Year 9 Psychology Curriculum Plan (Edexcel)

Unit	Core		Hinterland		NC Coverage Justification: Topic choice & sequencing	Assessment	Whole Education Opportunities
	Key components	Disciplinary Knowledge	Knowledge	Skills			
Introduction to Psychology (Sept-Oct half term)	• What psychology is (this is a new subject for all students in Year 9) • Identify and apply the 6 main human ethical guidelines • Understand and identify that there are different animal ethical guidelines • Define nature and nurture	• Application of ethics to new studies • Know how to evaluate a study • Know how to evaluate a theory	• Careers in psychology (research 4 different careers) • Milgram's study, learn about this to apply their ethics knowledge • Nature vs Nurture debate – discuss how a variety of behaviours may be down to nature or nurture	• Research • Presentation • Application • Discussion	N/A This is not a unit named in the spec, but we have designed this unit to give students an introduction to the key elements that they will use throughout the whole of their psychology GCSE: ethical guidelines, evaluating studies, evaluating theories. This is a whole unit designed to develop disciplinary knowledge.	• Teacher questioning during lesson • Retrieval practice activities (starters and plenaries) • Book work • PR1 assessment (knowledge of key terms learnt)	• SMSC – discussion of morals and what we can/can't do in studies. Students design an unethical study. • Careers – learn about different careers in psychology through a research project.
Memory (Oct-Jan)	• Know the structure and process of memory and information processing • Describe and evaluate the MSM of memory • Understand the duration and capacity of STM and LTM • Describe and evaluate the reconstructive memory theory • Describe and evaluate Bartlett's War of the Ghost study • Describe and evaluate Peterson and Peterson's study • Explain anterograde and retrograde amnesia • Define reductionism and holism	• How to describe a theory • How to describe a study • How to evaluate a theory • How to evaluate a study • Apply knowledge of a theory/study to new scenarios • How to answer 2 mark exam questions	• Using knowledge of MSM to discuss how to improve own memory and revision. Lead into making a complete and high-quality set of revision resources for this topic. • Schema examples in real life – going to a new restaurant/school. • Students carry out their own replication of Peterson & Peterson and Bartlett to see how the study runs in real life • Learn about the case of HM (engagement), to apply knowledge of amnesia	• Application • Designing a study • Carrying out a study • Data collection • Data analysis (basic at this stage) • Making high quality revision resources	N/A Topic 2 from the specification We teach this topic first for 2 key reasons: 1.It is the shortest topic and most straight forward topic for Year 9 students (due to being more objective and fact-based theories) 2. It teaches students about how memory works, the earlier they learn this the better as they can apply it to their own learning both in and out of the subject.	• Teacher questioning during lesson • Retrieval practice starters (test previous learning) • Exam questions answered in class • PR2 assessment (use exam questions)	• SMSC – discuss how culture and society can influence our schemas • Memory knowledge – discuss how memory works and link this to how best to revise. • Metacognition – regular retrieval practice and review • Careers – students carry out their own study to put themselves in a 'researchers' shoes.
Criminal Psychology (Feb -April)	• Describe and evaluate operant conditioning as an explanation of crime • Describe and evaluate Social Learning Theory as an explanation of crime • Describe and evaluate Eysenck's personality theory as an explanation of crime • Describe and evaluate the effects of punishment on recidivism (must include: prison, community sentencing and restorative justice) • Describe and evaluate two treatments to help reduce anti-social behaviour (these must be token economy and aner management) • Describe and evaluate Bandura, Ross and Ross' study • Describe and evaluate Charlton et al's study	• Evaluating a study (PEE) • Evaluating a theory • Application • Conclusion questions • Comparison questions • 9 mark essay's	• Operant conditioning – mention role in schools and pet training • SLT – look at role of the 9pm watershed and censorship • How to carry out a personality test • Use Bobo Doll to demonstrate Bandura's study • Discuss token economies in school as well as prison • Any videos of prison work well here (check content is suitable for Year 10)	• Identify issues with personality tests (standardised tests) • Data analysis (look at Bandura table lots there) • Writing step-by-step guides (token economy), helps clarity of explanations	This is the first OPTIONAL topic for Paper 2 (we have to choose 2 optional topics for this paper). Criminal psychology is chosen and studied first because this is always a topic students are very interested in and find engaging. Many students choose GCSE psychology because of this topic! The topic itself is also one of the more straightforward optional topics, but covers many of the classic theories and studies in psychology so is worth doing. This is accessible in year 9 as it is not too challenging but touches upon theories they will look at in year 10 in the more challenging topic "Psychological Problems" (social learning theory, operant conditioning).	• Teacher questioning during the lesson • Retrieval practice starters • Exam questions answered in class • PR2 assessment	• SMSC – great opportunity to discuss criminal behaviour. Including the causes and whether different types of punishments work. • Opportunity to get an external speaker in? Or go on a trip; link with sociology? • Netflix have a variety of documentaries on prison (Girls Incarcerated – this is a 15 though so can only do with Year 11) • Careers: opportunity to discuss careers such as forensic psychologist, law, prison service, police, judicial system.
The Brain (May-July)	• Know the structure and function of the brain (temporal, occipital, frontal, parietal, cerebellum) • Understand the lateralisation of function of the hemispheres including gender differences • Know what neurons and synapses are • Understand the function of neurotransmitters • Explain synaptic transmission • Understand the role of the CNS • Explain the symptoms of visual agnosia, prosopagnosia and pre-frontal cortex damage • Describe and evaluate Damasio's study • Describe and evaluate Sperry's study • Understand and explain how psychology has changed over time	• How to evaluate a study • How to answer application questions • How to answer a 9-mark essay questions	• Which side of your brain is dominant – discuss this as a concept! • How pain killers work • Phineas Gage study • Brain scans and how they work (good for psychology over time) • Raine et al (good example for psychology over time for G+T students)	• Carrying out research and evaluating it (hemisphere gender class study) • Application to real life • Creativity – make a neuron homework Research – brain scans	Topic 4 from the specification. This is one of the more challenging parts of the course regarding how scientific it is, but it is still accessible to students. We chose to put this in year 9 so that students could have a holistic view of the range of topics we cover (science-based vs the more social based). We touch upon neurotransmission which lots of them know from science, but pick this up again in Psychological Problems when they learn about drug treatments. We do this as the last topic in year 9 as it is the most challenging out of the three.	• Teacher questioning during lesson • Retrieval practice starters (test previous learning) • Exam questions answered in class • PR2 assessment (use exam questions) • Also assessed at the other PR points across the term	• Metacognition – regular retrieval practice and review • Cross curricular links with science (neuron and synaptic transmission) • Careers: opportunity to discuss careers in the science field; medicine, pharmacology, neuroscience.

Changes in sequencing justification:

At The Hazeley Academy, students used to take Psychology in Year 9 and carry it through until Year 11. In the past few years, we have changed to a different system where students take 5 instead of 4 option topics (to broaden their curriculum in year 9) and then drop one at the end of year 9. What we found in the first year of doing this, was that we lost a class size amount of students. The HAL were dropping the subject and favouring topics like Triple Science. We looked into the reasons for this and came to a few conclusions; behaviour was more challenging in year 9 post-COVID and due to staffing changes, but also students weren't covering any topics in year 9 that they took the course for (for most students, this is Mental Health, Sleep and Dreaming and Criminal). What we decided as a department was to teach them three topics that would give a holistic view of the upcoming curriculum; a "Science" topic (The Brain), a "Benefit" topic (Memory) and a "Hook" topic (Criminal). This then follows each year, and every year has a "Hook", "Benefit" and "Science".

Curriculum End Point

By the end of year 9 students will have developed the following:

Core knowledge	An understanding that everyone is different. How to be a better psychologist and learner through the memory topic. Knowledge about how the brain, central nervous system and neurotransmission works which provides a template for year 10 topics. An understanding of the motivations for criminal behaviour and how this behaviour can be learned.
Disciplinary knowledge	**Starting to** "think like a psychologist"? - Describe theories and studies (APRC) - A basic ability to evaluate theories and studies using acronyms. - A basic ability to apply theories and studies to unseen scenarios. - An understanding of what it means to be "ethical"
Exam technique	Starting to answer short answer questions using mostly AO1 and AO2. Starting to develop evaluation skills using PEE paragraphs.
Cross curricular links	Cross-curricular links to science in the brain topic.
Careers	Aspiration to careers such as forensic psychologist, neuroscientist, psychological researcher.
A4L	Assessment will consist of end of unit assessments where appropriate and then at PR points, assessments will be generated to assess based on content covered at that time. Key term quizzes and homework quizzes will also happen.