



Psychology

Nature of the Subject

Psychology is the scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. It seeks to understand how individuals think, feel, and act by exploring biological, cognitive, and sociocultural influences. The discipline applies rigorous research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, to investigate various aspects of human life, including decision-making, social interaction, memory, emotion, identity, and mental health.

The IB Psychology course emphasizes critical thinking, ethical research practices, and real-world applications of psychological knowledge. Students engage in inquiry-based learning, concept-driven instruction, and collaborative activities to deepen their understanding.

Distinction between Higher and Standard Level

Both SL and HL students study psychological concepts, research methods, and ethical considerations through four broad contexts:

- **Health and Well-being**
- **Human Development**
- **Human Relationships**
- **Learning and Cognition**

HL students extend their learning by exploring the influence of **culture, motivation, and technology** on behavior and developing data analysis skills. Additionally, HL students engage in more extensive research evaluation and interpretation.

Syllabus outline

Core Topics (SL & HL)

- **Concepts in Psychology:** Bias, causality, change, measurement, perspective, and responsibility.
- **Approaches to Psychology:** Biological, cognitive, and sociocultural perspectives.
- **Contexts:** Application of psychological theories and research to real-life areas of human behavior.
- **Research Methods:** Understanding and evaluating experimental, correlational, observational, and qualitative research methods.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Evaluating psychological research within ethical frameworks.

Additional Topics (HL Only)

- **Extensions of Psychological Research:** The role of culture, motivation, and technology in shaping human behavior.
- **Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Understanding and applying statistical and thematic analysis in psychological research.

Prior Learning

No prior knowledge of psychology is required. However, students should be prepared to engage in scientific research, critical analysis, and independent inquiry.

Assessment Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be expected to demonstrate:

1. **Knowledge and Understanding:** Mastery of key concepts, theories, and models in psychology.
2. **Application and Analysis:** Ability to apply psychological research and evaluate its implications.
3. **Synthesis and Evaluation:** Critical evaluation of psychological theories and research methodologies.
4. **Research Design (HL Only):** Interpretation and application of research findings and statistical analysis.

Teaching Approach

The course fosters critical thinking and inquiry-based learning through discussions, case studies, practical activities, and research projects. Students engage in hands-on investigations, group collaborations, and ethical debates to deepen their understanding of psychological concepts.

Why students might choose this subject

Studying psychology provides valuable insights into human behavior, making it relevant to a wide range of fields such as medicine, business, education, and mental health. The emphasis on research skills and ethical considerations prepares students for careers in scientific and human-focused professions.

Course Assessment

Throughout the two years, Psychology students are assessed using formative and summative assessments which build the necessary skills for their final exams. Students are also assessed through individual and group projects and presentations.

The **final Diploma grade** in the subject is determined by 3 assessment components for SL students and 4 for HL students:

Internal Assessment (IA) – Research Proposal (SL & HL)

- Students design a research proposal to investigate a psychological question using an appropriate research method.

External Assessment – Written Examinations

- **Paper 1:** Short-answer and essay questions on core psychological approaches.
- **Paper 2:** Extended responses on one context (SL) or two contexts (HL).
- **Paper 3 (HL Only):** Data analysis and interpretation questions.

Final Thoughts

IB Psychology is an engaging and intellectually stimulating course that equips students with analytical skills and a scientific understanding of human behavior. Whether pursuing a career in psychology or simply seeking to understand the complexities of human interaction, this course offers invaluable knowledge and skills applicable to various real-world scenarios.