



PSYCHOLOGY

'AS' Level:

The vital facts:

(psi is the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet and often is used as shorthand for psychology)

The nature of psychology:

Psychologists are scientists who are dedicated to improving our understanding of the mind and how it influences behaviour and thinking.

'A' Level psychology students are assessed on:

1. Their ability to show knowledge and understanding of psychological research (theories and/or studies) in an effective way.
2. Their ability to assess the scientific value of such research in an effective way.
3. Their ability to plan, conduct and report scientific investigations.

- We have changed to the **OCR examining board** in September 2008 as this is a challenging specification that approaches psychology in a way that Year 12 students find more appealing.
- All **assessment** is by two exams at the end of Year 12.
- Year 12 students get the chance to carry out and report on their own **investigations**.
- **Entry requirements:** We expect students to have 5 or more good GCSE A* to C passes, **including** Science, Maths & English.



Psychology Department

St. Peter's RC High School
& Sixth Form Centre
Stroud Road
Tuffley, Gloucester
GL4 0DE

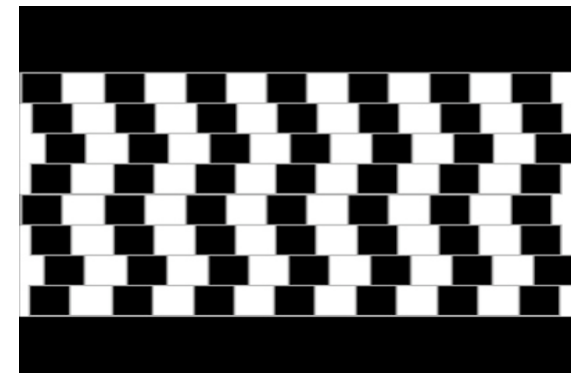
PSYCHOLOGY 'AS' LEVEL

(Intake: September 2009)

ST. PETER'S HIGH SCHOOL &
SIXTH FORM CENTRE

Do these lines run parallel to each other?

Why/how did the image trick your mind?



The lines are in fact parallel to each other – measure the distance between them to check! The black blocks have absorbed light and don't reflect any back to the eye of the viewer, while the white blocks reflect a lot of light. The way the black boxes are offset to each other tricks the brain, as it receives information from the retinas via the optic nerves, into 'pulling' one end of the line downwards, resulting in the viewer imagining that they see a kinked line. More illusions are available at:

<http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/~akitaoka/rotate-e.html>



Areas of psychological research covered in the AS course:

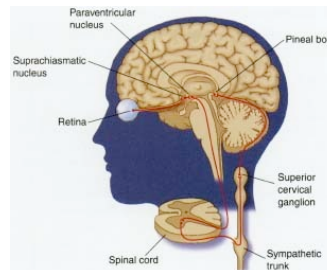
- Psychological investigations & research methods
- Unreliable eyewitness testimony; autism & Asperger syndrome; language acquisition.
- Development of thinking in young children; social learning of aggression; analysis of phobias.
- London taxi drivers' structural changes in the hippocampus region of the brain; rapid eye movement (REM) sleep; left and right brain dominance.
- Obedience; the psychology of tyranny; acts of “good Samaritanism”.
- Schizophrenia; multiple personality syndrome; gambling addiction.

Why you should consider studying psychology:

Psychology is interesting! This is a popular subject because topics involve students and the department is well known for encouraging active and innovative approaches to teaching & learning.

Psychology helps you to develop your thinking skills further.

Psychology is a challenging, popular and ever-developing subject. Universities want students who can think and they recognise that ‘A’ Level psychology students are involved in learning more about the one of the newest and most innovative fields of scientific research.



Careers for which psychology ‘A’ Level is appropriate: Law, medicine, teaching, research, business, banking, personnel management, management in general, ergonomics, architecture, design, advertising, sales, marketing, economics, counselling, child psychology, educational psychology, clinical psychology, training & motivation.

Why universities are interested in people who do the ‘A’ level psychology course:

- Psychology develops linguistic skills of argument and critical thinking.
- Of the non-traditional subjects, psychology has an excellent reputation as being thorough, challenging, requiring breadth and depth of knowledge.
- Psychology encourages independent study and helps to develop the ability to carry out investigations in a scientific manner.