



GCE A LEVEL EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**PSYCHOLOGY
A LEVEL**

SUMMER 2022

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PSYCHOLOGY

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COMPONENT 1 Psychology: Past to Present

General Comments

It is encouraging to note that, as with the 2019 examination series, the majority of candidates answered all questions on the examination. It is clear that some centres have made use of the new Eduqas resources, with content appearing within a range of candidate answers.

As with previous series candidates were less successful with AO2 questions. AO1 questions were answered well overall, and many candidates produced reasonable responses to AO3 questions.

Most candidates attempted the contemporary debate question and although there were many textbook answers, it was evident that some centres have encouraged candidates to complete their own independent research to find recent and appropriate evidence to support or refute the debate.

Links between the components were also evident in candidate's answers, especially in relation to drug therapy, addiction and schizophrenia. This element of synopticity is encouraged, not only to cut down the amount of content that candidates have to learn, but to also evidence a broader knowledge and understanding of the whole Psychology A Level.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1** When this question was answered well candidates provided clear responses that outlined Bowlby's methodology and procedures which allowed them to access the top of the reasonable band. However, many basic answers brought the mean down to 4.6 which was less than half marks. The main issues were missing detail e.g. grading of thieves, the control group not being thieves, it was a case study; or muddled detail e.g. confusion over who was interviewed by who. Some candidates also referred to 'parents' rather than the mother, which is inaccurate.
- Q.2** Most candidates provided two issues for their chosen cognitive therapy, but these were not always ethical considerations; many answers included issues relating to the effectiveness of the therapy and candidates failed to discuss how these could end up being an ethical consideration. The ethical considerations of patient blame and irrational thoughts were the most popular responses. Lack of consent and invasion of privacy were also used on many occasions, but the evaluation was not made relevant to the actual therapies and therefore could not be credited. The lack of understanding of the requirements of this question is reflected in the mean mark of 3.1. Candidates could have used positive ethical considerations e.g. right to withdraw, the empowerment of free will etc.

- Q.3** As with previous series, this AO2 skill question was answered poorly which is reflected in the facility factor of 27.5. This was the lowest facility factor on the examination. Many candidates simply described two or three behaviourist assumptions, with very little reference made to valid psychological examples of human behaviour. The answers that attracted marks in the top two bands were few, but in these instances candidates correctly applied their knowledge of component three behaviour topics to the behaviourist assumptions or they linked the assumptions to relationship formation.

Some candidates tried to draw comparisons between how Harlow's monkeys behaved and human behaviour. This example is not appropriate in the context of the behaviourist approach assumptions, it's arguably more appropriate to the psychodynamic approach.

- Q.4** With a facility factor of 59.6 this question was answered well on the whole and was deemed to be the most accessible, as well as being the most successfully answered question with a mean of 4.8. The majority of candidates knew the two named assumptions and were able to give an example from each one. The best answers were structured appropriately and used a range of Freudian terminology, giving a range of excellent examples, e.g. oral receptive personality, the principles of the tripartite personality etc.

Weaker assumptions appeared when candidates muddled the three parts of the tripartite personality (muddling the ID and Superego) and writing the psychosexual stages in the incorrect order.

- Q.5** The responses to this question were reasonable overall, with a mean of 4.7. Candidates who described drug therapy were typically more successful in achieving higher band marks, with many applying the use of drugs to manage addictive and schizophrenic behaviour from Component Three topics. Weaker answers were basic in that they did not fully explain how the drugs worked.

For psychosurgery most components were referred to, but not in detail. Answers were basic and key terminology was omitted e.g. leucotome, gamma knife etc.

It is worth noting that answers can, and should, go beyond textbook content. The history of psychosurgery techniques can be described, as can agonist and antagonist drugs from Component Three content.

- Q.6** As with previous series, answers tended to achieve basic marks because candidates did not make the necessary reference to the statement to display AO2 skills. Although the attempt rate of 98.3% is encouraging, most candidates simply wrote about ethical issues of Watson and Rayner's research with many answers not taking the statement into consideration. Negative social implications were often not referred to.

It is important to clear up any misconceptions. Many candidates discussed a lack of consent but there was consent from Little Albert's mother. There were often inaccuracies about the role of his mother and how much she knew, with many candidates stating that there was no 'right to withdraw', but Little Albert's mother removed him from the investigation, so there was a right to withdraw.

There was limited discussion about the social implications with some candidates discussing operant conditioning in relation to the education system, rather than classical conditioning. The best answers picked up on the "today" element in the statement as well as discussing 'negative social implications'. AO2 answers must use specific terms from the statement if they are to access the top bands.

- Q.7** Most candidates who attempted this question provided a logical evaluation of Raine et al's research. However, the facility factor (37.6), mean (3.8) and attempt rate (96.1%) were all low. Even though examples were mostly relevant, these were not always developed to support the question asked. Most candidates evaluated issues relating to the sample, method and ethical issues of Raine's research, with few exploring issues of reliability and validity.

Unfortunately, many candidates did not include a conclusion and where a conclusion had been provided, it tended to be superficial or repetitive. However, there was a marked increase in the number of candidates who incorporated mini-conclusions at the end of each paragraph, therefore providing the opportunity to gain AO3 credit.

The main issues with lower band answers was that evaluation points were generic with limited links specifically to Raine's research. Common misconceptions were included the gender imbalance in the participants (this is not an issue because the sample reflected the prison population) and a lack of understanding about population validity in terms of who Raine was generalising his findings to.

- Q.8** On the whole this question was either poorly answered or was not answered at all, which is evidenced by the attempt rate of 97.2% and a mean of 3.4. Candidates made assertions about the approaches but did not support them with evidence from each approach. Some candidates simply referenced part of an assumption that did not necessarily demonstrate the point being made. However, those who did attempt the question clearly understood that both similarities and differences were essential, but conclusions were omitted or repetitive.

As with previous examination series, there was still confusion with the concepts of determinism and reductionism. Candidates would state determinism but then discuss reductionism, which could not be credited.

The biggest issue with this question was the lack of understanding that the positive approach is not on the side of nature or nurture because it is based on free will. There was a lack of acknowledgement that free will means free from coercion of internal and external factors, i.e. nature and nurture.

Candidates would benefit from developing their structure for this style of question by ensuring that they point out the similarity or difference, back up their point with evidence from each approach and provide either mini conclusions throughout or an overall conclusion at the end of their answer.

Q.9 There were a wide range of responses to this question. Some candidates showed excellent engagement with eyewitness testimony and linked research to the question, as well as discussing a range of social, ethical and economic implications of the debate with mini or overall conclusions. Most candidates appeared to understand this debate and many managed to achieve top of basic or the bottom of the reasonable band for both AO1 and AO3.

However, even though the overall structure of many scripts was reasonable, there was limited use of independent research overall and the independent research that was present tended to be superficial.

Candidates who provided textbook style answers generally lacked any links to the question because a model answer had been learnt that did not engage with the question asked. This was reflected in the disappointing mean mark of 10.3. In such answers there was also a lack of range and understanding of the debate. When referring to research candidates need to describe how it links to eyewitness testimony and use statistics or findings from the research to support the points made. Conclusions also need to be explicit with in the debate.

It is still very disappointing to note that the overwhelming majority of candidates believe that Elizabeth Loftus is male.

Summary of key points

AO2 answers must use key terms from the statement if one is provided. Candidates should highlight the key terms and ensure that they read back over their answer to check that they are evident in their answer.

Bullet points are acceptable for answers requiring the methodology, procedures, findings or conclusions of classic research. Such answers can still gain access to top bands as long as the structure is logical, and content sufficiently detailed.

For 'assumptions linked to behaviour' questions, candidates should not explain the assumptions, but rather choose behaviours that the assumptions can explain in their answers.

Conclusions are required in all AO3 questions where 10 or more marks are awarded. Conclusions should not be repetitive, but should reflect the 'tone' of the answer provided and possibly include information or their opinion on e.g. the use of methodologies, issues of reliability and/or validity, social implications of a theory, therapy, classic evidence etc.

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COMPONENT 2 Psychology: Investigating Behaviour

General Comments

Overall, most questions were attempted, and candidates performed reasonably well. Descriptive questions were answered better than evaluative questions and it was pleasing to see many candidates making specific references to the novel scenarios or their personal investigations where relevant. Short answer explanation questions of psychological terminology were often not detailed enough for the full marks and candidates should be reminded to examine the mark allocation for each question as a guide for how much detail is required. Many marks were lost when candidates did not appear to have read the question thoroughly, for example in the novel scenario questions, which is disappointing. Questions relating to Milgram's research, provided many detailed responses. Candidates seemed to manage their time well, with well explained and coherent responses to most questions.

Comments on individual questions/sections

- Q.1 (a)** Short tariff descriptive questions, such as this were mostly accurate with a mean score of 1.3, but many students did not receive full credit for a brief response, consisting of one sentence to explain that primary data is collected by the researcher first hand. Better responses often used examples to demonstrate their understanding. Most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 99.1%.
- (b)** Many students relied on a reversal of the previous question in their response to this question which received minimal credit, if any. Many responses were less detailed or not specific to psychological research, such as 'information gained from pre-existing sources', resulting in a mean score of 1.3 although most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 99%.
- (c)** Candidates could accurately identify strengths and weaknesses of primary and secondary sources but should be reminded to pay attention to the command words in the question in order to receive full marks. Very few candidates provided examples from psychology in their response, resulting in a mean score of 2.5. Other responses received basic credit for descriptive explanations, such as 'secondary sources are less valid' without elaboration as to why this is the case or why this is a weakness. Not all candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 96.8%.
- Q.2 (a)** This question was answered reasonably well by 99.5% of candidates with a mean score of 1.2, although many basic responses prevailed, with few candidates providing a detailed comparison.

- Q.2 (b)** Many candidates (99%) could offer some evaluative comments to this question, but many relied on descriptive comments which did not receive any AO3 credit; for example, simply stating that qualitative data provided detailed findings. Many responses achieved basic credit because the response focused on specific qualitative methods, suggesting that the data was difficult or time consuming to collect, which may be true of a method such as an interview but is not true of all qualitative data. Candidates should focus on the wording of the question. This resulted in a mean score of 1.3.
- Q.3 (a)** Many candidates could not provide a correct response to this question, with a lower response rate of 85.5%, or had basic responses such as comparing methods rather than findings, resulting in a mean score of 0.6.
- (b)** Many candidates could not provide a correct response to this question, with a lower response rate of 83.3%, or muddled their response with the previous question. Many candidates simply reworded the question, which gained no credit, with a mean score of 0.5.
- Q.4 (a & b)** Most candidates could accurately identify the mean and the mode from the diagram, with a response rate of 97.5% and 97.7% and a mean score of 0.7 for both parts.
- Q.5 (a)** Generic points should be developed for higher marks, for example, many candidates provided descriptions of case studies in question 5 that were applicable to all/other methods (e.g. it is a study of an individual / small group). Most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 99% and a mean score of 0.9.
- (b)** Many responses were descriptive rather than evaluative points, such as a method providing a lot of detailed information, without explaining the advantage of this feature, so did not receive AO3 credit, resulting in a mean score of 1.5 for this question. Many candidates seemed to confuse a case study with secondary research general, providing generic evaluation points which were not specific to case studies, such as lacking validity because the researcher has not collected the data first hand. Other responses were generic and not fully explained enough to be credit worthy, such as how a small sample makes the findings difficult to generalise. Candidates should be aware that a case study, by its nature, would not often aim to generalise the findings and they should be reminded that a large sample does not automatically equate with a representative sample. Most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 98.5%
- Q.6 (a)** Candidates produced some detailed accounts of Milgram's research, providing both quantitative and qualitative findings, although some candidates missed out on marks by providing conclusions instead. Most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 99% and a mean score of 1.2.

Q.6 (b) In evaluation of the study, very few candidates could offer thorough evaluation of all three features in the question. Many offered generic evaluation points of a controlled study or a volunteer sample without contextualising the point to Milgram's research. Most evaluation was limited to either a strength or weakness of the feature. Many candidates provided reasonable evaluation by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of one or two features, resulting in a mean score of 4.7. Generic evaluation points that were not specifically relevant to the aims of Milgram's research received little credit; for example, the sample was all men so could not be generalised to women. Candidates should focus on the aims of the research to ensure evaluation points are accurate. Responses that draw an appropriate conclusion could often access higher bands in the mark scheme. Most candidates attempted this question with a response rate of 98.8%.

Q.7 The personal investigation was often described well, providing coherent explanations of the experiment that the candidate had carried out. However, it was obvious that many candidates either did not understand the methodology of the investigation or could not coherently explain what they had done. Candidates should be reminded to provide fully explained, contextualised answers to allow the examiner to understand their research and award maximum credit for their responses. Most marks were lost for failing to link the response to the investigation.

- (a) (i)** Many candidates could write a hypothesis with at least one variable fully operationalised, but many struggled to operationalise helping behaviour. Some candidates write a correlational hypothesis or an aim, which received no credit, with a mean score of 1.4 and an attempt rate of 98.7%.
- (ii)** Most could identify the direction of their hypothesis but few could justify their choice, relying on anecdotal justification or personal opinion, such as 'we believed this would happen' which received no credit, resulting in a mean score of 1.3. A small number of candidates could accurately explain the findings of previous research to justify their hypothesis. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 98.9%.
- (b) (i)** Most candidates could identify an appropriate extraneous variable but generic or vague suggestions lost marks in the explanation as to how the variable would affect helping behaviour, with common examples being the weather or the time of day, resulting in a mean score of 1.8. Candidates should be guided to explore the impact of potential extraneous variables when carrying out their investigation to allow them to access the marks in questions such as this one. Fewer candidates attempted this question with a rate of 97.8%.
- (ii)** Similar to the previous question, many answers were generic or basic, for example, explaining how the study would be carried out at the same time of day, without explaining how this would deal with the issue, resulting in a mean score of 1.0 attempted by 96.9% of candidates.

- Q.7** (c) This question provided mixed responses, with many candidates being able to identify the correct experimental design, but not being able to justify their choice, with a mean score of 1.9. Common errors occurred when the candidate relied on generic responses, such as 'to reduce order effects' which received no credit if used as justification for independent groups when gender was the independent variable. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 97.3%.
- (d) Most could identify an appropriate statistical test but failed to link their justification to the investigation which is essential for AO2 credit, with a mean score of 1.8 and a lower attempt rate of 94.9%.
- (e) Most candidates could offer two improvements to their experiment, often relying on their response to Q,7 (b) earlier (dealing with extraneous variables). Basic credit was given when candidates failed to explain how their suggestion would improve the experiment, with a mean score of 1.9. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 97.7%.
- Q.8** (a) Many candidates could provide strengths and weaknesses of interviews but failed to link their evaluation to their investigation, receiving no AO2 credit for this question, resulting in a low mean score of 1.0 attempted by 99.5% of candidates.
- (b) Many candidates lost marks for identifying rather than explaining an ethical issue, for example, stating 'informed consent' without explaining what the issue with a lack of informed consent is. Marks were lost for not linking the issue or the way of dealing with it to the investigation, with a mean score of 2.2. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 99.3%.
- Q.9** (a) Most candidates (99.5%) could provide basic responses, with few achieving full marks, with a mean score of 1.0.
- (b) Most candidates did not seem to know what event sampling was, offering what appeared to be guesses based on the wording of the term (e.g. a sample who are present at the event), resulting in a low mean score of 0.7. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 97.7%.
- (c). Most candidates suggested that the level of measurement for the data in the novel scenario was nominal, which might be suggested by the presentation in a table, with a very low mean score of 0.1. This highlights the importance of reading the item carefully. Not all candidates attempted this question at 93.5%.
- (d) (i) (ii) Most could calculate the correct percentages, with a mean score of 1.7 for both, but the lengthy working out of many candidates suggested that they did not have a calculator in the examination. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 98.9% and 98.3%.
- Q.10** (a) (i) (ii) Most could correctly identify the line graph, with a mean score of 0.9, but few could explain why this graph was suitable for the data in the scenario, with a lower mean score of 0.7. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 98%.

- Q10** **(a)** **(iii)** Most marks were lost for drawing inferential conclusions, which cannot be drawn from a graph, resulting in a lower mean score of 0.6. This has been highlighted in several previous examiner reports yet seemingly remains an issue for many. Candidates should practice drawing descriptive conclusions from graphs or tables to avoid this persistent error. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 99.6%.
- (b)** Many candidates could accurately explain how a matched pairs design is carried out but marks were lost when candidates explained why this design would be suitable, resulting in a mean score of 1.5. This highlights the importance of understanding the command words in the question. Most candidates attempted this question with a rate of 96.8%.
- (c)** Most could identify the reasons why a Wilcoxon was appropriate but did not link the justification to the scenario which is essential for AO2 credit, resulting in a mean score of 2.2. Not all candidates attempted this question (92.4%).
- (d)** **(i) (ii)** Very few could accurately identify the critical value, often providing the correct value for $n=20$, with a very low mean score of 0.1. This highlights the importance of careful reading of the scenario, where it suggested that $n=18$ should be used. However, candidates were still able to achieve full marks in the second part of the answer even if they had identified the incorrect value, by linking their justification to the scenario. Many candidates were not able to correctly state that the null hypothesis should be accepted, even though their justification suggested this, meaning that they received no credit, with a mean score of 0.4 for this part. Many candidates did not attempt this question, with the rate at 94.9% and 95.6% for each part.
- (e)** Many candidates could provide reasonable suggestions as to why research based in a laboratory is better than online research. However, many responses were applicable to both methods and received no credit, for example, how participants can lie online or how a sample in a laboratory can be more representative. This resulted in a mean score of 2.6 which was attempted by 99% of candidates,

Summary of key points

- Candidates should ensure that they read the scenario questions fully to understand the research process.
- For comparison and evaluative questions, candidates should develop descriptions fully into strengths and weaknesses, to ensure that they are able to access the AO3 marks for evaluation.
- Candidates should be prepared for a range of questions asking them to justify the design decisions and choice of analytical or statistical methods used in their personal investigations. All responses for these questions should be clearly linked to the investigation to receive the AO2 marks for these questions.
- Candidates should use the resources provided by Eduqas, in the form of a glossary of key research terminology, to ensure full marks are gained in short tariff descriptive questions.

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COMPONENT 3 Psychology: Implications In The Real World

General Comments

Candidates and centres should be congratulated on their preparations for the June 2022 Component 3 examination, and for their candidate's responses to questions that, generally reflect clear knowledge of content as well as an understanding of how to apply appropriate skills across the paper.

Centres have clearly supported their candidates well and to assist with this process further, a number of observations have been made across this paper for centres to consider in preparation for future examinations.

Centres should continue to offer time to practise AO2 application skills. Candidates could be encouraged to practice examples of application questions. It may be useful for the candidate to make up their own scenario's, create a mark scheme to accompany it, and then write an exemplar answer. They can then ask one of their peers to answer their scenario question in the suggested time, and then mark it. Being an active part of the process, will hopefully create a deeper understanding of the requirements of these questions.

Centres should note that the Eduqas website includes important information to guide teachers as to what is expected for each skill within examinations. Centres may wish also wish to refer back to the on-line support resources on the Eduqas Psychology website that help to prepare candidates for their examinations and the importance of reading the questions carefully, particularly specific and subtle details.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Addictive behaviours

Q.1 (a) Addiction, as a behaviour, remains a popular choice for centres to select for their candidates, with 50.4% of candidates attempting this question. This question was scenario based and was also assessing evaluative skill, so required candidates to use both AO2 and AO3 skills. The scenario was broad enough to ensure there was enough for candidates to embed within their response. The mean mark for this question was 7.2. Where effective AO2 was shown, candidates used material fully from the scenario in relation to Abiya. Better answers referred to sections of the scenario, such as her change of mood, or appearance, or the ability to make sensible decisions. They also referred to Abiya borrowing money from her friends and the issue of her not paying it back. There were fewer answers in the top band, due to parts of the scenario being ignored. Most candidates used the term 'substances' and related this to methadone (agonist substitution) and naltrexone (antagonistic substitution), as well as some referring to, and evaluating, buprenorphine. The question asked for both agonist and antagonist substitution to be evaluated. The evaluative component of this question was a further limiting factor – not because of a lack of knowledge, but because some candidates missed the subtleties of the question. Here the question asked for an evaluation of both agonist and antagonist substitution. The stronger answers separated the two types of substitutions, and then evaluated them holistically with reference to reductionist, side effects, etc. The weaker answers either; evaluated the two as one (so, agonist and antagonist together) or evaluated only one of them (agonist or antagonist). Some candidates still only used the name 'Abiya' and did not apply the scenario to the evaluation point. All of these observations may help to explain the lower facility factor of 48.1. However, those candidates who showed thorough application made evaluative comments that brought Abiya very much into the argument throughout the response. They also made intelligent assertions beyond the information within scenario. For example – methadone could be used to help to modify Abiya's addictive behaviours, if the substance abuse was heroin. Methadone is an example of agonist substitution and evidence by NICE and Van den Brink and Haasen (2006) supports its effectiveness, particularly as a maintenance treatment. This should improve her mood and help her to think clearer and make sensible decisions. However, there would need to be an 'adequate' dosage, and Abiya would need to be motivated to want to take it and have access to these drugs. Unfortunately, there may be side effects if Abiya was taking other drugs, such as alcohol or antidepressants and these may lead to respiratory problems or even an overdose. Weaker responses often made the fatal mistake of describing (AO1) antagonist and / or agonist substitution rather than making evaluative comments.

Simple reference to names alone, as previous examiners reports and CPD have pointed out, is insufficient to display application. Therefore, centres should ensure suitable practicing of questions that allow candidates to practice applying evaluation to scenarios.

- (b) This question requires the assessment of AO1 skills. The most common response was peer influence, followed by the role of the media. This question was answered reasonably well, with a mean mark of 5.4. The weaker answers lacked detail or breadth when presenting their evidence and sometimes mixed up the two social psychological explanations, for example, when describing the role of the media would refer to perceived social norms. Better answers provided responses where the description made was 'informed' by research/theorists relevant to the explanation. This was better than previous years by many candidates making theoretical links to social learning theory, particularly in relation to Bandura. Also, the subtleties of the question, required a description of how the explanation would help us understand addictive behaviours. Sometimes this was missed out. This was not testing an application skill (AO2) but needed some description of how a named addiction could be explained by, for example, peer influence or the role of the media (AO1). Usually better responses referred to alcohol and/or smoking addictions. The facility factor for this question was 53.8, which reflects the mixture of marks and the difference in approaches to answering this type of question. Centres could help candidates to develop examination skills that would increase depth within their answers by encouraging links to theory, where appropriate, when describing explanations for behaviours.

Autistic spectrum behaviours

- Q.2 (a) Autism is increasing in popularity as an option, with 17.9% of candidates attempting this question, but it still remains one of the least popular choices of Section A: Applications. Most candidates correctly identified that the question was assessing AO1 and AO2 skills and there was a mean mark of 8.6. There were a range of responses provided, with a facility factor of 57.4, with stronger candidates describing in detail PECS as a method of modification as well as equally applying the description to the scenario of Gio. During this application, the scenario was broken down, so that parts of it could be referred to and applied to the descriptive element of the response. Weaker responses referred to the name of Gio, but very little else in the scenario (such as his confusion with instructions containing lots of words, his love of pictures and rewards, and his problem with starting conversations with others).
- (b) This question assessed candidates understanding of **two** individual differences explanations of autistic spectrum behaviours, and particularly their ability to evaluate them (AO3). The most common explanations evaluated were theory of mind and weak central coherence theory. The mean mark for this question was 4.4. Better answers evaluated two explanations displaying both depth and range of material. The responses contained balanced arguments using for and against points. Weaker answers, either only evaluated one explanation or the evaluation was mainly descriptive (AO1) or contained generic evaluative points, such as, being deterministic or reductionist, but with limited further expansion of detail. Also, another mistake, which may have also contributed to the lower facility factor of 43.9, which was made by a small number of candidates, was that individual differences explanations were evaluated as one item.

For example, 'individual differences explanations of autistic spectrum behaviours are deterministic because...' That being said, a few of the top band answers used this technique to start off, but then went on to evaluate each one separately. Centres could try to ensure that candidates clearly understand the demands of the subtleties of this type of question.

Bullying behaviours

- Q.3 (a)** Bullying was again the least attempted application of all, with only 6.2% of candidates attempting this question. For part (a), the two methods identified in the specification, Creating a Peaceful School Learning Environment (CAPSLE) and Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme (OBPP), were used in responses across the various centres. The question asked for a description (AO1) of **two** methods of modifying bullying behaviours. The mean mark for this question was 4.6. Responses varied, with some weaker answers just stating at a superficial level how either CAPSLE and/or OBPP can reduce bullying behaviours, with very little terminology used. Better answers clearly described the stages / processes involved in both techniques along with effective use of terminology and displaying both depth and range across the whole answer. For example, both CAPSLE and OBPP ideally needed the basis or assumptions of the programmes to be described to set the context before describing the elements of the therapy. For CAPSLE, it may have included description of positive climate campaign, classroom management plan, physical education programme, peer or adult mentoring and reflection time. For OBPP description would usually be focused on the different levels of intervention; individual level, class level, school level and community level. These effective responses were able to describe how these methods of modification contributed towards a reduction in bullying behaviours. There were also some very good answers that missed out on the top band because their response contained some inaccuracies or, more often than not, there was one method covered effectively with both depth and range, but the second method only had depth *or* range. These differences across candidate's responses, and their approach to this question, help to explain the facility factor of 45.8. When asked for a description of *two* methods of modification, it is expected that the candidate pays the same amount of attention and detail to each method, to allow for depth *and* range across the response. Candidates should be reminded that depth is the descriptive knowledge, breadth is the multiple parts of what is being described / focused on in the question (CAPSLE and OBPP) and that using appropriate terminology enhances the response by making the answer less generic and more psychological.

- (b) This question required both AO3 and AO2 skills, but the application was a statement. The statement was thought-provoking to allow scope for candidates to apply the evaluative evidence to it. The mean mark for this question was 5.4. Better candidates were able to create a balanced argument. For example, they would explain why the statement was correct or incorrect, and effectively backed their comments up with evaluative evidence. The application to the statement was well-structured and contained well-chosen evidence, using both breadth and depth of material. The weaker responses tended to be generic in their evaluations and often misinterpreted the issue. The weakest responses also did not make any application to the statement nor make reference to relevant supporting or contradictory research. Much of the answer remained generic with evaluative comments often lacking in depth, accuracy and purpose. Sometimes, too the evaluative evidence to argue this issue for and against, remained one-sided. Better candidates with thorough application embedded the statement into the selected evaluations. For example, the evaluative comments included the argument that social psychological explanations do indeed provide the bully with excuses to pass on the blame for their actions with reinforced responses as to reasons why, followed by a clear counter view that suggested that the statement was incorrect in its claims. A further common error that limited AO3 marks in this particular question was that candidates tended to waste words and time describing in detail (AO1) the explanation before briefly evaluating, or worse, some candidates only described the social psychological explanations. Sometimes, some candidates wrote down all that they knew about the topic to almost prove to the examiner that they had revised. This was not necessary, as it was more important to answer the question set, as this alone showed skill.

Criminal Behaviours

- Q.4 (a)** Criminal behaviours remains the second most popular choice of application, with 87.6% of candidates attempting this question. Part (a) of this question required both the use of AO1 and AO2 skills. The mean mark for this question was 8.7. Description of restorative justice was generally basic or reasonable (usually breadth and structure, but lacking more depth), with very few candidates achieving the higher band of 9 or 10. When this higher band was achieved for AO1, this was mainly due to the effective terminology used, and the breadth and depth of material. Again, for effective AO1 skills, the answer needed to be placed in context, such as introducing the background and the aims. For example, Carrabine et al. (2014) was concerned about the failure of custodial sentencing and was seeking an alternative approach. So, with restorative justice aims of rehabilitation of offenders and atonement for wrongdoing, this seemed an excellent option. Once the context for the method is introduced, the candidate could describe the victim's perspective and mention stakeholders in relation to Wachtel and McCold's (2003) theory of restorative justice. Stronger AO1 answers also usually scored at least a 4 on AO2 applying the description of restorative justice to Sophia, but occasionally, a 5. Most candidates engaged reasonably well with the scenario, achieving on average, a mark of 3 or 4. Weaker AO2 responses placed a single reference to Sophia at the top of the answer or did not refer to Sophia at all, although this was rare. One other limiting factor observed for AO2, was that a number of candidates used the wrong name in reference to the scenario. For example, Sophie, or even Abiya or Gio from previous scenario questions.

- (b)** This question required the candidate to use their evaluation skills (AO3). The most common biological explanations were the role of the amygdala and inherited criminality. The mean mark for this question was 5.3. The responses were mixed, and some candidates were let down by not providing appropriate conclusions, either detailed mini-conclusions and/or a final conclusion. Strong responses were well structured and provided evidence that supported and refuted the two explanations. Both explanations were evaluated equally, but not necessarily in relation to the same number of strengths and weaknesses. Those responses that were in the reasonable band or below usually lacked either appropriate conclusions, were stronger on one explanation than the other or had either strengths or weaknesses. The basic band responses tended to be more generic in nature (such as mentioning reductionist, deterministic, but with no particular context), or lacked depth or breadth.

Schizophrenia

Q.5 (a) Schizophrenia was the most popular choice for centres to teach, with 89.5% of candidates attempting this question. Part (a) of this question required the use of AO1 skills. The mean mark for this question was 5.6. There were some excellent descriptions of dysfunctional families, which appeared to be the most popular choice (including double bind and/or expressed emotion). Similarly, cultural norms/sociocultural factors tended to include urbanicity, social isolation and ethnicity/discrimination. The difference between top band answers and lower band answers revolved around the amount of breadth and depth and the detail and accuracy of the description research. For example, Bateson's and Brown's research on dysfunctional families and Faris/Dunham (1939), Jim van Os et al. (210), Bleuler, Jones (1994), Ineichen (1984), Harrison et al. (1988), for sociocultural factors. Description of this research added depth to answers. Centres should ensure that candidates are given access to enough rich material so that they have ample to select from when answering a question under examination conditions.

(b) The skills for assessment here were AO2 and AO3. The majority of candidates referred to the scenario throughout their answer and seemed well-prepared to answer this type of question. The mean mark for this question was 7.7. Charlie's symptoms (disordered thinking, flatness of affect) and behaviours (hearing voices) were generally referred to within responses. A wide variety of candidates demonstrated good knowledge of either antipsychotic drugs or CBT. Strong candidates were able to introduce the method of modification (and any AO1 aspects of this account) without neglecting the focus on AO3, as this question was evaluative, and AO1 was not credited. Better answers would signpost their evaluation towards the term 'effectiveness', by using phrases such as 'antipsychotics are an effective method of modification because...' Or, they would explain one strength or weakness of antipsychotics and then summarise their evidence by saying how this factor was effective. Effectiveness for CBT included evidence in support and against (e.g. Kuipers et al (1997), Sameer Jauhar et al. (2014), Morrison et al. (32014) and short-term effectiveness (Tarrier et al. (2004). Evidence for effectiveness for antipsychotics included research on conventional antipsychotic drugs (Cole et al. (1964), comparing conventional and atypical antipsychotics (Ravanic,2009), and issues, such as difficulty assessing the effectiveness of antipsychotics (Rettenbacher, 2004).

Some candidates used ethical implications and social implications as evaluation, although the question specified 'effectiveness'. Better answers evaluated effectiveness and then used aspects of ethics and social implications but applied these to Charlie in terms of effectiveness. For example, in ethics, the issue of if Charlie stopped taking the drug, due to adverse side-effects, then this would make the medication ineffective. Similarly, with CBT, the therapy would be ineffective for those who were denied access to it (Kingdon and Kirschen, 2006). Good knowledge was shown in both methods of modification.

Stress

- Q.6 (a)** Stress is still a reasonably popular application, with 36.5 of candidates responding to this question. Part (a) of this question required both AO1 and AO2 skills, with the application to a scenario. In relation to the method of modification being described, beta blockers seemed more popular than stress inoculation training (SIT). The mean mark for this question was 8.1. Most candidates could describe reasonably well but few did this thoroughly. There were many reasonable attempts at linking to the scenario, mainly being given marks of 3. Knowledge of the method of modification was generally good. For beta blockers, better candidates were able to describe why they are used and how they work (using effective terminology, referring to the sympathetic nervous system, cardiovascular disorders, adrenaline/noradrenaline and their use for acute stress), the different types (non-selective, selective), the notion of off-label use, and particularly, the use by musicians. For SIT, a thorough response would include, a definition of inoculation, description of the importance of perception and the related theoretical background (with reference to the transactional model and the idea of constructive narrative perspective), and a description of the process of SIT (conceptualisation, skills acquisition/rehearsal and application/follow through). The weaker answers lacked the use of terminology, or this was used inaccurately, and the response lacked depth, and usually just listed components without giving examples or explanation. With regard to AO2, better responses described Toni's symptoms (sweaty palms, anxiety, low self-esteem) and explained how beta blockers would calm these down to enable Toni to effectively perform as a musician and not worry about losing her job. Research using musicians by Lockwood (1989) was also often described in these stronger responses and applied directly to Toni to explain how beta blockers could be used as a way to prevent stage fright before the live performances.
- (b)** This question required the candidate to use their evaluation skills (AO3). The most common individual differences explanations were hardiness and Type A/Type B personalities. The mean mark for this question was 4.6. The responses were mixed, and candidates were let down by not providing appropriate conclusions, either detailed mini-conclusions and/or a final conclusion. This prevented many candidates from attaining the top band again, much like question 4b). Strong responses were well-structured and provided evidence that supported and refuted both the explanations. Both explanations were evaluated equally, but not necessarily in relation to the same number of strengths and weaknesses. Those responses that lacked appropriate conclusions, were stronger on one explanation than the other or had either strengths or weaknesses and therefore remained in the reasonable band. The basic band responses were more generic in nature (such as mentioning reductionist, deterministic, but with no particular context), or lacked depth or breadth. The weaker answers tended to describe (AO1) and used very little evaluation.

Controversies

It was noticed that many candidates completed these controversies questions first, before moving onto the applications. This was suggested in previous examiners reports, and it is good to see that centres are not only reading the reports but are also acting upon the advice. Centres should remember to instil into their candidates the tight time structure attached to this question, namely around 33 minutes. It may also be useful to complete a brief plan before the response is attempted as this may help the candidate to stay focussed on the statement and prevent them from deviating away from the particular question's focus.

Centres are reminded to prepare for the debates that exist within and around each controversy. Also, it would be useful to remind candidates of the importance of contextualising the statement by introducing their understanding of the key terms before introducing the relevant evidence/psychological studies. Once the discussion is contextualised, this should lend itself to a clearer structure, and more opportunities to create depth and breadth in the answer.

Centres might consider ensuring that, for the controversies question, candidates are aware of the need for AO2 to be able to ensure that the evidence they select is appropriate and that it is then effectively applied back to the statement. Also, as suggested on previous examiners reports, the use of key phrases and link words would aid structure and provide for a more effective debate. For example, useful language to use could include terms such as: 'however', 'alternatively', 'conversely', 'a counter view', 'similarly', 'in contrast', 'on the other hand', 'in agreement with', 'disagreeing with this point of view', 'providing support for', 'other researchers have found that'.

Q.7 This question required the use of both AO2 and AO3 skills and was by far the most popular of the two controversies questions, with 69.3% of candidates attempting this question. The mean mark for this question was 14.5. There were some excellent responses with sophisticated arguments created and a real engagement with the issue demonstrated.

Many candidates had prepared well and had used a range of evidence and synoptic material. Stronger candidates broke the statements down and considered separate aspects, such as societal benefits, economic benefits, and then considered ethical consequences of research. Again, balanced arguments were created and any comments within the essay, were always backed up by appropriate evidence from across the course. Many other candidates offered responses between the reasonable and good bands.

Often, AO2 evidence was appropriate, with good use of terminology and a reasonable reference to the statement. Similarly, AO3 evidence displayed a good interpretation of key issues, with comments clearly relevant to the context and good structure with an appropriate conclusion. Well selected research studies were used, often beyond the current component and from the breadth of the course to show a balanced argument reflecting the societal, economical and ethical impact. However, there were a fair number of more basic answers, as these lower marked responses reduced the overall accessibility of this question. Weaker answers mainly described procedures and results of Milgram, Bowlby and Watson and Raynor, sometimes Zimbardo too, without real engagement with the issue. Weaker answers that focused around ethical issues and arguments were generally one-sided, usually focusing on negative aspects.

With the basic or superficial responses, there was usually a general misinterpretation of the issue. The main problem here was that some candidates wrote about non-human (animal) research, instead of research on humans. Answers included work by Harlow, Pavlov, Skinner and a focus on the 3 R's in BPS guidelines. This type of response is equivalent of writing a gender controversy in response to a cultural bias question. Within the specification, animal studies (non-human animals) is a separate controversy. It is worth reminding candidates to check the sub-headings in the examination paper, as this clearly stated, 'ethical costs of conducting research' and not 'non-human animals.' However, some responses were credited as stronger candidates used the results of animal studies as an alternative for using humans in psychological research to provide societal and economic advantages. For example, the findings of Harlow's research allowed greater understanding of the need for warmth rather than food which provided a stimulus for Bowlby's research on the maternal deprivation hypothesis, which led to changes in child-rearing methods and changes in the rights of the child, plus a stimulus for more work on attachment etc.

Another reason for poorer responses was that the candidate had run out of time for this question and just reworded the statement with their own opinions and very little psychological evidence with a few names, such as Milgram or BPS guidelines thrown in.

Q.8 This question required the use of both AO2 and AO3 skills, but of the two controversies questions, this was less popular and the mean mark was slightly lower (13.4). When this controversy question was chosen, stronger candidates used effective terminology throughout their response. They defined concepts such as; ethnocentrism (including alpha and beta bias), cultural relativism, use of cross-cultural studies, the notion of difference or bias, a consideration of the historical and cultural context. Appropriate research included Myers and Diener, Buss, Milgram's sample, Mead, and research on tribes etc. Better answers also explained how the evidence selected provided these false claims (or not), so developing depth within the argument. Weaker answers used less terminology and usually described these words, with very little supportive evidence. It was good to see that many more mini-conclusions (AO3) were being included at the end of paragraphs. It is also worth reminding candidates that there should not really be any new material within the conclusions, rather just a reflection of what has been written about in relation to how it supports or contradicts the main issue.

Summary of key points

In conclusion, a very pleasing response has been seen this year by candidates sitting component 3. This is a good indication that centres have been reading and acting upon important correspondences sent from Eduqas, and in response have been working hard to prepare candidates for their examination. Centres should continue to:

- **Time management:** Continue to ensure that candidates are aware of the timings for each question and the overall paper. To avoid unfinished responses or rushed responses, centres could reinforce the suggested time-plan of: 10 mark questions = 13 minutes; 15 mark questions = 20 minutes; 25 mark questions = 33 minutes.
- **Exam strategy:** Continue to ensure that candidates enter the examination with a clear plan of what order to complete the paper in. As the controversies section is a singular 25 mark question, centres may want to suggest to candidates that this question is responded to first, to minimise the effect of any poor timings, towards the end of the examination.
- **Identify and respond to subtleties in questions:** Ensuring that candidates read the actual question on the paper and not just write everything they know about the behaviours. Subtleties within questions need to be identified; such subtleties could be, only responding with one explanation when the question asks to 'describe explanations of....'. or when a question asks 'to evaluate one method of modification', but the candidate writes about two. The mark for the best of the two methods would be given, however, more importantly, the candidate has lost valuable time in the examination, which could have been used to add detail into other questions.
- **Application to the scenario / statement:** Ensure that the candidate uses the reference point (scenario / statement) throughout their answer, preferably within each paragraph. The key here is to use the whole of the source, but to also break the source down, where possible. It should be the focus of the answer and appropriate evidence (AO1 or AO3) should be selected from course material to effectively support it. It should be embedded throughout the answer and not just seen as a starting point and/or end point. Candidates should also look beyond simple rewording of statements/scenarios.
- **Integration of skills:** Develop AO1, AO2 and AO3 skills with a particular emphasis on how to effectively combine these skills in relation to the specific demands of the question. Evaluation questions especially continue to pose a challenge to many candidates, in comparison to descriptive AO1 skills, or even application AO2 skills. Candidates having learned detailed descriptions of explanations/methods of modifications with appropriate research evidence, often found it difficult to evaluate without being too descriptive. Centres could ensure that candidates have sufficient practise of AO3 skills and fully understand the difference between using evidence for description and for evaluation.



WJEC
245 Western Avenue
Cardiff CF5 2YX
Tel No 029 2026 5000
Fax 029 2057 5994
E-mail: exams@wjec.co.uk
website: www.wjec.co.uk