



Harmonize Academy

Subject Overview

Psychology



We offer two qualifications under the umbrella of **Psychology** here at Harmonize Academy. Some learners prefer or are best suited to exams whilst others prefer coursework-based qualifications. Therefore, we offer **GCSE Psychology** and **Level 2 Certificate** in Mental Health Awareness.

How do we deliver Psychology?

- **GCSE Psychology** (100% exam based)
- **NCFE Level 2 Certificate** in Mental Health Awareness (100% coursework based)

GCSE Psychology

Our **Psychology GCSE** curriculum aims to provide students with a foundational understanding of psychological concepts, methods, and applications. It's designed to introduce learners to how psychologists explain behaviour and mental processes, using both scientific and theoretical approaches. The curriculum **aims** to help students:

1. **Understand the basics of human behaviour and mental processes**
Through learning about key psychological theories and perspectives (like biological, cognitive, social, and developmental).
2. **Develop scientific thinking and research skills**
Through learning about research methods and how psychological studies are designed, conducted, and interpreted
3. **Apply psychological concepts to real-life contexts**
Through learning about everyday behaviours and mental health issues (e.g., memory, aggression, depression, substance abuse and misuse).
4. **Explore the work of classic and contemporary psychologists**
Through learning about and analysing key studies and how they've contributed to our understanding of the mind and behaviour.
5. **Build critical thinking and analytical skills**
Through learning about explanations, comparing them, challenging assumptions and evaluating the reliability of research evidence.

This qualification is linear and students sit 2 exams at the end of the course. There is no coursework.

Paper 1: Cognition and Behaviour (1 hour 45 minutes – 100 marks)

Paper 2: Social Context and Behaviour (1 hour 45 minutes – 100 marks)

Paper 1: Cognition and Behaviour (1 hour 45 minutes – 100 marks)

1. Memory -

- Processes of memory (encoding, storage, retrieval)
- Structures of memory (multi-store model)
- Memory as an active process (Bartlett's theory)
- Factors affecting the accuracy of memory

2. Perception -

- Sensation and perception
- Visual cues, illusions and depth perception
- Gregory's and Gibson's theories
- Factors affecting perception

3. Development -

- Early brain development
- Piaget's theory of cognitive development
- The role of education in development
- Dweck's and Willingham's learning theories

4. Research Methods -

- Experimental design
- Hypotheses and variables
- Sampling methods
- Data analysis (mean, median, mode, range)
- Ethical issues
- Types of data (qualitative/quantitative)

Paper 2: Social Context and Behaviour (1 hour 45 minutes – 100 marks)

1. Social Influence

- Conformity (Asch)
- Obedience (Milgram)
- Prosocial behaviour (e.g. Piliavin)
- Bystander behaviour
- Crowd and collective behaviour

2. Language, Thought and Communication

- Piaget's theory on language and thought
- Sapir-Whorf hypothesis
- Non-verbal communication (eye contact, gestures, posture)
- Factors affecting non-verbal communication
- Animal vs human communication

3. Brain and Neuropsychology

- Structure and function of the nervous system
- The brain: cerebrum, cerebral cortex, etc.
- Neuropsychological studies (e.g. Tulving, Damasio)
- Brain lateralisation
- Impact of neurological damage

4. Psychological Problems

- Depression: symptoms, diagnosis, biological and psychological explanations (e.g. Beck's theory), treatments
- Addiction: symptoms, diagnosis, biological and psychological explanations, treatment

NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Mental Health Awareness

The **NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Mental Health Awareness** is a vocational qualification designed to provide learners with a solid understanding of mental health issues, how to support individuals, and how to reduce stigma in various settings. The curriculum **aims** to help students:

1. **Increase knowledge and understanding of mental health**
Through learning about what mental health is, including definitions and misconceptions.
2. **Promote awareness of mental health conditions**
Through learning about and identifying common mental health conditions, their symptoms, and how they can impact people's lives.
3. **Support early intervention and signposting**
Through learning how to recognise when someone might need help and how to direct them to appropriate support.
4. **Challenge stigma and discrimination**
Through learning about and respecting different cultural attitudes and reduce misunderstanding around mental health conditions.
5. **Develop empathy and understanding**
Through learning to consider emotional, psychological and social impacts of mental health issues.

This qualification is 100% coursework based and there is 10 mandatory units. For each unit learners are expected to understand definitions, symptoms, causes, impacts on their selves, family and friends and local support available. The units include:

- Unit 1** – Understanding mental health
- Unit 2** – Understanding stress
- Unit 3** – Understanding anxiety
- Unit 4** – Understanding phobias
- Unit 5** – Understanding depression
- Unit 6** – Understanding postnatal depression
- Unit 7** – Understanding bipolar
- Unit 8** – Understanding schizophrenia
- Unit 9** – Understanding dementia
- Unit 10** – Understanding eating disorders

Future pathways

Careers in Psychology

Our curriculum **prepares learners for further study in psychology or related subjects.**

Through conversations we lay the groundwork for further qualifications such as the Level 3 NCFE Certificate in Understanding Mental Health, A-Level Psychology or other social science courses. We discuss steps following college or sixth form such as which degree courses and careers they may be interested in. We research which qualifications and grades they need to be working towards in order to further their future careers in the field of psychology. We welcome back, and often do, any previous students if they need any help with their ongoing studies or university applications in psychology.