

# ***‘A’ Level Psychology in Barry Sixth***

## ***What is Psychology?***

Psychology is a science. Psychologists look at human behaviour and thought using methods developed by scientists to study human actions

## ***What topics are studied at AS and A level?***

The course followed in Barry Sixth is the WJEC syllabus. This specification is followed by most of the schools in Wales and there is a textbook to cover the course which students are expected to buy for themselves.

There is emphasis on the methods used by psychologists, so students will need to be comfortable with mathematics and sciences

The topics are:

- Approaches used by psychologists to study humans

- Research methods

- Core studies - students will look at ten important research studies to understand the approaches and the history of psychology

## ***The examination***

The A level examination is divided into four separate papers. There will be a combination of analysis of stimulus materials and essays.

## ***Career Options***

Psychology is a good general subject. It can be combined with sciences or with arts subjects. There is a heavy load of reading and learning to do, so if you are weak in this area, do not combine Psychology with other subjects that require you to read a great deal.

Psychology is a very useful subject area and can be seen as a career option in its own right. It is particularly useful to those considering a career in social work, the police, nursing, counselling and psychology.

Psychology is a popular subject for careers and university places are highly competitive, so colleges can demand high grades for acceptance. A high level of commitment to your own success is essential if you are intending to take up a career using psychology

## ***What GCSEs do I need?***

You do not need a GCSE in Psychology for ‘A’ level though a B grade in English and in Mathematics is recommended.

### ***Teaching methods***

Psychology is taught using a variety of methods including group work, lecturing and personal research. You are expected to undertake various research projects in your own time and to report on them to the whole class. You are given as much help as you need and you will receive individual tuition should you require it and ask for it. Teaching staff offer a high degree of commitment and expect it from students.

### ***What resources are on offer?***

The Learning Resource Centre is extremely well stocked with 'A' level texts. In addition to textbooks there are a variety of other source books for you to use.

You will be given research sheets and notes to supplement your own notes. You will also be supported by a huge amount of material kept on the school computer network shared folders on the Bryn Hafren Network. There is a Website which supports students.

You will need to buy a copy of Flanagan, Hartnoll and Murray (2009) ***Psychology AS: The Complete Companion for WJEC***, Folens Press ISBN 9781850084402

### ***Will I enjoy Psychology?***

There is a heavy workload of individual reading in Psychology. You are expected to complete a minimum of three hours at home and three hours in school each week in addition to your taught lessons. Psychology will suit people who enjoy being challenged by new ideas and who like discussion work, even though discussion only forms part of the subject.

You will need to be able to work on your own and use your initiative to look things up. You will enjoy Psychology a lot if you are prepared to make the effort for yourself. 'A' levels are challenging and students cannot expect to find everything equally interesting, but for those people who are prepared to work hard and to participate in lessons then Psychology is a good option.

You are invited to attend a lesson of Psychology at 'A' level to see if it will suit you and you are advised to look at some of the textbooks in the Bryn Hafren LRC to see what they are like. Talk to people who are already studying the subject and ask for their opinions about what they enjoy or dislike about the subject.

***For further information, ask to see Mrs Griffiths in Bryn Hafren or Miss Jenkins in Barry Comprehensive School***