

Psychology at Bootham

What is Psychology?

Psychology is the study of human behaviour – it is the **SCIENCE** of mind and brain. What could be more fascinating or worthwhile?

Psychology broadly spans from the highly scientific disciplines cognitive neuro-science and the psychophysics of perception, through the study of social influence, the analysis of human dialogues, positive psychology and the correlates of human flourishing to the nuanced exploration of spiritual experiences of the numinous! AQA Psychology A level will give you a taste of some key areas: Memory, Development, Social Influence, Mental Health, Bio-Psychology, Research Methods, Statistics, Issues/Debates Plus three Options modules.

Why study Psychology? It's interesting and useful. Studying Psychology A level will build your critical thinking, train you in practical scientific methods and tone up your writing skills ready for a degree or career in almost anything. It keeps your options open.

In Psychology we study questions: What causes mental disorder, such as schizophrenia? Do our perceptions of the world map closely onto reality – if not, can you choose your own reality? What do 'split-brain patients' tell us about whether we have free will? How can one affect changes in beliefs and society? How can we motivate ourselves more effectively through reinforcement? Which is more important, Nature or Nurture? How can we get our working memory to work for us? Would you obey an order to hurt someone? Would you be a good eyewitness to a crime? Are your memories accurate and how easily can they be altered? Who do you fall in love with and why? Is social media good for you?

To find out more: watch the new video 2020 or this one by Harriet Ennis:

[‘What is Psychology?’ including a student panel Q&A at the end.](#)

Our aims: We aim to stretch our students, beyond asking them to think critically and to write coherently, towards a questioning approach to their studies. Ideally, we want to foster academic exploration and in particular we aim to provide a thought-provoking course.

Being a comparatively new discipline, Psychology is deep in the process of new discovery. For this reason, scientific research methods and findings are at the heart of any Psychology course. Humans are complex creatures, so to gain insight into their minds and behaviour; psychologists need to devise clever and inventive experiments. In contrast to other sciences, such as Physics and Biology, where students learn to apply well established findings,

Psychology students are constantly analysing and questioning research and weighing up evidence. Hence our strap line: ‘think like a scientist; argue like a lawyer’

Psychology Trips and Enrichment Events

Our links with the Psychology Department at The University of York and the Anthropology Department at The University of Durham allow us to hold events to enrich students’ learning:



On ‘Brain Day’ with Dr Guy Sutton students handled a real brain and learnt, amongst other fascinating things, how scientists can implant memories into the dreams of sleeping mice!



Psychology students wearing distortion goggles to carry out a Perception Experiment at The University of York.



Students at the The University of York’s Neuro-imaging Unit, with Professor Alan Baddeley (world famous in the field of Memory Research).

Active learning methods

We engage students in thought-provoking experiments and active learning methods. Psychology is a fascinating subject and there are a lot of new techniques and information to learn. The best way to understand these effectively is by putting research methods into context - a hands-on approach to learning.



Research has shown that people wearing artificial smiles (by holding a pencil between their teeth) are more resilient when faced with an impossible task.

We tried to replicate those findings ourselves. TED talk on smiling

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9cGdRNMdQQ>



Mini-sculptures made by students studying interactional synchrony and attachment types for their Developmental Psychology topic.

Both male and female students enjoy active learning methods...

The ratio of male to female Psychology students at A level is 1:4 countrywide. At Bootham we have chosen a new A level specification with a better balance of topics to encourage both male and female student interest. We were delighted to have a healthy ratio of males to females. Indeed in 2019, we had more male than female students!

Help and Advice for Bootham Psychology students:

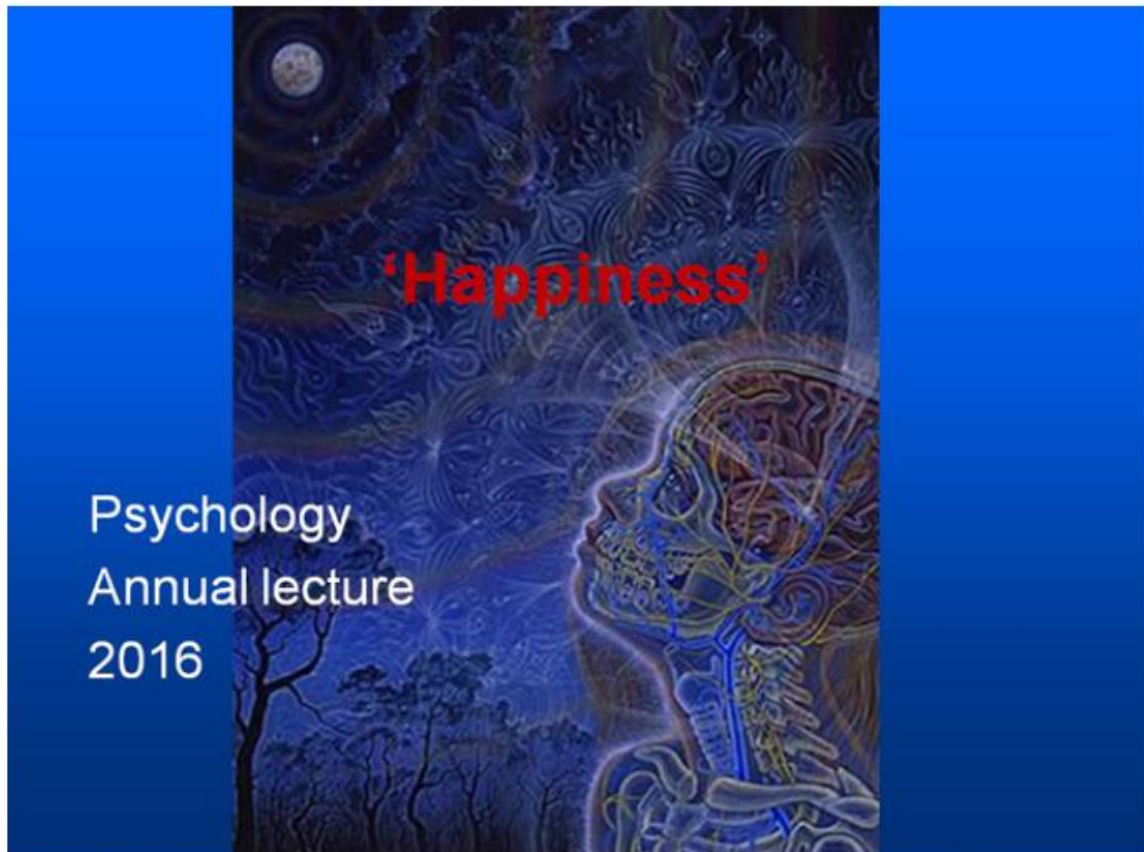
Bootham Psychology department has a strong Old Scholars network that students can make use of for help and advice, should they wish to go on to study Psychology after A level. Job opportunities, internships and advice on courses is available through our flourishing Facebook network group – The Bootham Psychology Hall of Fame.

Psychology for All



A four-day Psychology Summer School is held at Manor School annually for students in Years 7 and 8.

For further information here is the ISSP (Independent State School Partnership) link <https://yorkissp.org/>. Bootham A level students work as teaching assistants for the Summer School which is like a mini-internship.



This year's public psychology lecture at Bootham explored 'The Psychology of Happiness'.

The PowerPoint presentations and those from previous years are available to view on the Psychology subject page of the school website:

There are also ISSP Psychology master classes annually, a 'Psychology Experiments for Seniors' activity for Year 10 and 11 students at Bootham and an A level Challenge Course - Mental Health and Wellbeing - that runs 4.30-5.30 weekly.

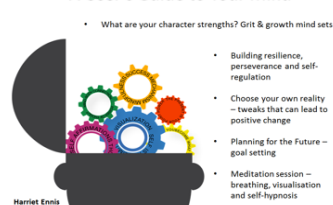
PEAK PERFORMANCE AND WELLBEING



Key features of the course:

- This course will impress future employers and/or university admissions as you can claim experience of **independent study in the form of a MOOC from Berkeley University**. MOOC stands for Massive Open Online Course – they are free and high quality. The awarding body is Berkeley, which is recognised as one of the top US universities. You can choose to receive **accreditation in the form of a certificate** from Berkeley if you pass the mid-term and final multi-choice exams. <https://www.edx.org/course/science-happiness-uc-berkeleyx-gg101x-4#> <http://www.chronicle.com/article/What-You-Need-to-Know-About/133475/>
- Inside and outside class you will learn **evidenced-based techniques to improve your current well-being and future success**. If you engage with the course it should be life-changing, interesting and thought-provoking. Please note that the course includes both Psychology and Philosophy and it will challenge you to think, participate and question ideas. The course is **'hands-on'** and **practical** for example, you will be trained in **techniques such as self-hypnosis, visualisation and mindfulness**.
- This course includes academic content as well as skills training. It investigates the science and theory behind how we can prepare for more successful lives and better well-being. In particular the course **focuses on critical thinking skills**, such as how to judge validity and interrogate data. The course leader has based the course around workshops that have consistently received **outstanding feedback** from the York ISSP (Independent State Schools Partnership) staff and students.

A User's Guide to Your Mind



- What are your character strengths? Grit & growth mind sets
- Building resilience, perseverance and self-regulation
- Choose your own reality – tweaks that can lead to positive change
- Planning for the Future – goal setting
- Meditation session – breathing, visualisation and self-hypnosis

Key skills:

Self-awareness
Confidence and Resilience
Self-presentation
Motivation
Decision-making
Self-change
Coping with stress
Critical thinking