

LEAVING  
CERTIFICATE  
SHORT COURSE

# PSYCHOLOGY

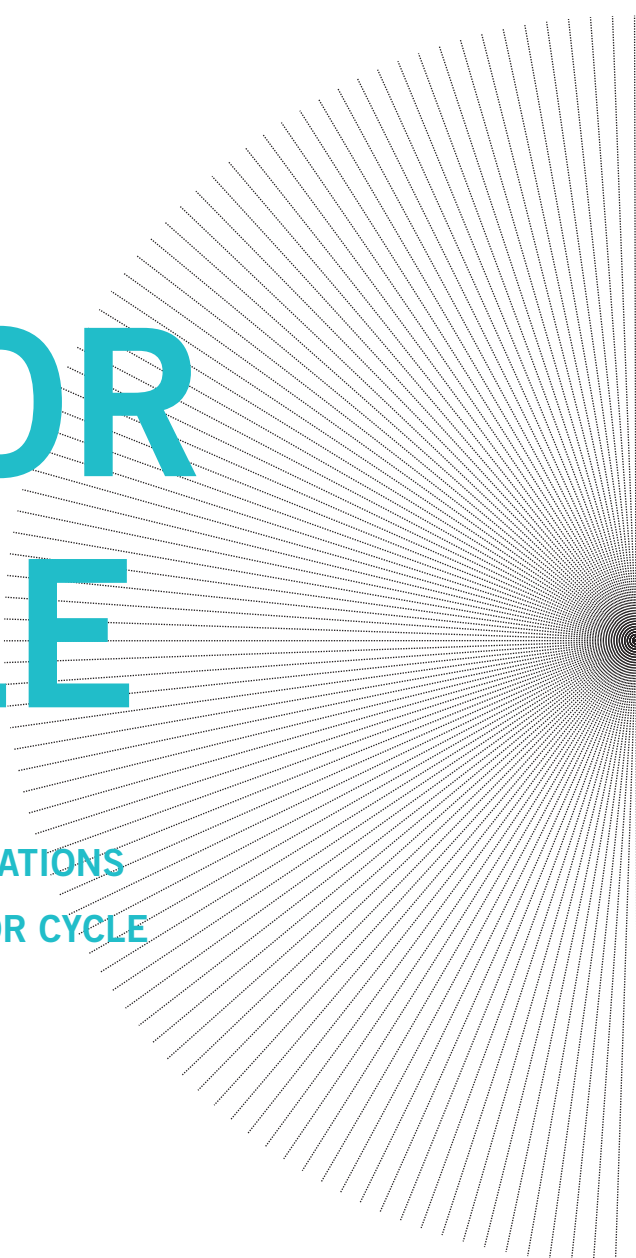
DRAFT SHORT COURSE  
FOR CONSULTATION



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# SENIOR CYCLE



INTRODUCTION

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

THE EXPERIENCE OF SENIOR CYCLE

OVERVIEW

VISION

## Introduction

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Learners in senior cycle are approaching the end of their time in school and are focusing on the directions they would like to take in their future lives. Senior cycle plays a vital role in helping learners to address their current needs as young adults and in preparing them for life in a changing economic and social context.

Senior cycle is founded on a commitment to educational achievement of the highest standard for all learners, commensurate with their individual abilities. To support learners as they shape their own future there is an emphasis on the development of knowledge and deep understanding; on learners taking responsibility for their own learning; on the acquisition of key skills; and on the processes of learning. The broad curriculum, with some opportunities for specialisation, supports continuity from junior cycle and sets out to meet the needs of learners, some of whom have special educational needs, but who all share a wide range of learning interests, aptitudes and talents.

The range and scope of the curriculum components offered at senior cycle—subjects, short courses, transition units and curriculum frameworks—have been developed to allow for choice and flexibility, for a balance between knowledge and skills, and for the promotion of the kinds of learning strategies relevant to participation in and contribution to a changing world where the future is uncertain.

Assessment in senior cycle involves gathering, interpreting and using information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and can be used for a variety of purposes. It can be used to determine the appropriate route for learners through a differentiated curriculum, to identify specific areas of difficulty or strength for a given student and to test and certify achievement. Assessment can support and improve learning by helping learners and teachers to identify next steps in the teaching and learning process.

## The experience of senior cycle

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The vision of senior cycle sees the learner at the centre of the educational experience. That experience will enable learners to be resourceful, to be confident, to participate actively in society, and to build an interest in and ability to learn throughout their future lives.

This vision of the learner is underpinned by the values on which senior cycle is based and it is realised through the principles that inform the curriculum as it is experienced by learners in schools. The curriculum, made up of subjects and courses, embedded key skills, clearly expressed learning outcomes, and supported by a range of approaches to assessment, is the vehicle through which the vision becomes a reality for the learner.

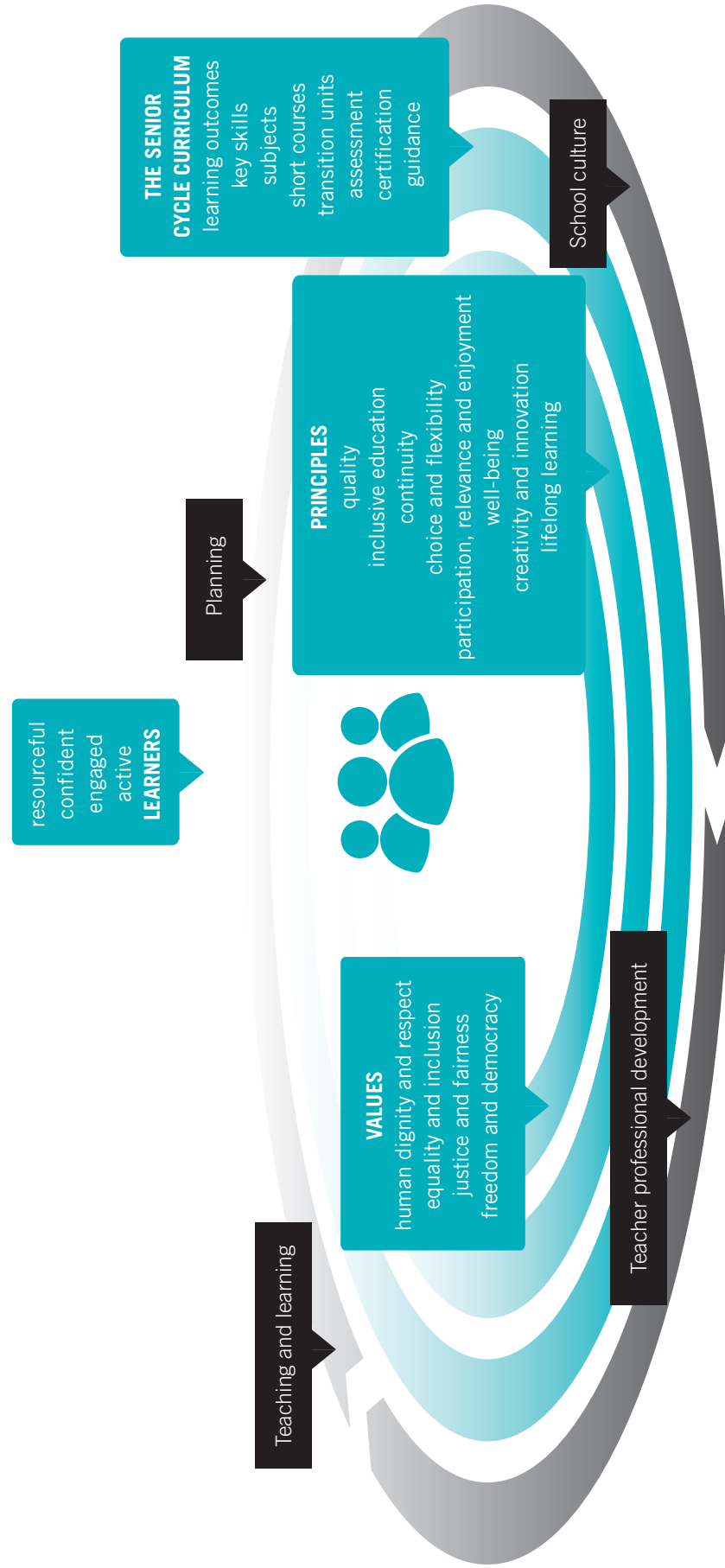
At a practical level, the provision of a high quality educational experience in senior cycle is supported by

- effective curriculum planning, development, organisation and evaluation
- teaching and learning approaches that motivate and interest learners, that enable them to progress, deepen and apply their learning, and that develop their capacity to reflect on their learning
- professional development for teachers and school management that enables them to lead curriculum development and change in their schools
- a school culture that respects learners, that encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning over time, and that promotes a love of learning.

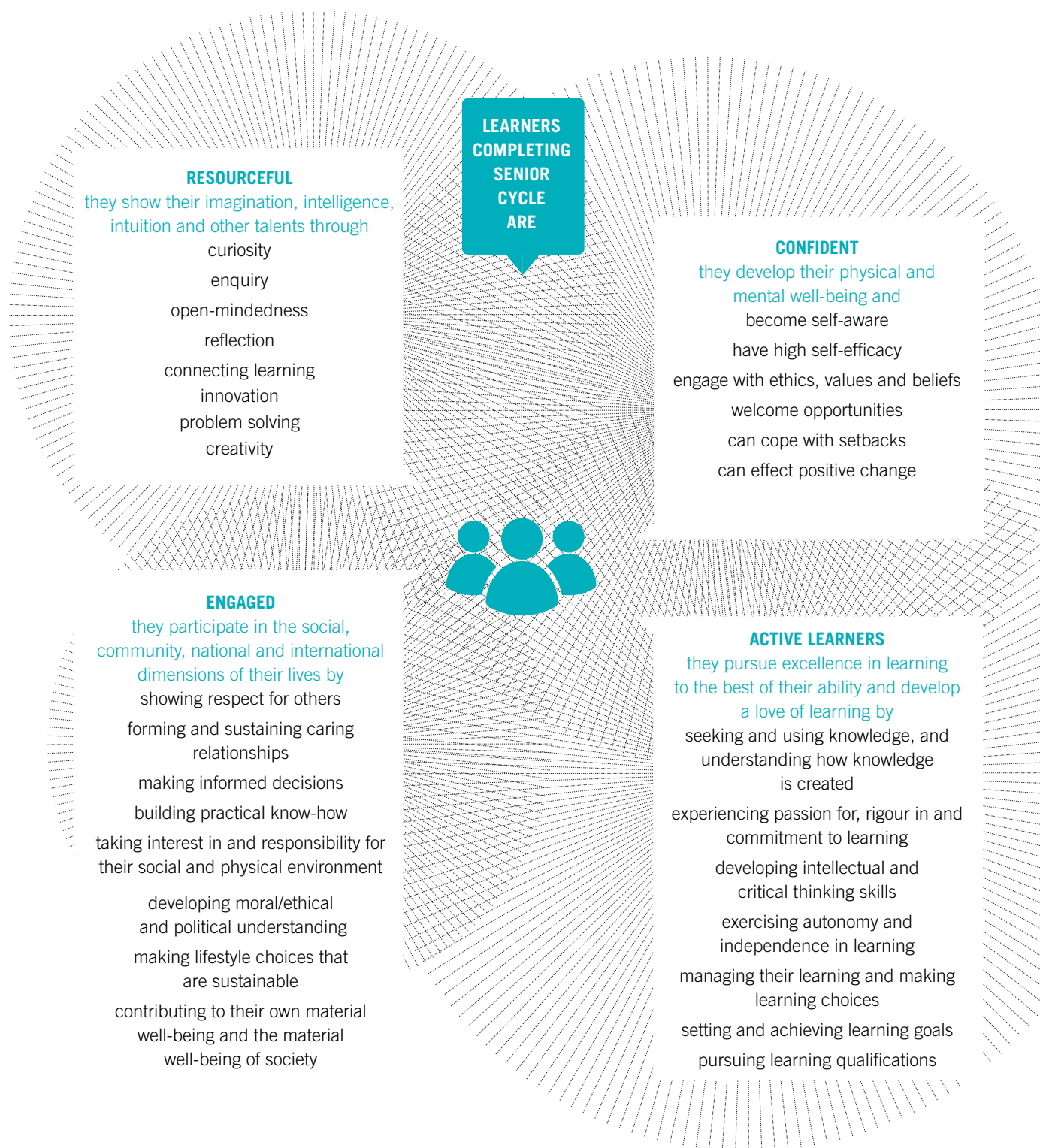
Senior cycle education is situated in the context of a broader education policy that focuses on the contribution that education can make to the development of the learner as a person and as a citizen. It is an education policy that emphasises the promotion of social cohesion, the growth of society and the economy, and the principle of sustainability in all aspects of development.



## Overview of senior cycle









# PSYCHOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

AIM

OBJECTIVES

RELATED LEARNING

## Introduction and rationale

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Psychology is the science of behaviour. It is the systematic study of how we think, act, and feel. Indeed, psychologists are interested in a wide variety of phenomena, including the biological bases of behaviour, how we process information, what makes us individuals and how we interact with others, and how we develop and change over the course of our lives. Central to the discipline of psychology is the use of research to study all of these aspects of behaviour. Research can be defined as an organised, systematic, theory-driven approach to answering questions about behaviour. Consequently, students studying psychology will learn about research itself and as an underlying theme running through the course. A strong emphasis on psychological research is also important in contrasting the scientific study of psychology with popular psychology as it is frequently presented in the media.

The purpose of the short course in Psychology is to introduce learners to the scientific study of behaviour. In doing so, students will learn important concepts in psychology and how to apply these concepts to their everyday lives. The course should help learners to understand themselves and the world around them in a general sense. By studying psychology, learners will be introduced to the many applications of psychology in the real world, for example, sports, media, technology, the workplace, and school. Psychology is a new area of learning to the senior cycle curriculum and it will provide learners with the opportunity to engage in a discipline that will have a wide appeal to learners. Learners should have an interest in human behaviour and be willing to take a scientific approach to studying it. During the course, they will learn to plan, carry out, and communicate the findings of research studies in psychology, conducting their own small-scale research studies. They will investigate current and relevant research-based topics in psychology.

## Aim

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The Leaving Certificate short course in Psychology aims to provide learners with a general introduction to the scientific study of behaviour, its theory, and practice.

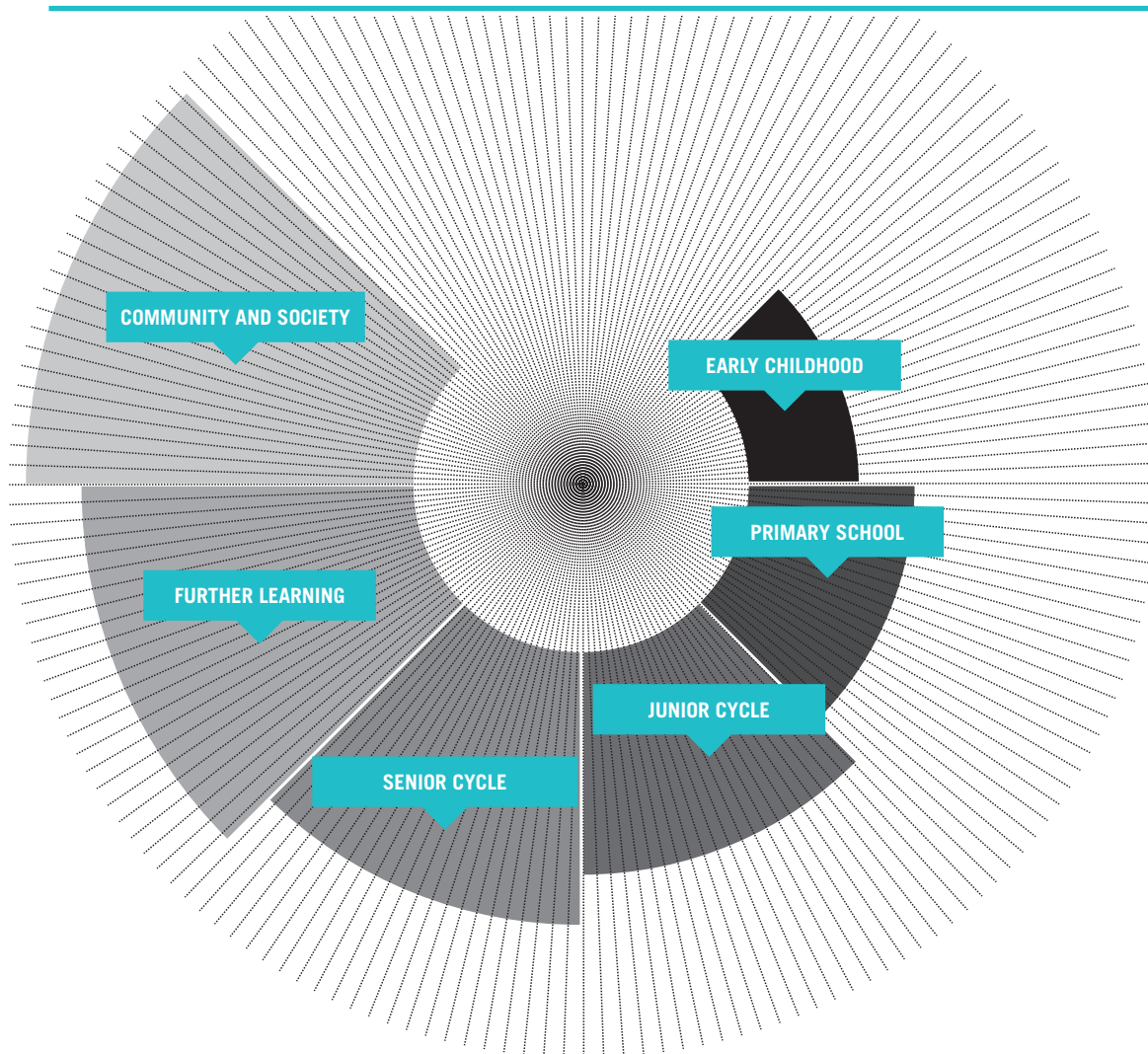
## Objectives

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The objectives of the Leaving Certificate short course in Psychology are to:

- introduce learners to psychology as a subject of study
- enable learners to develop a knowledge and understanding of psychology, its main theories and themes
- support students' learning in psychology and other subjects by applying the appropriate psychological research findings
- introduce learners to a wide variety of psychological methods, their strengths and weaknesses
- promote learners' critical awareness of how psychology is presented in the media.

## Related learning



The short course in Psychology fits in well with students' previous learning experiences in primary school and junior cycle. It also complements a number of other senior cycle subjects. Overall, it is consistent with the main themes and values emphasised in both primary and post-primary curricula. In particular, the course takes a learner-centred approach. Studying psychology will enable learners to develop in terms of the knowledge they acquire, the understanding they achieve, the skills they master and the values they develop. It also enables learners to develop as social beings; the aims of the course include helping learners to consider ethics; see things from another person's perspective and work together in groups. Furthermore, it prepares learners for further and higher education and lifelong learning; providing transferable skills such as critical thinking and subject-specific knowledge that help students make more informed choices at third level.

### Primary school

The Primary School Curriculum emphasises creative problem solving and critical thinking and the short course in Psychology encourages these skills both in terms of theory and practice. Research is a strong component in the course, consistent with the Primary School Curriculum's emphasis on children investigating, asking questions, and observing the world around them. This emphasis is particularly apparent in the SESE Science Curriculum; the skills of inquiry and investigation are also key skills to be developed in learners doing psychology.

### **Junior cycle**

Science is an area of related learning at junior cycle also. Science and technology is identified as an area of experience which brings students into contact with the world around them. However, whereas science encourages learners to study a wide variety of phenomena, psychology is more focused on the science of the mind and the influences of the world on the individual and vice versa. However, the spirit of investigation is strong in both science and psychology. In the short course, learners are required to test their own and others' hypotheses about the world.

### **Senior cycle**

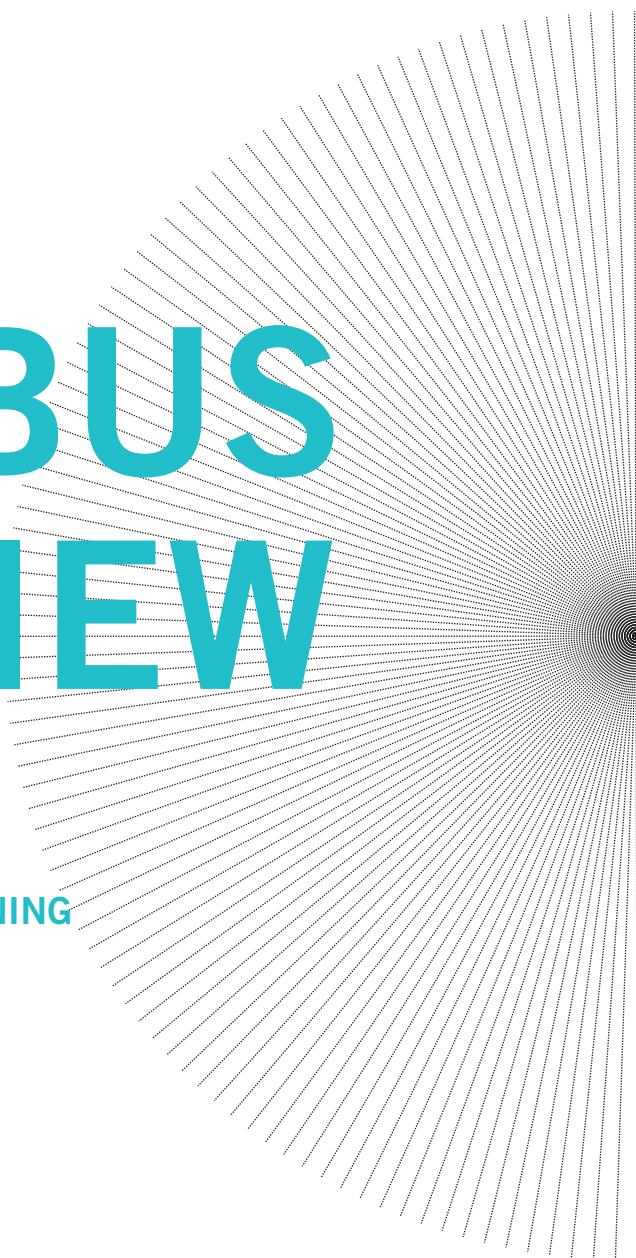
Psychology complements a number of other subjects that students may study at senior cycle. For example, the nervous system is studied in both Biology and Psychology. Similarly, stress is studied in SPHE, statistics in mathematics, and moral development in Religious Education. However, psychology approaches these topics from a different perspective and enhances learners' knowledge and understanding of them by making further connections. In SPHE, for example, students learn about mental health. One of the learning outcomes of this topic is that students will "develop skills to support self or others, including the ability to recognise and deal with emotions appropriately and to communicate assertively". Psychology also deals with emotion but learners studying psychology might consider the biological basis of behaviour and how different theories of emotion have tried to explain the nature of emotion from different perspectives (e.g., physiological, evolutionary, and cognitive).

The senior cycle's new and revised syllabuses are characterised by applications of learning to real-life situations and the short course in Psychology endeavours to help students to be critical learners in the face of an information rich real world. One of its objectives is to help learners to evaluate information coming from different sources and make informed decisions. The inclusion of a psychology and technology sub-topic requires students to think about and work better in a world that is increasingly technology dependant.

### **Further learning**

Senior cycle should prepare students for further and higher education if that is the choice that they make. It is hoped that studying Psychology will enable students to make a more informed choice about third level courses but also provide them with knowledge and skills that will help them in their everyday lives, whatever path they may pursue.

# SYLLABUS OVERVIEW

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STRUCTURE

KEY SKILLS

TEACHING AND LEARNING

DIFFERENTIATION

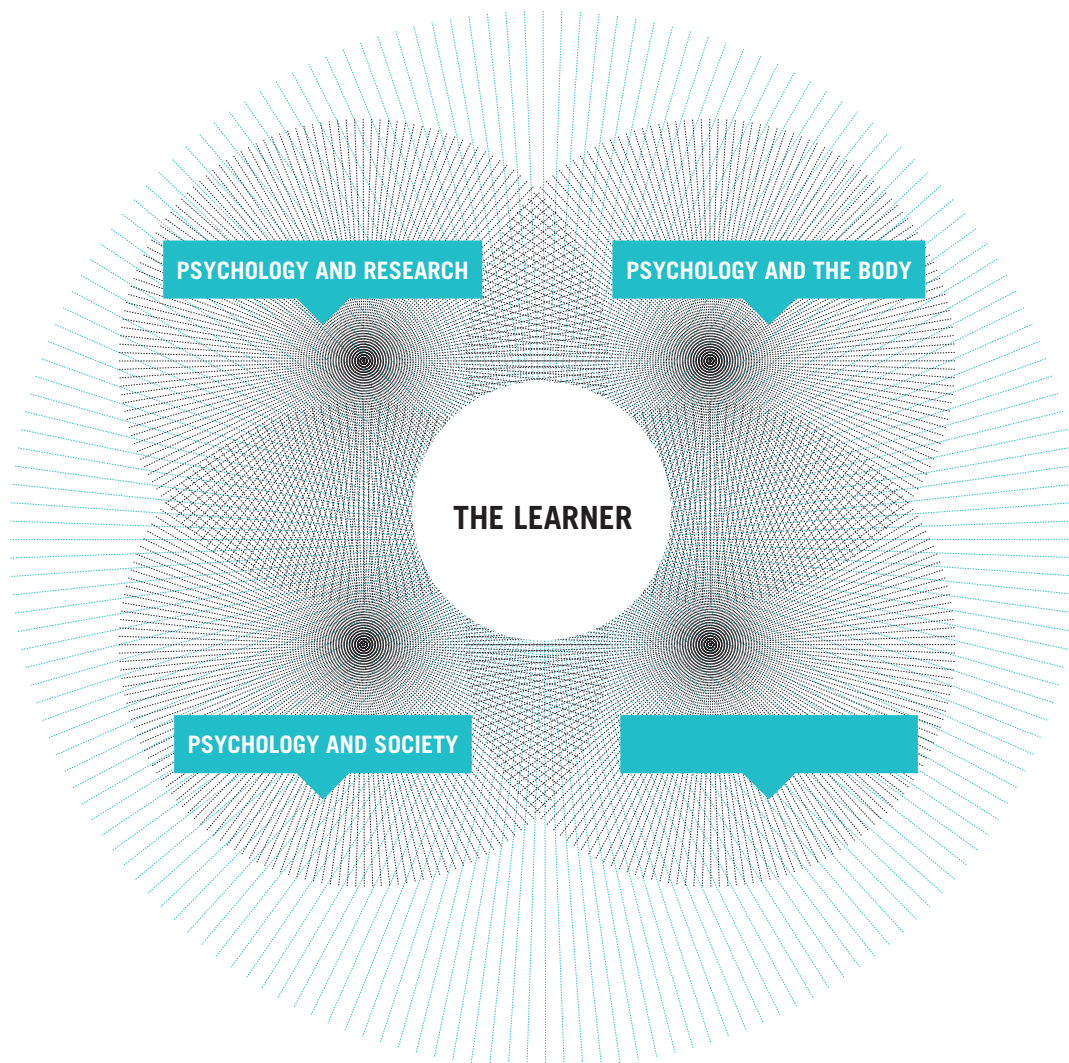


# Syllabus overview

## Structure

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The short course in Psychology consists of four units of study: Psychology and Research, Psychology and the Body, Psychology and You, and Psychology and Society (see diagram below). These encompass the six core components that have been identified as central to the discipline (Biological Bases of Behaviour, Developmental and Lifespan Psychology, Social Psychology, Personality and Individual Differences, Cognitive Psychology, and Research Design and Methods). It is expected that the four units will be given equal emphasis.





Each unit in the course looks at a different levels of influences on behaviour. Psychology and the Body focuses on how the brain affects behaviour. What we know about the brain has informed the psychology of the individual and is dealt with in the topic Psychology and You. Psychology and You looks at how and why people think the way they do, personality and individual differences, and age-related changes in these aspects of behaviour. Psychology and Society explores how a person's behaviour affects that of the people around them and vice versa. Finally, Psychology and Research introduces students to the scientific study of all of these different types of influences on behaviour. It is important to note that Psychology and Research introduces important principles that are relevant to the entire course.

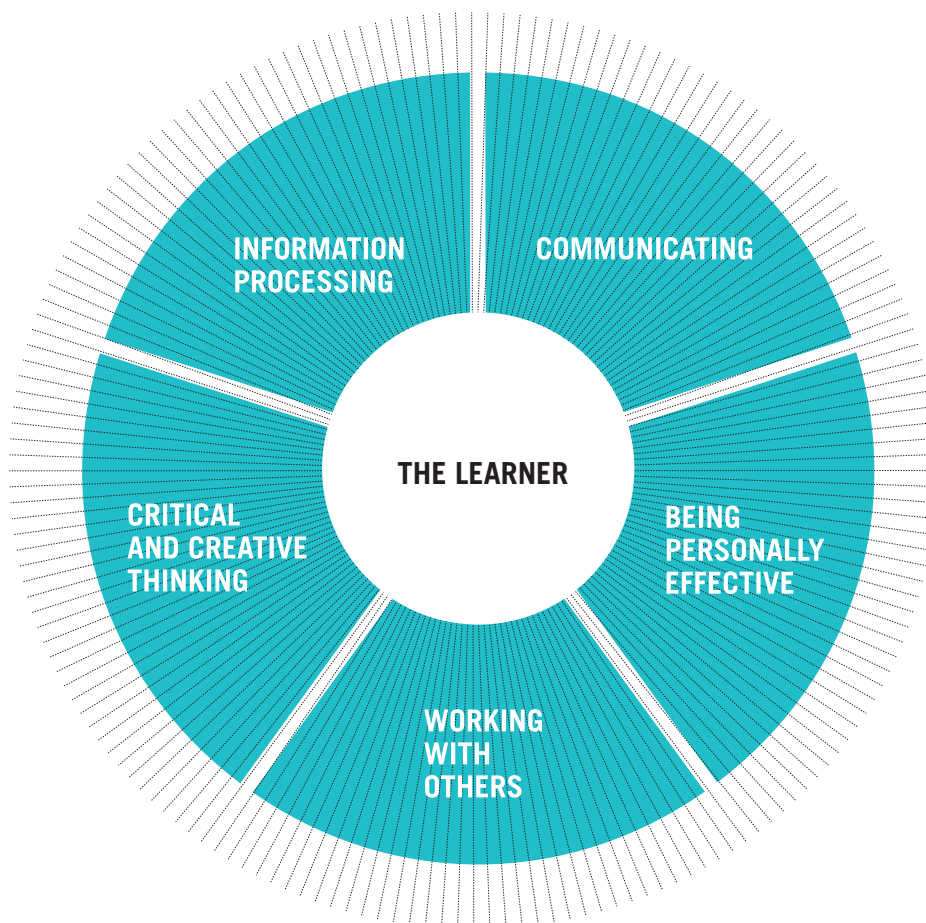
PSYCHOLOGY AND RESEARCH	PSYCHOLOGY AND THE BODY	PSYCHOLOGY AND YOU	PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY
1.1 What is psychology?	2.1 Brain and behaviour	3.1 Cognitive Psychology: Memory	4.1 Attitudes and Persuasion
1.2 What is research?	2.2 Sensation and perception	3.2 Personality and individual differences	4.2 Interpersonal and group processes
1.3 Ethics	2.3 Motivation and emotion	3.3 Developmental psychology	4.2 Being a psychologist; Working with people

### Time allocation

The short course in Psychology is designed as a 90-hour course of study. It is recommended that there is at least one double period each week to facilitate engagement in participatory learning activities and conducting small-scale research studies.

## Key Skills

Five key skills have been identified as central to teaching and learning across the curriculum at senior cycle: information processing, being personally effective, communicating, critical and creative thinking, and working with others. These key skills are important for all learners to achieve their full potential, both during their time in school and into the future and to participate fully in society, including family life, the world of work and lifelong learning. Embedding the key skills in the curriculum will unlock a range of learning experiences for students, improving their present and future access to learning, their social interaction, their information and communication abilities, and their ability to work collaboratively.



The short course in Psychology will contribute to the development of the key skills as follows:

### Information processing

Information is readily accessible from a wide range of sources. Studying Psychology will require learners to seek information from reliable and valid sources, to conduct focused searches for information, and organise what they find into a form that can be communicated to others. Learners will summarise and integrate new information with what they already know as their study of the subject progresses. Many of the topics require outputs which will involve putting information together and presenting it in a variety of ways, including producing an information leaflet, writing up reports, debating various issues, and designing an advertising campaign. While all of the key skills are represented in Psychology, information processing is particularly prominent.

### Critical and creative thinking

There is a strong emphasis on research in this course and engaging in the research process will encourage learners to critically evaluate existing information and think creatively about it. Learners will be encouraged to examine the way they think about many aspects of their everyday lives and how and why we behave the way we do. A number of theoretical perspectives are presented in the course, for example, in relation to cognitive development, and this will give learners the opportunity to compare and contrast different viewpoints and examine the evidence for both. Further, they will be encouraged to pose questions and answer them imaginatively. In conducting small-scale research studies, students will be asked to test theories and generate new ones.

## **Communicating**

In Psychology, learners are encouraged to discuss and debate ideas and issues (e.g., ethical concerns in the context of human and animal research). They will be expected to consider and listen to other people's viewpoints—within the class from their teacher and peers and from the wider community. A number of topics in Psychology will enable learners to acquire knowledge about important aspects of communication including individual differences and interpersonal and group processes and then put those ideas into practice. These activities encourage learners to see things from another's perspective, communicate within a group, and explore the use of today's technologies in communicating. As has been pointed out previously, the course does emphasise research and an important part of research is communicating findings to a variety of audiences in different ways.

## **Working with others**

Studying individual differences makes learners aware of the ways people differ in their thinking and behaviour and should encourage them to consider other people's perspectives and develop empathy for others. Similarly, learning about and discussing ethical concerns in relation to research will lead students to respect the rights of others as research participants. Actually conducting research and occupying the role of researcher and participant will enable students to experience an ethical approach to studying human behaviour (e.g., designing a consent form). Studying interpersonal group processes involves considering what a group is and how group membership can affect an individual's behaviour. Learners are expected to work together in a focussed way to collect data for small-scale research studies, to generate ideas, and problem solve in class discussions and debates.

## **Being personally effective**

Studying Psychology will enable students to gain knowledge and skills that will directly benefit them as learners and in other aspects of their everyday lives. By participating in a learning environment that is open to new ideas, different opinions and challenging experiences, learners will gain confidence in expressing themselves and listening to the views of others. Constructive feedback from formative assessment and class exercises will help students to evaluate their own work and learn how to become more self-directed in their learning. Developing their research skills will support their efforts to gain and evaluate knowledge in an information-rich environment. Topics such as that focusing on memory will be directly applicable to learners' gaining an understanding of what constitutes effective learning practices.

# Teaching and learning

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Studying the short course in Psychology involves a positive learning experience that results in the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will enable learners to become more self-directed in their learning and to apply these skills throughout their lives. This will require a range of teaching and learning approaches, which will cater for learners of varying strengths and needs.

Psychology supports learning in a number of ways, including:

- **Subject-specific knowledge**

Studying psychology will enable learners to acquire knowledge and understanding of several topics which facilitate learning. Such topics include research and ethics, healthy brain habits, selective attention, motivation, memory, individual differences, cognitive development, and interpersonal and group processes. These topics will help students to study more effectively and understand the various influences on learning behaviour. Improving learning behaviour will encourage students to develop positive beliefs about learning and learn in ways that suit their own strengths and needs.

- **Teaching and learning strategies**

Psychology is amenable to a wide variety of teaching and learning strategies that will enable students to develop their learning skills. Possible teaching strategies include practicals, project work, field trips, demonstrations, and case studies. Practical or small-scale research studies allow students the opportunity to work together in groups or individually. Learners will take part in demonstrations where possible. They will be expected to take notes and follow through with relevant reading. Professionals working in psychology would be valuable visitors to the classroom. Visual information, slides, films and videos will be used where appropriate. Participation will be encouraged at all times during classes with opportunities for students to discuss and debate various issues in psychology.

In psychology, students will learn to work ethically with people, work in groups and individually, develop presentation skills, and use different information and communications technology. The use of information communications technology is to be encouraged to source information and present it in a variety of ways.

- **Assessment for learning**

Different types of formative assessment will be used to support students' learning in psychology. Monitoring their own performance and acting on constructive feedback will enable students to better evaluate and improve their own work. Setting homework will help students to plan and carry out work within a specific timeframe. Informal, in-class assessment can also be valuable, for example, student questions and responses in classes; student presentations of their own work; and performance in practicals. Teachers in reflecting on their teaching practices and making necessary adjustments may also use results of assessments.

## Differentiation

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Students learn at different rates and in different ways. Differentiation in teaching and learning and in related assessment arrangements is essential in order to cater for and meet the needs of all students. The short course in Psychology provides numerous opportunities for the teacher to teach the subject and select content so that it directly meets the needs and interests of their students. The focus on active and participatory learning which is central to the course means that students can be engaged in learning activities that most directly match their own needs and ways of learning.

The Psychology course is designed to be taken at Ordinary and Higher levels. The learning outcomes are not differentiated by level, however the assessment will allow students to undertake an examination at either Higher or Ordinary level.

# UNITS OF STUDY

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UNIT 1: PSYCHOLOGY AND RESEARCH

UNIT 2: PSYCHOLOGY AND THE BODY

UNIT 3: PSYCHOLOGY AND YOU

UNIT 4: PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIETY

# Unit 1: Psychology and Research

Psychology and Research introduces psychology as a discipline strongly rooted in research as distinct from popular psychology. Psychological research involves the systematic study of all aspects of behaviour using a variety of methods including experiments, observations, case studies, correlational studies, and surveys. To this end, students will find out about the history of psychology and how it developed into a science of behaviour, its methods, and the ethical principles that underlie it. The outcomes of this unit can be achieved by a variety of teaching and learning strategies, including classroom discussion sessions, analysis of case studies, and conducting small-scale research projects.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT	STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO
<b>1.1 What is psychology?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explain the term <i>psychology</i></li><li>• draw a history of psychology timeline from Descartes to the present day</li></ul>
<b>1.2 What is research?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explain the term <i>research</i></li><li>• identify the stages involved in conducting a research study: planning, collecting data, analysing findings, communicating findings</li><li>• compare two different ways of collecting data: experimental and non-experimental (including field observations, case studies, correlational studies, and surveys)</li><li>• provide descriptive statistics for a data set (i.e., mean, median, mode, and range, graphs and tables)</li><li>• explain the purpose of a statistical test</li><li>• link the findings of a research study back to the research question asked</li></ul>
<b>1.3 Ethics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• discuss ethical concerns in the context of human (including informed consent, deception, debriefing, and confidentiality) and animal research</li><li>• design a sample consent form for use in a research study</li></ul>

## Unit 2: Psychology and the Body

This unit, focussing on how the brain affects behaviour, begins with a brief introduction to the nervous system. This allows learners become familiar with the anatomy of the brain and the key terms associated with it. Learners should begin to develop the language to learn about important areas in this topic such as sensation, perception, motivation, and emotion.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT	STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO
<b>2.1 Brain and behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• describe the structure of the human nervous system</li><li>• discuss the brain's influence on behaviour during a typical day</li><li>• produce an information leaflet for the public about healthy brain habits</li></ul>
<b>2.2 Sensation and perception</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• connect the five senses (i.e., vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch) with their corresponding structures, stimuli, and receptors</li><li>• differentiate between sensation, perception and information processing</li><li>• reproduce a simple experiment in the field of sensation and perception</li><li>• discuss the strengths and limitations of selective attention in humans</li></ul>
<b>2.3 Motivation and emotion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• discuss what drives us to behave the way we do (motivation)</li><li>• describe Maslow's hierarchy of needs</li><li>• explain what motivates us to eat</li><li>• discuss what causes our feelings (emotion)</li><li>• compare the James-Lange and Canon-Bard theories of emotion</li></ul>

# Unit 3: Psychology and You

This topic aims to bring together learners' emerging understanding of psychology and research with the psychology of the individual. There is an emphasis on how researchers have described cognitive processes such as memory as well as personality and individual differences, and how these change across the lifespan. Links can be made to Unit 2 – Psychology and the Body and the manner in which what we know about the brain has informed these other branches of psychology.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT	STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO
<b>3.1 Cognitive psychology: memory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• describe the different types of memory, including sensory, short-term, working, and long-term memory</li><li>• examine the evidence for each type of memory</li><li>• conduct a simple experiment on an aspect of memory</li><li>• design a study timetable that takes into account what we know about memory</li></ul>
<b>3.2 Personality and individual differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• discuss physical and psychological characteristics in the context of individual differences</li><li>• explain the term personality</li><li>• compare Freud's psychoanalytic approach to Eysenck's trait approach to personality</li><li>• explain the term intelligence</li><li>• debate the issues surrounding the use of intelligence and aptitude tests</li><li>• discuss the idea of individual differences in relation to mental health</li><li>• compare biological and psychological explanations of at least one example of mental illness (e.g. depression)</li></ul>
<b>3.3 Developmental psychology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• compare Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories of cognitive development</li><li>• describe the development of language in childhood</li><li>• identify the importance of attachment in childhood</li><li>• describe the psychological changes that occur during adolescence</li><li>• carry out a small-scale observational study</li></ul>

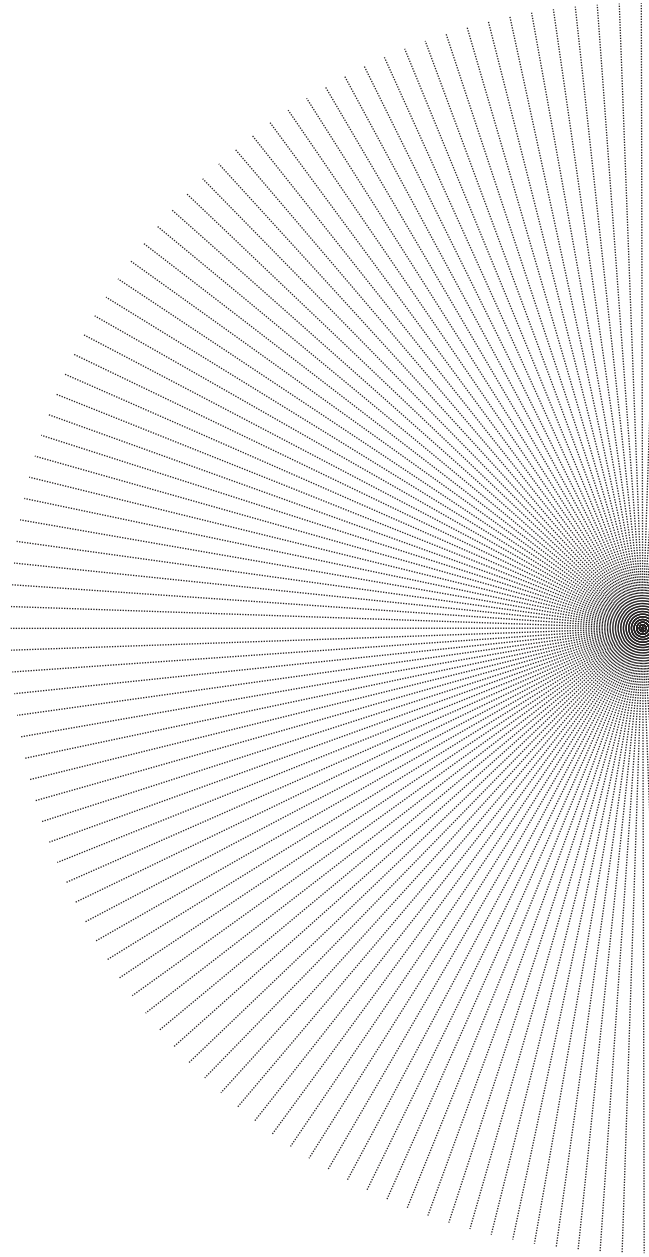


# Unit 4: Psychology and Society

Psychology and Society looks at how a person's behaviour affects that of the people around them and vice versa. This unit asks learners to consider the impact of the modern world on our behaviour and what psychology has to offer in such a world. For example, how humans and technology interact. Observational studies and project work will be useful in studying this unit. Professionals working in psychology would be valuable visitors to the classroom. As with Units 2 and 3, this unit is underpinned by an emphasis on research.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT	STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO
<b>4.1. Attitudes and persuasion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• explain the term attitudes</li><li>• discuss how attitudes can be changed (e.g., persuasion)</li><li>• design an attitude questionnaire</li></ul>
<b>4.2. Interpersonal and group processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• discuss what a group is and the different forms it can take</li><li>• consider how group membership can affect individual behaviour</li><li>• examine conflict and prejudice between groups</li><li>• design an advertising campaign to combat prejudice and stereotyping</li><li>• discuss how technology can help or hinder communication</li></ul>
<b>4.3. Being a psychologist: working with people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• describe what is involved in working in clinical and counselling, educational, forensic, health, organisational, and sports psychology</li></ul>





## Assessment in Psychology

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The assessment that students will undertake as part of or on completion of Psychology will involve:

- Formative assessment. Formative assessment is used to gauge what students already know and understand and can do, and may be used to provide information for planning the next instructional steps. Results of assessments may also be used by teachers to reflect on their teaching practices so that instructional sequences and activities can be modified as required. Feedback to students about their performance is critical to their learning and enables them to develop as learners.
- Summative assessment, i.e. assessment of learning or components used for certification of the course. The purpose of summative assessment is to gauge students' ultimate learning at the end of a course and therefore gathers information about both processes and outcomes.

Formative assessment will be matched to the intended learning outcomes thereby helping to ensure consistency between the aim and objectives of the course and its assessment. Feedback to students is essential to student learning. Furthermore, formative assessment benefits students by providing opportunities for them to use and display their skills and abilities. A wide range of assessment methods could be used including project work, in-class tests, practical work, reports.

## Assessment for certification

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Assessment for certification in Psychology will be based on the learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and there will be one assessment component, a written examination. The assessment will take place on the conclusion of the course. The structure of the examination will reflect the structure of the course; i.e., Psychology and Research, Psychology and the Body, Psychology and You, and Psychology and Society. The percentage of the total marks to be allocated to each section will be 25%. Each section will comprise a short answer question (5%) and an extended response question (20%).

QUESTION TYPE	OPTIONS	RESPONSE FORMAT	WEIGHTING
<b>Short questions</b>	Specified number of questions to be attempted from a set	Completed on question paper	20%
<b>Extended response questions</b>	Choice from a set of unseen questions (some based on provided stimulus material)	Constructed response in paragraph format or essay format	80%

The tasks set as part of the written examination will examine the following:

- understanding of psychological concepts and theories
- comprehension- capacity to comprehend key information and to draw conclusions from a set of data/fact presented
- analysis- ability to identify psychological principles embedded in descriptions of familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- application- use of psychological research findings and research skills in a problem-solving setting to evaluate, propose, and choose between a number of possible solutions
- interpretation and expression to give articulate, well-argued responses in making and using connections between different aspects of psychology.

### Short answer questions

A number of different types of short answer questions will be presented. Definition questions could be used to assess students' knowledge of specific vocabulary such as words, phrases or technical terms. Extraction/comprehension questions might require a learner to obtain information from a graph or set of data, for example, to interpret a scatterplot of the relationships between two variables.

### Extended response questions

Extended response questions require students to provide a fuller answer or carry out an activity. Different types of extended response questions will include: comprehension/analysis, description, explanation, and problem solving / analysis /evaluation questions. Comprehension analysis questions require students to comprehend and analyse stimulus material. For example, students could be provided with a short description of a research study and asked to discuss any ethical concerns that might arise

from such a study. Description questions call on students to deploy several pieces of information in sequence, for example, in describing the stages involved in conducting a research study. Explanation questions seek evidence of reasoning to demonstrate understanding. For example, explaining why a consent form is necessary when conducting human research. Finally, in responding to problem solving/analysis/evaluation questions students engage with the topic analytically or manipulate and analyse data. For example, examining the evidence for competing theories, which seek to explain some aspect of behaviour.

The examination will assess learning related to each topic. Since the aim of the course is to provide students with a general introduction to the study of psychology, students will be assessed on some aspect of each topic whether with short answer questions or extended answer questions. It is important that whatever learning is assessed reflects students' knowledge and understanding about psychology as a subject of study, its theory and practice.

### Differentiation: Ordinary and Higher Level

There will be separate examination papers for Ordinary and Higher level. Differentiation will be reflected in the structure of the examination paper and in the style of questioning. Consideration will be given to the language level in the questions, the stimulus material provided, the structure of the questions and the amount of scaffolding provided for the examination candidates, especially at Ordinary level.

# General assessment criteria

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**A high level of achievement** in Psychology is characterised by relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of a broad range of psychological concepts, theories, studies, research methods, applications, principles and perspectives. The student consistently applies this knowledge and understanding to analyse familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and problems, using appropriate skills accurately. The ability to describe the potential connections between the different aspects of psychology studied is well developed. The student effectively evaluates evidence and arguments, making reasoned judgements to present appropriate and well-supported conclusions, using psychological terminology in appropriate contexts.

**A moderate level of achievement** is characterised by relevant and accurate knowledge of a range of psychological concepts, theories, studies, research methods, applications, principles and perspectives. The student applies this knowledge and understanding to analyse familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and problems, using appropriate skills. There is some understanding of the connections between the different aspects of psychology studied. The student evaluates evidence and arguments to present reasoned conclusions using psychological terminology in appropriate contexts.

**A low level of achievement** is characterised by a basic knowledge of appropriate psychological concepts, theories, studies, research methods, applications, principles and perspectives. The student shows some ability to use this knowledge and understanding in order to analyse familiar and unfamiliar situations, issues and problems making some use of relevant skills. The ability to identify connections between the different aspects of psychology studied is limited. The student's responses are clear but the evaluation of evidence and arguments is limited and the use of appropriate psychological terminology is limited.





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