



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

Department of Psychology

# Psychology AS Level Essay Competition

The University of Cambridge's Department of Psychology is hosting an essay competition for sixth form students. We are inviting essays that answer one of two questions:

- 1) **"Is reason the master of emotions, or are emotions the master of reason?"** Suggested starting point for reading: ["Thinking, Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman](#).

or

- 2) **"What has research in the past decade taught us about the relationship between children's acquisition of language skills and their conceptual development?"** Suggested starting point for reading: ["Cognitive Development: The Learning Brain" by Usha Goswami](#).

These essays should demonstrate both a breadth of knowledge and ideas and an ability to write with clarity and coherence. Schools and colleges may submit essays from a maximum of three pupils *in their first year of study* for A-level, Scottish Higher Level or an equivalent qualification. Not all of the previous winners studied psychology at school: we'd like to emphasize that the competition is open to all students who are thinking about a degree in Psychology.

Essays must be typed or word-processed and must not exceed 2,000 words in length (excluding references). All debts to other scholars (including teachers, books, articles and web sites) should be acknowledged. We reserve the right to check submitted essays for plagiarism using online tools. Each essay must be accompanied by a note from a staff member, confirming that it is the work of the pupil (who should have completed not more than

one year of full-time study post 16 years of age). It would be helpful if this cover letter also provided some information about both the school and the pupil. Essays should be emailed to the following address,

[essay-competition@psychol.cam.ac.uk](mailto:essay-competition@psychol.cam.ac.uk),

when you will receive an acknowledgement. The same address can be used for any queries for the judges. The closing date is the **30th June 2013**. Letters will also be sent to all applicants whose essays are short-listed.

Three prizes of £300, £200 and £100 will be awarded for the best three essays, the overall winner and his / her subject teacher will be invited to receive the prize at a lunch at Newnham College, Cambridge (travel expenses *within* the UK will be paid). The Judges' decision is final, and will be announced by the end of July, 2013. Due to the volume of entries feedback will not be possible. The panel of Judges is chaired by Dr Claire Hughes, Fellow of Newnham College and Reader in Developmental Psychology at the Centre for Family Research.

The Psychological and Behavioural Sciences (PBS) Tripos is a new undergraduate course at Cambridge which offers a broad and flexible coverage of all aspects of psychology. It has 'graduate recognition' from the British Psychological Society, which is needed to pursue a career in psychology. For further information, see the PBS Tripos website: [www.pbs.tripos.cam.ac.uk](http://www.pbs.tripos.cam.ac.uk).

*Dr Claire Hughes, January 16th, 2013*