

# Medicine vs. Psychology: A Career Guide

Both Medicine and Psychology are highly competitive, science-based fields that require high academic standards and a deep commitment to human well-being. While Medicine is a vocational path to becoming a doctor, Psychology is a broader behavioral science that can lead to clinical practice or diverse corporate roles.



# Overview & Branches

Medical school provides a foundational degree (MBBS or MD) followed by years of residency and fellowship to specialize in a specific "branch."

## General Practice (GP) / Family Medicine

Holistic care for all ages.

## Surgery

Invasive treatment methods (includes Neurosurgery, Orthopedics, and Plastic Surgery).

## Psychiatry

A medical specialty focused on mental health (requires an MD first).

## Internal Medicine

Diagnosis and treatment of complex adult diseases (includes sub-branches like Cardiology, Oncology, and Gastroenterology).

## Pediatrics

Medical care for infants, children, and adolescents.

## Pathology & Radiology

Diagnostic branches focusing on lab analysis and medical imaging.

# Possible Career Paths



## Specialist Consultant

Working in hospitals within a chosen field (e.g., Neurologist).



## Academic Researcher

Leading medical trials and discovering new treatments.



## Public Health Official

Working with organizations like the WHO or national health ministries.



## Medical Educator

Training the next generation of doctors in university settings.

# Academic Requirements & Favorable Grades

## IB Diploma

- **Subjects:** Biology (HL) and Chemistry (HL) are non-negotiable. Math (AA) HL is often preferred.
- **Grades:** Total 38–42 points; 6s or 7s in all HL subjects.

## American System

- **Subjects:** AP Biology, AP Chemistry, and AP Calculus (AB or BC). AP Physics is a plus.
- **Grades:** Unweighted GPA 3.9+; AP scores of 5.

## IGCSE & A-Levels

- **Subjects:** Biology and Chemistry at A-Level are mandatory. A third subject (Math or Physics) is highly recommended.
- **Grades:** A\*A\*A to A\*AA at A-Level.

## Resources

- [AAMC \(Association of American Medical Colleges\)](#)
- [General Medical Council \(UK\)](#)
- [MSAR Database](#)

# Overview & Branches

Psychology is the study of the mind and behavior. Unlike Psychiatry, it does not require a medical degree, though clinical practice requires a PhD or PsyD.

## Clinical Psychology

Diagnosing and treating mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders.

## Cognitive Psychology

Studying internal mental processes like memory and decision-making.

## Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology

Applying psychological principles to workplace productivity and employee well-being.

## Forensic Psychology

The intersection of psychology and the legal system.

## Developmental Psychology

Studying how people grow and change throughout their lifespan.

# Possible Career Paths



## Chartered Psychologist

Requires postgraduate specialization (Clinical, Counseling, etc.).



## Human Resources Manager

Using behavioral insight to manage talent and culture.



## Market Research Analyst

Analyzing consumer behavior for brands.



## User Experience (UX) Researcher

Designing technology based on human mental models.

# Academic Requirements & Favorable Grades

Psychology is often categorized as a "Science" in university admissions, so scientific rigor is expected.

## IB Diploma

- **Subjects:** Psychology (HL) is helpful, but Biology (HL) or Math (HL) is often more important for entry.
- **Grades:** Total 35–38 points; 6 in HL Science/Math.

## American System

- **Subjects:** AP Psychology, AP Statistics (crucial for research), and AP Biology.
- **Grades:** Unweighted GPA 3.6+; AP scores of 4 or 5.

## IGCSE & A-Levels

- **Subjects:** A-Level Psychology and at least one other science (Biology is preferred).
- **Grades:** AAA to ABB at A-Level.

## Resources

- [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#)
- [British Psychological Society \(BPS\)](#)
- [Psychology.org Career Guide](#)



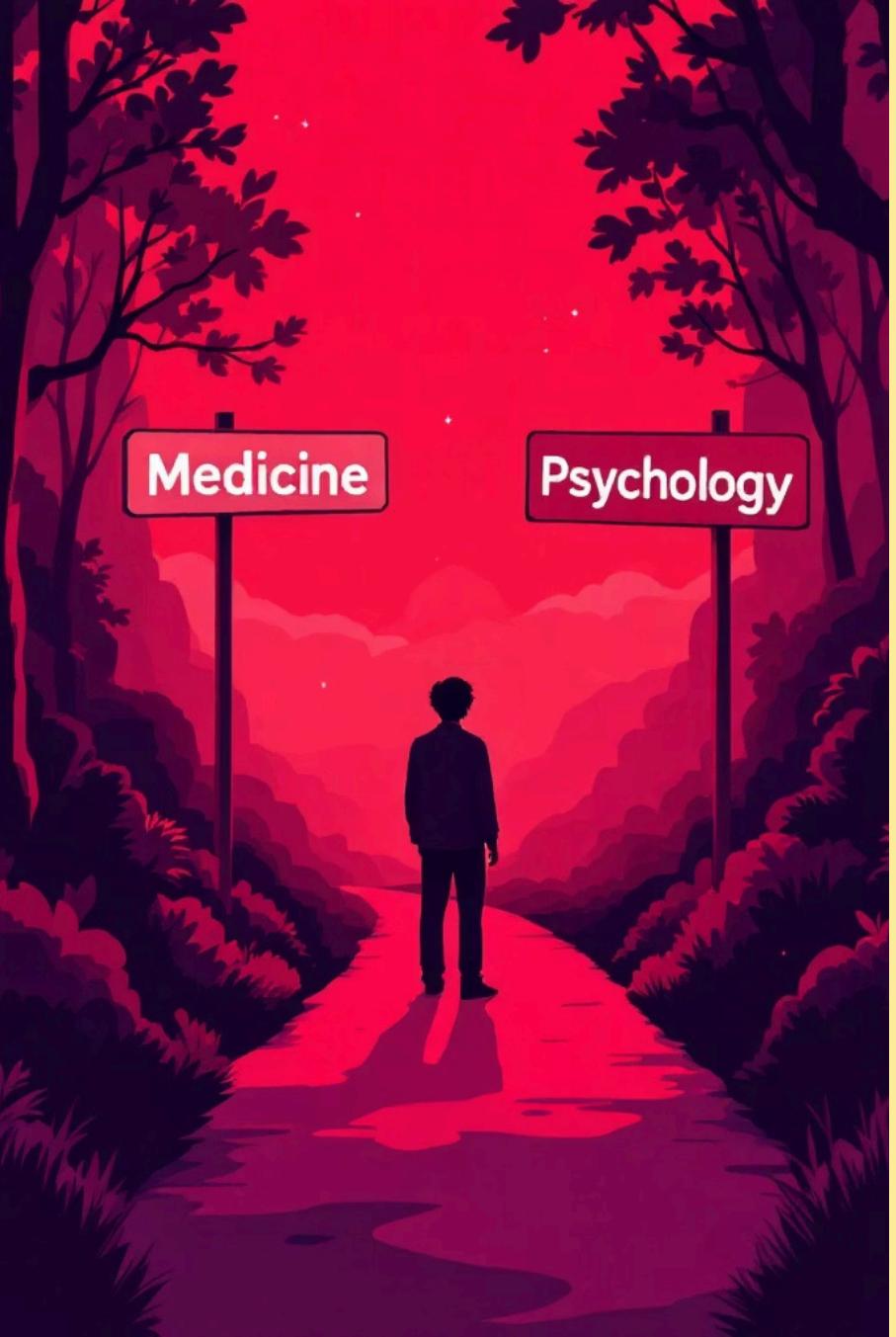
# Key Differences

## Medicine

- Vocational path to becoming a doctor.
- Focus on physical health and disease.
- Requires an MD/MBBS degree.
- Specialization through residency and fellowship.

## Psychology

- Broader behavioral science.
- Focus on mind and behavior.
- Clinical practice requires PhD or PsyD.
- Diverse career paths beyond clinical practice.



# Choosing Your Path

Both fields offer rewarding careers dedicated to human well-being. Your choice depends on your interests, academic strengths, and long-term career aspirations.



## Passion for the Human Mind

If you're fascinated by behavior, cognition, and mental processes, psychology might be your calling.

## Commitment to Healing

If you're driven to diagnose and treat physical ailments, medicine is the direct path.

## Academic Rigor

Both require high academic standards and continuous learning.