Sapolsky, 978-0684838915

Essentials of Human Memory (Cognitive Psychology) Paperback –1999 by Alan D. Baddeley (Author)  
ISBN 978-0863775451

Clinical Neuropsychological Foundations of Schizophrenia by Bernice A. Marcopulos (Editor),  
Matthew M. Kurtz (Editor) ISBN 9781848728776

The Extended Phenotype/The Selfish Gene, Richard Dawkins

Attachment, John Bowlby

Bad Science, Ben Goldacre (2009)