

# PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/11

Core Studies 1

## Key messages

- Methodology underpins psychology. Candidates need a good grounding in methodological concepts to understand, describe, evaluate, discuss and apply the core studies effectively.
- Candidates need to practise linking ideas, such as controls, designs, strengths and weaknesses, etc. to each of the core studies.
- The central aspects of each core study (its background, aim, procedure, results and conclusions) need to be carefully learned.

## General comments

There was a spread of questions on different aspects of the studies, such as aims and background, procedure, results, conclusions and evaluation. In **Section A**, the candidates' knowledge of aims/background (8, 11(a), 14(a)), procedure (5), results (7, 9, 11(b)), conclusions (12, 14(b)) and evaluation (2(b), 4(b), 13(b), 15(b)) was fairly good. However, some parts of **Section A** of this paper presented particular challenges to some candidates. Many candidates could improve by having a better general understanding of the background of studies (for example in response to **Question 6(a)**), whereas the understanding of ethics was good (e.g. **Question 6(b)**). To improve performance further, candidates would benefit from a more effective grasp of methodology in psychology so that they can see how the study illustrates these principles, for example to be able to improve their answers to questions about experimental design (**Question 2**), although the understanding of methodology was good in some areas (e.g. **Questions 10(a), 15(a)**). Some sensible and original answers were given to **Question 3(b)**, which required candidates to be original in their thinking, this is to be encouraged. Candidates need to take care to note when a link to a study is required by the question, and would benefit from practising including links in their responses.

Some candidates offered good responses to **Question 16** in **Section B**, writing essays that were relevant and focused on evaluation rather than description. However, some candidates could have improved their answers still further by illustrating their evaluative points with examples from the content of the chosen study. The answers to **Question 17** were less effective and candidates need to be able write in enough detail about any of the studies for any relevant essay question.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Question 1**

- (a) Many candidates were able to describe the meaning of 'opportunity sample' although some of these were unable to give a second example. Some incorrectly repeated the information about the study by Mann et al. and others gave a reason why the suspects in the Mann et al. study were an opportunity sample.
- (b) Many candidates were able to earn partial marks for an appropriate comment about generalisability or representativeness. Some went on to elaborate this, but unless the elaboration was related to the study, it could not earn the second mark. Few candidates were able to make appropriate linking comments.

## Question 2

- (a) Many candidates understood the general concept of a repeated measures design, and marks varied according to the clarity of the answer. Candidates should avoid making ambiguous statements such as 'All participants do all tests' as this may also be true of independent groups. Candidates should be encouraged to understand that it is the *conditions or levels of the IV* which matter.
- (b) Although many candidates were able to earn credit for comments relating to avoiding issues with individual differences few were able to make an appropriate link to the study.

## Question 3

- (a) There was considerable evidence of guesswork here, with specific suggestions such as 'housewives' or examples of occupations such as 'lawyers' or 'teachers'. Some candidates also mistakenly reported irrelevant details about the participants, such as that they were people in the public library (or librarians) or were attending adult education classes.
- (b) Many candidates made appropriate comments about them being comparable but few were able to relate this to the specific groups in the study, such as that educational or workplace experiences could affect social cognition; e.g. if working with colleagues helped to make people better at detecting emotions.

## Question 4

- (a) This question part was well answered.
- (b) Most candidates were able to gain one mark here, many also gained the second mark.

## Question 5

- (a) This question part was very well answered.
- (b) This question part was also well answered, with a range of appropriate suggestions for each item.

## Question 6

- (a) This question part was not well answered, with candidates showing a range of misunderstandings. Nevertheless, there was a core of good answers, giving responses similar to those on the mark scheme, i.e. division/allocation/separation of people into two or more groups (on the basis of anything).
- (b) This question part produced much better answers than **part (a)**, generally using ethical criticisms.

## Question 7

- (a) This question part was well answered, with a range of appropriate results.
- (b) This question part was also well answered, with a range of appropriate reasons, with many candidates using the example 'because children said "That's not ladylike"' to justify their answer.

## Question 8

This question was generally well answered, although some candidates did not respond to 'using little Hans as an example', which was required by the question, and were not able to access full marks as a result.

## Question 9

Although many candidates were able to earn marks, few earned full marks, even though it is likely that they knew enough to elaborate their answers. It is important that candidates look at the mark tariff for each question, and write in appropriate detail.

### Question 10

- (a) Candidates generally answered this question well, although some did not respond to the need to relate their answer to the study, they merely stated what was required for any study to be a laboratory experiment.
- (b) Most answers focused on ecological validity although some just restated the stem of the question which could not be credited. There were many good links to the study here.

### Question 11

- (a), (b) Both question parts were answered well.

### Question 12

Most candidates answered in terms of why the suggestion was true, although full marks were also available for arguing the opposite way, or for both sides. The evidence from the results was generally well used to justify the viewpoint.

### Question 13

- (a) This question part was often well answered but some candidates attempted to apply their answers to the study (which was not required in this case) and did so in ways that were not creditworthy, such as simply describing what was done in the study. Note that contextualised descriptions of the self-report method did earn credit.
- (b) Although many candidates were able to identify an appropriate advantage, few could successfully link this to the study. Linking effectively is a skill many candidates need to improve.

### Question 14

- (a) There were many correct answers here, although some candidates gave circular definitions which could not earn credit (e.g. 'Systemisers are people who think systematically')
- (b) This question part was also generally well answered. However, a small number of candidates gave conclusions in terms of gender and empathising and systemising, rather than in terms of university subject, as required by the question.

### Question 15

- (a) Many candidates earned full marks on this question part, although a small minority gave muddled answers about long and short sessions.
- (b) Most candidates were able to give a partial answer, fewer linked this effectively to the study.

### Question 16

This essay was often well written, with many entering the higher bands. Candidates showed a good grasp of the ethical issues themselves and were able to illustrate these with examples from their chosen study.

### Question 17

This essay was also fairly well written by many candidates. They were able to identify various factors affecting generalisability and often related these directly and meaningfully to the study. However, candidates tended to be unable to write a sufficient diversity of points in their essays in this topic. There were fewer essays relating to the study by Langlois et al.

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/12

Core Studies 1

## Key messages

- Candidates should provide answers that equate to mark allocation, so an answer worth two marks should be short and an answer worth 10 marks should be correspondingly longer. **Section B** questions are not short-answer.
- For a **Section A** two mark answer that has the command ‘describe’, candidates should ensure they provide enough detail to score both marks, rather than a partial, very brief or vague answer.
- Candidates should read all parts of a question, **(a)** and **(b)** in **Section A**, before beginning to write an answer to ensure that the answers to both question parts answer the questions set.
- Where a question states ‘in this study’ candidates must relate what they write to the study in question, i.e. give an example from the study.
- Candidates should look to quote psychological knowledge wherever possible. Anecdotal answers will not achieve top marks.
- Candidates should always seek to evaluate using psychological methods, approaches, issues and debates as appear in the syllabus rather than with general evaluation points.
- The writing of some candidates is difficult to read and all candidates are encouraged to write legibly. Candidates are reminded that writing in ink that shows through on the opposite side of the paper also makes what is written difficult to read.
- It is helpful to Examiners if candidates answer questions in the order in which they are presented on the question paper, although **Section B** could be done before **Section A**.

## General comments

There are errors that are frequently made by candidates and addressing these would increase marks significantly.

Some candidates confuse command terms such as identify, outline, explain and describe. Often, writing one more sentence, extending an outline for example, would make a difference to the mark awarded. An examination is an opportunity for candidates to show in detail what they have learned about psychology.

A common error is not to address ‘in this study’ in questions. There were many instances of this on this paper and it meant that many candidates scored limited credit because they did not fully answer the question. ‘In this study’ requires the answer to be related to the study in the question; without doing this the answer could relate to any study when it needs to be explicitly linked.

## Comments on specific questions

### Question 1

- (a) Most candidates were not able to explain what a positive correlation is, although many of the core studies involve correlations. Limited credit was awarded answers stating ‘a relationship between two variables’, but needed to address ‘positive’ in order to achieve full credit.
- (b) Some candidates scored full marks, but the inability to understand part (a) affected many part (b) answers.

## Question 2

- (a), (b) Many candidates appeared to find it challenging to distinguish between a laboratory and a field experiment. In part (a) candidates would define an experiment and mention IV, DV and controls, but needed to mention where the experiment was conducted. This meant that the answer could apply equally to both part (a) and part (b). The response in part (a) needed to mention that the experiment was conducted in a laboratory, an artificial environment, such as at the university. For part (b) candidates often did better, and more mentioned that part of the study was conducted in the home of the participant. A link to the study was required, for instance by mentioning completing the booklets.

## Question 3

- (a) This question part required candidates to identify two ethical guidelines. Full guidelines avoid ambiguity, for instance *informed consent*; *protection from harm* and *lack of deception*. ‘Deception’ alone suggests that participants should be deceived.
- (b) This question part required candidates to relate one of the guidelines identified in part (a) to the core study. Some candidates wrote very strong answers, outlining the guideline and then how it applied. Some candidates did not relate the guideline to the study, which needed to be linked in order to answer the question set.

## Question 4

- (a) Candidates could describe the results of either the visual cliff or paw placement test. Most candidates scored full marks with only a few candidates scoring limited credit for saying what happened to the active kitten but not the passive and so providing no more than a partial answer. A few candidates provided no answer.
- (b) This question required an explanation of how the results mentioned in part (a) supported the conclusion of the study. Most candidates correctly stated that kittens require learning of paw-eye co-ordination for example, but often candidates could not transfer their part (a) answer.

## Question 5

- (a) Nearly all candidates could identify two controls used in the study by Milgram.
- (b) Most candidates need to focus on *controls* to improve their answers to this question. For example, candidates stated that the purpose of the prods was to make the participant obey authority. This is the reason why prods were included, but it is not the reason why the same prods, as a control, were used for every participant, which was to ensure that all participants were pressured to obey equally so that differences in obedience were not due to different commands/prods being used.

## Question 6

- (a) Most candidates scored full marks, but others lost focus and referred to characteristics of the sampling technique/method, which is different from the sample of participants, i.e. ‘self-selected’ and ‘replied to a newspaper advert’ could not be credited.
- (b) Many candidates provided anecdotal answers limited to a comment such as they were ‘the best people to choose for the study’. Strong answers often focused on the reason for the study (as the question required) stating that to test the dispositional hypothesis ('bad' places are due to 'bad' people), 'good' people i.e. males with no criminal record and no involvement in anti-social behaviours, had to be used.

## Question 7

- (a) Most candidates were able to score full marks for this question, weaker answers required further elaboration or detail.
- (b) Some candidates stated the result – ‘the boys opted for maximum difference’ but needed to explain how the categorisation had led to this to answer the question set.

### Question 8

Very few candidates scored full marks in response to this question mainly because the question set was not answered specifically. This question asked for a ‘description of the procedure … in the *experimental (test) room*’. Answers providing descriptions of the models in room 1 or the aggression arousal in room 2 could not be credited. Strong responses mentioned the number of observers, time sampling (every 5 seconds for 10 minutes giving 240 instances of behaviour), the use of a one-way mirror and the response categories (examples of the behaviours observed). Some candidates wrote about video clips despite there being no video in the study.

### Question 9

- (a) Most candidates scored full marks for this question part. Nearly all candidates correctly explained that qualitative data is the use of words. Some candidates stated that qualitative data is ‘not using numbers’ and whilst this is true, it does not explain what qualitative data is. Most candidates went on to give an appropriate example from the Freud study. A few candidates wrote nothing more than ‘the dream’ but most provided a full example, for instance, ‘the descriptions of dreams/fantasies reported by little Hans such as the giraffe episode’.
- (b) This question part also saw most candidates scoring full marks, most stating that an advantage of qualitative data is that it can be in-depth or can provide an explanation for why something happens. Examples from the Freud study were often appropriate.

### Question 10

- (a) This question asked about the sampling technique not the sample, so any description of participants could not be credited. Credit was given for ‘volunteer sampling’ because the participants/their parents had put themselves in the subject pool. Credit was also given for ‘opportunity sampling’ because the researchers selected from the subject pool as the participants were easy to contact. Some candidates repeated the information in the question, which could not be credited.
- (b) Nearly all candidates referred to a lack of generalisability as a disadvantage of the sampling technique and scored limited credit. However, many candidates could not explain why this sample could not be generalised. The most logical explanation was a lack of representativeness because the participants were all from the same area; also creditworthy was that they were all volunteers. In this instance, the question did not state ‘in this study’ and so answers could be more general.

### Question 11

- (a) This question for four marks required description of the story (two marks) and the drawings (two marks). Some candidates did not address both these components and scored limited credit. Some answers were very brief, but many candidates wrote very detailed answers often showing very good understanding of the Nelson study.

### Question 12

- (a) In this instance the focus was on the independent groups design and most candidates scored limited credit for their outline, although some candidates incorrectly outlined a repeated/related design. For full marks, candidates needed to address ‘using this study as an example’, which some candidates did not do. A statement was required to show the candidate understands that each participant could only be in one of the EPI-IGN, EPI-INF, EPI-MIS or placebo/control groups, a fundamental aspect of the study.
- (b) The most common advantage quoted was that this would avoid order effects or that it would help prevent participants from working out what the study was about. The ‘in this study’ aspect of the question was often absent, restricting candidates to limited credit. To score full credit, the candidate needed to make a link to the study in their response, for instance, ‘it would help prevent participants from working out that the study *was about emotion*’.

### Question 13

- (a) Most candidates correctly stated that the aim was to test whether psychiatrists (in the context of a mental hospital) could distinguish between a sane and an insane person. There were some responses that were vague, such as 'to see whether psychiatrists are competent', which needed to be more specific, for instance by mentioning the context, in order to be worth more credit.
- (b) This question part required candidates to think about the Rosenhan study and apply it to their knowledge of case studies. Many candidates were successful and there were many strong answers.

### Question 14

- (a) Answers to the question of cognitive style varied in detail and understanding. For full marks, candidates had to provide elaboration and most common was for candidates to give an example of a cognitive style such as empathising or systemising. A common uncreditable response was 'it is how the brain works'.
- (b) Many candidates achieved credit by selecting one of the four tests in the Billington et al. study, i.e. the embedded figures test, the eyes test, the systemising quotient (SQ-R) or the empathising quotient (EQ). Some candidates either did not appear to know a test of cognitive style or appeared to guess. IQ test was commonly suggested.

### Question 15

- (a) There were some candidates who incorrectly referred to BDD as merely 'a dislike of appearance', but there were those candidates who were able to show their knowledge of this illness and its diagnosis, and who often scored full marks.
- (b) There were many excellent answers showing very good understanding.

### Section B

Many candidates did not answer the question set or did not apply appropriate examination technique. For example, many candidates describe rather than discuss/evaluate. There are no marks for description and a descriptive introduction is not required. Candidates also need to give strengths (plural) and weaknesses (plural) as specified in the questions. The strongest format is two strengths and two weaknesses (**Question 16**) or four weaknesses (**Question 17**), with each point being supported with an appropriate example from the named study.

### Question 16

This question required an evaluation of *quantitative data*. Answers covered the entire mark range. The strongest responses provided both strengths and weaknesses and give appropriate supporting examples. Sometimes candidates repeated points and occasionally candidates would confuse quantitative with qualitative data. Appropriate strengths included the scientific or objective nature of the data and that statistics can be calculated, and for some studies the data, gathered by scientific equipment is reliable. Appropriate weaknesses were in reference to quantitative data not providing an explanation (e.g. *why* people helped in the Piliavin et al. study) or quantitative data only providing 'half' the story (e.g. a dream could only be described qualitatively).

### Question 17

This question required candidates to consider only weaknesses, but some candidates gave strengths which were not required and could not be credited. The majority of candidates wrote about the Haney et al. study referring to weakness of the sample (all white, male, etc.), the limited nature of the 'prison' itself, that the 'prisoners' were not criminals, (i.e. issues of generalisability), and ethics, because most guidelines were broken. Answers which were restricted to ethics (in effect just one weakness) achieved limited credit. Candidates should be mindful that weaknesses should be clearly expressed with examples used in support, rather than restrict answers to a number of different examples.

# PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/13  
Core Studies 1

## Key messages

- Methodology underpins psychology. Candidates need a good grounding in methodological concepts to understand, describe, evaluate, discuss and apply the core studies effectively.
- Candidates need to practise linking ideas, such as controls, designs, strengths and weaknesses etc. to each of the core studies.
- The central aspects of each core study (its background, aim, procedure, results and conclusions) need to be carefully learned.

## General comments

As with all papers, there was a spread of questions on different aspects of the studies, such as background, procedure, results and evaluation. In **Section A**, the candidates' knowledge of aims (4), procedure (1, 10(a), 14(b)), results/conclusions (7, 10(b), 11) and evaluation (3(b), 5(b), 6(b), 15(b)) was fairly good. Many candidates could improve by having a better general understanding of the background of studies (for example, in response to **Question 4**). To improve performance further, candidates would benefit from a more effective grasp of methodology in psychology so that they can see how the studies illustrate these principles, for example to be able to improve their answers to questions about experimental design (**Question 9** and **Question 3**), although the understanding of methodology was good in some areas (e.g. **Question 12**) and the understanding of ethical implications was good (for example, **Question 8**). Many sensible and original answers were given to **Question 13**, which required candidates to be original in their thinking, this is to be encouraged. Candidates need to take care to note when a link to a study is required by the question, and would benefit from practising including links in their responses.

Some candidates offered good responses to **Question 16** in **Section B**, writing essays that were relevant and focused on evaluation rather than description. However, many candidates could have improved their answers by illustrating their evaluative points with examples from the content of the chosen study. The answers to **Question 17** were weak and candidates need to practise evaluating the approaches rather than the studies themselves in order to prepare for any essay.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Candidates offered a range of creditworthy answers here, in addition to those on the mark scheme, such as 'You might need more people depending on the crime' or 'There might be more people present with a murderer than a burglar'. Suggestions for other people who might be present included lawyers, religious figures, detectives and senior police officers. Many candidates were able to think about the situation and apply their knowledge effectively. This enabled them to gain marks for both 'identification of reason' and 'explanation of reason'.
- (b) This question part was not as well answered by some candidates as **part (a)**. There was a tendency to give answers suggesting that it might lead to more (or less) lying which, in itself, would not have mattered. It was whether it affected the nature of the lying behaviours, or the ability of observers to detect or score them that mattered.

## Question 2

- (a) This question part was generally accurately answered, showing good knowledge of the study. In addition to the points listed on the mark scheme, candidates also observed that there were more female than male participants.
- (b) Part (b) of this question was not answered as well as part (a). Some candidates appeared to mistakenly believe that the older individual who supplied the true stories was also a participant.

## Question 3

- (a) Although this question was moderately well answered, there was a tendency for candidates to provide the incorrect feature of 'longitudinal'. Although some case studies are longitudinal, a case study does not have to be.
- (b) Generic answers were very common, with candidates citing qualitative data, depth, description or detail as an advantage for limited credit. Fewer candidates were able to link this to the study for a full credit.

## Question 4

Although many candidates were able to see that it was a nature-nurture argument, only some could extend this to the concept of the need for self-generated movement being the 'nurture' factor. Fewer still could identify that the argument towards the 'nature' side of the spectrum suggested that only vision was needed, not the interaction of vision and self-generated movement. Some candidates omitted this question.

## Question 5

- (a) This question was generally well answered, typically with 'descriptive data' and, where an example from the study was provided, the participants' comments and behaviours were typically described.
- (b) This question part was also well answered, although some candidates could not elaborate their answer with any detail, whether contextualised or not.

## Question 6

- (a) Many candidates simply repeated the stem, which neither provides an example from the study nor explain why this was an independent groups design.
- (b) Candidates were often unable to link their answer to the study, so could not earn full marks.

## Question 7

The question was sometimes answered well but many candidates did not score full marks because they described results rather than reporting conclusions. Few candidates realised the implications of the results for the nature-nurture argument.

## Question 8

- (a) This question was generally well answered although some candidates could have saved time as they gave a description of their chosen ethical problem rather than just identifying it as required by the question.
- (b) Many candidates demonstrated in this question that they were able to link their knowledge of the study to the question.

### Question 9

- (a) This question indicated that candidates' understanding of the concept of an experimental design was poor. Although some managed to gain a mark on **Question 6** when they were given the name of the experimental design, those same candidates were often unable to answer either part of this question. They tended to discuss laboratory experiments instead of designs.
- (b) Many of students who gave an example of an advantage of repeated measures suggested the appearance of the faces on both the left and right for each participant so that potential side bias was counterbalanced. This is a control measure which is unrelated to the design, so is not answering the question.

### Question 10

- (a) 'Accurate' was a common weak response, which was not always suggested in the context of a psychological study. To improve, points needed to be more exact, for example, referring appropriately to measures being reliable, objective or valid.
- (b) Candidates appeared to be confused about the findings of the study, as this question produced a range of muddled answers.

### Question 11

- (a), (b) There were few creditworthy answers apart from obvious statements such as 'the participants became angry' or 'the participants were happy'. Few candidates were able to use their knowledge of the relevant material (about the procedure or results) to answer these questions.

### Question 12

This question was often very well answered. However, a significant minority of candidates believed that low ecological validity is a feature of a laboratory experiment, which is a very common misconception.

### Question 13

- (a) This question was often well answered with interesting suggestions. However, a small number of candidates simply suggested 'attraction', which is not a *behaviour*.
- (b) Candidates who were able to give an appropriate suggestion in **part (a)** were also likely to give better answers here. Most focused on ecological validity, although the level of understanding of this concept was often too simplistic to earn credit.

### Question 14

- (a) Many candidates used the information in the question (telling them who the participants were) and were therefore able to understand that the sampling technique was opportunity sampling;
- (b) This question part was generally very well answered.

### Question 15

- (a) This question part was often well answered but some candidates attempted to apply their answers to the study (which was not required) and did so in ways that were not creditworthy, such as simply describing what was done in the study. Note that contextualised descriptions of the self-report method did earn credit.
- (b) Although many candidates were able to identify appropriate disadvantages, few could successfully link this to the study. Linking effectively is a skill many candidates need to improve.

### Question 16

A common misunderstanding was that using only one participant helped to improve studies by reducing individual differences. Such an extreme solution ignores rather than solves the problem of individual differences, so lowers validity as generalisability is reduced. Another common error was the misassumption that getting the results you expected indicates that the research was valid. Nevertheless, some candidates were able to make useful comments, such as for the study by Thigpen and Cleckley, the hundreds of hours of video gave high validity. These answers were somewhat better than those for the studies by Maguire et al. and Veale and Riley.

### Question 17

The majority of essays made little or no attempt to evaluate the social approach. Many simply evaluated their chosen study. Others followed the same route by made global generalisations about the social approach from that one study without indicating why their comment applied to the approach in general. These problems arose with all the study options.

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/21  
Core Studies 2

## Key messages

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

It is important that candidates are made aware of the issues in psychology as some were unable to identify and/or define various types of validity in **part (a)**. Candidates should suggest a simple alternative to the original study in **part (b)** and give clear details of the procedure followed. Extended evaluative points that make direct reference to the alternative idea are necessary in **part (c)** to achieve full marks.

#### **Question 2**

It is important that all candidates practice writing these types of questions. Some did not structure their responses appropriately and could not achieve full marks, although the number doing this has decreased from previous sessions. For example, if the question asks for strengths and weaknesses then four points must be made (two strengths and two weaknesses). Candidates must refer to the named study in their responses to achieve higher marks.

### **Section B**

Candidates must write more extended responses in both **part (b)** and **part (c)** of the essay as many gave accurate responses that lacked depth. Evidence must be given in **part (c)** to achieve higher marks.

## General comments

The marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the whole mark scheme. Many provided strong answers which showed that they were very well prepared and consistently referred to the evidence in order to achieve high marks.

Time management for this paper was good for most candidates and most attempted all questions that were required.

A minority of candidates answered both questions in the **Section B** essay and this had increased from previous sessions. When a candidate did this they were awarded the mark for the better of the two responses (**Question 3** or **Question 4**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly.

Candidates need to cover the entire syllabus so that they can respond to the questions in **Section A** where there is no choice of question. In addition to this, candidates must include evidence in the **part (c)** of their **Section B** essays to achieve higher marks. **Question 4** was the more popular choice of question.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Most candidates achieved some marks for this question. Common points made included describing ecological validity, internal/external validity and population validity. Some discussed ethical validity which could not be credited.
- (b) Most candidates were able to describe a procedure that investigated multiple personality disorder that used a method other than a case study. Popular ideas included using either a self-report or an observation. A substantial number followed the 'who', 'what', 'how' and 'where' approach which helped them gain marks. However, many candidates were stating self-report but then not giving any examples of questions that might be asked which limited the overall score on this question. A significant minority of candidates used the case study method despite the question requiring them not to.

Some candidates evaluated their idea in this question, which was not required by this question, and which could not be credited.

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved marks in this question by providing some evaluative points. Many discussed issues about generalisability, validity, reliability and the ethical issues of studying someone with a mental health problem.

Many candidates gave well developed points that achieved very high marks as they referred directly to their alternative idea. Some candidates only briefly identified issues and did not refer back to the context of their own study.

#### **Question 2**

- (a) The majority of candidates achieved full marks for their answer to this question. They referred to the fact that quantitative data is numerical data. They often extended their response by referring to the ability to use statistics, graphs or the possibility of making comparisons with quantitative data. Some did not achieve full marks as they gave a very brief response.

- (b) Many candidates received marks for this question by giving a finding from the study. Common responses were to describe the finding that the participants used more words to describe the true memories compared to the false memory. In addition, many mentioned the fact that just seven participants said they remembered the false story and this dropped to six after the interview. Quite a few candidates had very good knowledge of the precise numerical results from the study and gave these in their answer. A lot of candidates simply identified what quantitative data had been collected rather than focusing on a finding and achieved no marks.

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved some marks in this section. Most were able to describe one strength and one weakness of collecting quantitative data and were able to give an example from the Loftus and Pickrell study. Many referred to the data being easy to compare and also that statistical tests can be used with quantitative data. For the weaknesses most referred to the lack of depth in the data.

Candidates need to describe two strengths and two weaknesses to achieve higher marks. Many attempted to do this, but appeared to find it difficult to describe an appropriate second weakness (e.g. validity and decreased usefulness).

- (d) Some candidates answered appropriately for this question and identified points about similarities and differences between the cognitive approach and one other approach in psychology. Common comparison points included the assumptions of each approach, types of research methods commonly used by each approach and the application of the findings of studies within each approach. However, many candidates answered the question by just describing two approaches separately with no clear comparison point. Many also simply named studies rather than using them to make a comparison.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) The majority of candidates achieved at least one mark for their answer to this question. Many referred to the fact that the physiological approach focusses on biological processes in the body. Some candidates also linked the study of the biological processes in the body to the effect that these have on behaviour to achieve full marks.
- (b) The candidates who attempted this question found it difficult to describe the physiological processes investigated in the study. Some of the responses were very brief while others gave quite long descriptions of the procedure of the study rather than the physiological processes. The vast majority of candidates could achieve one mark per study but found it difficult to write in enough depth to achieve much more than this. For the study by Dement and Kleitman most candidates could identify the physiological processes of REM/NREM, brain waves and dream length estimations. For the study by Maguire et al. the vast majority of candidates could note it involved the hippocampus but struggled to explain much more about the study. For the study by Schachter and Singer this tended to be a description of the two factor theory which was sometimes quite confused.
- (c) Most candidates described two if not three problems faced by psychologists when they investigate physiological processes. Common issues raised included ethics, validity and cost. The candidates did often link at least one of these problems to a piece of evidence but it was noticeable that if the candidate did this for the first problem they would then not link the second and third problem to evidence and therefore achieved lower marks.

### Question 4

- (a) Many who attempted this question achieved one mark for stating that the situational explanation of behaviour refers to the effect the situation or environment has on a person's behaviour. Some achieved full marks by giving an example of how the situation might affect behaviour.
- (b) Most candidates achieved at least one mark by mentioning how the data was collected in the study. The strongest responses were for the study by Piliavin et al. as the candidates described a substantial amount of the data collected by the female observers. In addition, many described how the study by Milgram counted how far up the shock generator each participant went and a number of candidates mentioned that qualitative data about the behaviour of the participants were also collected. Candidates appeared to find it more difficult to describe how the various pieces of data were collected in the study by Haney, Banks and Zimbardo. Most just focused on the qualitative data collected about the guards' and prisoners' behaviour but needed to mention the other types of data collected such as the guard reports and daily self-reports completed by all participants.
- (c) Most candidates could give one advantage of investigating the effects of the situation on behaviour. Common responses included usefulness, the fact it provides an explanation of behaviour and validity. Some did not link their responses to a study and achieved fewer marks.

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/22

Core Studies 2

## Key messages

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

It is important that candidates are made aware of how the research methods are used in each of the core studies as many could not give a detailed description of how the snapshot method was used in the Veale and Riley study in part **(a)**. Candidates should suggest a simple alternative to the original study in part **(b)** and give clear details of the procedure followed. In addition, candidates need to be aware of the features of each method as a few gave a description of a study that was snapshot rather than longitudinal. Extended evaluative points that make direct reference to the alternative idea are necessary in part **(c)** to achieve full marks.

#### **Question 2**

It is important that candidates practice writing these types of questions. Some did not structure their responses appropriately and could not achieve full marks. For example, if the question asks for strengths and weaknesses then four points must be made (two strengths and two weaknesses). Candidates must refer to the named study in their responses to achieve higher marks. In addition, when asked to discuss the extent to which a study is useful the candidate must provide a discussion rather than simply describing how and to whom the study is useful.

### **Section B**

Candidates must write more extended responses in both part **(b)** and part **(c)** of the essay as many gave accurate responses that lacked depth. Evidence must be given in part **(c)** to achieve higher marks.

## General comments

The marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the whole mark scheme. Many provided good answers which showed that they were very well prepared and consistently referred to the evidence in order to achieve high marks.

Time management for this paper was very good for most candidates and most attempted all questions that were required.

A minority of candidates answered both questions in the **Section B** essay. When a candidate did this they were awarded the mark for the better of the two responses (**Question 3** or **Question 4**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly.

Candidates need to cover the entire syllabus so that they can respond to the questions in **Section A** where there is no choice of question. In addition to this, candidates must include evidence in the part **(c)** of their **Section B** essays to achieve higher marks. **Question 4** was the more popular choice of question.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Most candidates achieved some marks for this question. Common points made included describing the fact that the snapshot method lasts for a short period of time. Many gave examples of this such as a few minutes or a few hours. Some candidates stated that snapshot studies could go on for weeks or even a month which was incorrect. Many gave some examples from Veale and Riley although this often lacked detail. Common responses included reference to the questionnaire given to the participants in the study and then examples of what the questionnaire was testing or the types of questions asked (e.g. using a rating scale).
- (b) Most candidates described a procedure that used the longitudinal method and was measuring body dysmorphic disorder (BDD). A few ‘mirrored’ ideas from the original Veale and Riley study ensuring that the ‘how’ and ‘what’ elements of the procedure were covered and often included details of sample. There were a minority of candidates presenting a snapshot method that was done in a very short period of time so could only gain partial credit.

Some candidates wrote out results of their study which could not be credited. Common ideas included doing an observation of participants while they looked in a mirror. This was sometimes done in the participant’s home or in the lab. This was followed up with a questionnaire and/or an interview. Many of the candidates did give details on which specific behaviours were observed (e.g. timing how long the participant spends looking in the mirror) and the specific questions asked.

Some did not include the other details required such as where the study would take place and who the participants would be. In addition, the candidates need to ensure the ‘what’ and ‘how’ for the procedure are very clear. For this particular study, the candidate needed to give details of the behaviour measured and/or the specific questions asked.

A few suggested very unethical research such as putting hidden cameras into participants’ homes to watch them in their bedroom or bathroom.

A small number of candidates evaluated their idea in this question, which was not required by this question, and which could not be credited.

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved marks in this question by providing some evaluative points. Most gave both methodological and ethical issues in their response.

Many discussed issues about the ecological validity of their study, generalisability of the sample group and ethical issues that might come about as a result of a long and/or in-depth nature of their study. Most also contextualised their responses referring directly to their original idea and this has improved compared to previous sessions.

A few gave well developed points that achieved very high marks as they referred directly to their alternative idea. Some only briefly identified issues and did not refer back to the context of their own study.

#### **Question 2**

- (a) The majority of candidates achieved at least one mark for their answer to this question. Many referred to the fact that the physiological approach focuses on biological processes in the body. Some candidates also linked the study of the biological processes in the body to the effect that these have on behaviour to achieve full marks. A small minority of candidates gave assumptions of the cognitive approach rather than physiological which was not creditworthy.
- (b) Many candidates received marks for this question by giving the aim of the study. Most mentioned that the study investigated the effect of smells on facial attractiveness. Some then went on to describe the study which did not receive any marks. A minority of candidates gave the results of the study which showed the link between physiology and psychology. A very small number gave full mark answers which explained the physiological element of the study (the smell) and the effect this had on the psychology measured in the study (the perceived facial attractiveness).

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved some marks in this section. Most were able to describe one strength and one weakness of the physiological approach. Common strengths included control and reliability of laboratory based research. Weaknesses discussed were mainly ecological validity and reductionism. Good examples from the Demattè study were often given. Most attempted two strengths and two weaknesses although there were many instances where the candidate's four points were not all creditable and therefore achieved in the 5-6 mark band. Generalisability was not creditworthy as a weakness.

Some candidates did not attempt the 'plural nature' of these types of questions to gain the seven plus marks available. Candidates need to describe two strengths and two weaknesses to achieve the higher marks. Many did attempt to do this, but found it difficult to describe an appropriate second weakness (e.g. ecological validity and reductionism).

- (d) Many of the candidates answered appropriately for this question and were able to achieve higher marks compared to previous sessions. Many discussed the sample used and the ecological validity of the study. This was sometimes then linked to the effect on the usefulness of the research although some candidates just evaluated the study with a brief mention of usefulness at the start of their response.

A number simply described the usefulness of the study and achieved up to four marks. Some candidates just focussed on how the study explained the effect of smell on facial attractiveness without any reference to usefulness and they were awarded up to two marks.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) The vast majority of candidates achieved at least one mark for this question and were able to give a definition of the nature-nurture debate. Some candidates did not make clear which part of the definition was nature and which part was nurture and achieved limited credit. No candidates mixed up the two terms.
- (b) Candidates achieved at least one mark per study and many attempted to answer the question and wrote about how each of the studies supports either the nature or nurture view. Many just described what was investigated in each study or the procedure of the study. Most identified whether they thought the study supported nature or nurture but then found it very difficult to support this with relevant examples from the study.
- (c) Many candidates identified one or two problems when psychologists investigate the nature-nurture debate. The most common problems discussed were ethical issues, problems with studying children and the difficulties distinguishing between behaviours that are a result of nature and those that are a result of nurture.

### Question 4

- (a) Most candidates achieved at least one mark for this question. They were able to state that generalisability refers to the ability to apply the results to the general population. Some referred to ecological validity and this was also creditworthy. A few candidates gave more detailed responses and described how generalisability refers to the extent to which the results of the sample used in the study can be applied to the target population.
- (b) This question was answered well by many candidates. Most achieved an average of two marks per study and many achieved full marks. Candidates were able to describe how the data were collected in each of the named studies. Many needed to fully describe the data collection and omitted important details from each description. For example, the use of a journal to record the results in the study by Rosenhan and the measurement of how far up the electric shock generator the participants went in the study by Milgram.
- (c) Most candidates identified many problems with making generalisations from psychological research. Common points included ecological validity, generalising from the sample used in the study to the wider population and issues of ethics. Some candidates referred back to the core studies as evidence to back up their points. However, many did not do this and therefore achieved lower marks. In addition to this, some candidates just made one point for all three studies. This was often done when referring to the problem of generalising from the sample. Candidates need to make three different points to achieve the maximum marks.

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/23

Core Studies 2

## Key messages

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

It is important that candidates are made aware of how the research methods are used in each of the core studies as many could not give a detailed description of how the self report method was used in the Loftus and Pickrell study in part **(a)**. Candidates should suggest a simple alternative to the original study in part **(b)** and give clear details of the procedure followed. In addition, candidates need to be aware of the features of each method as many gave a description of a study with a large sample size which is not a case study. Extended evaluative points that make direct reference to the alternative idea are necessary in part **(c)** to achieve full marks.

#### **Question 2**

It is important that candidates practice responding to these types of questions. A few did not structure their responses appropriately and could not achieve full marks. For example, if the question asks for strengths and weaknesses then four points must be made (two strengths and two weaknesses). Candidates must refer to the named study in their responses to achieve higher marks.

### **Section B**

Candidates must write more extended responses in both part **(b)** and part **(c)** of the essay as many gave accurate responses that lacked depth. Evidence must be given in part **(c)** to achieve higher marks.

## General comments

The marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the whole mark scheme. Most of the cohort of candidates provided good answers which showed that they were very well prepared and consistently referred to the evidence in order to achieve high marks.

Time management for this paper was excellent for most candidates and most attempted all questions that were required.

A number of candidates answered both questions in the **Section B** essay. When a candidate did this they were awarded the mark for the better of the two responses (**Question 3** or **Question 4**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly.

Candidates need to cover the entire syllabus so that they can respond to the questions in **Section A** where there is no choice of question. In addition to this, candidates must include evidence in the part **(c)** of their **Section B** essays to achieve higher marks. **Question 3** was the more popular choice of question.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Almost all candidates achieved some marks for this question. Common points made included describing the interviews and questionnaires which are used in the self report method. Many also described the type of questions asked and/or types of data collected in self reports. Many then applied this to the Loftus and Pickrell study in which participants complete a self report in advance of their two interviews where they filled in as much as they could recall about the four memories in the booklet they were given. At the interview they had to state whether they remembered the events and also rate the clarity of the event on a 1–10 scale and their confidence on a 1–5 scale. If given more time to think about it they think they would remember more with a yes or no response.
- (b) Most candidates described a procedure that used the case study method and was measuring false memories in some way. Quite a few ‘mirrored’ ideas from the original Loftus and Pickrell study ensuring that the ‘how’ and ‘what’ elements of the procedure were covered and often included details of sample. There were a minority of candidates presenting experimental work with large pools of participants so could only gain partial credit.

Some candidates wrote out results of their study which could not be credited. Popular ideas included getting relatives to give a false memory to a family member over an extended period of time and then the researcher would regularly interview the participant to find out if they could recall this memory. Most candidates focused their response on briefly describing how the alternative study would be carried out and what data would be collected. Many did not include the other details required such as where the study would take place and who the participants would be. In addition, the candidates need to ensure the ‘what’ and ‘how’ for the procedure were very clear. For this particular study, the candidates needed to give details of the questions asked if this was relevant to their procedure.

A very small number of candidates evaluated their idea in this question, which was not required by this question, and which could not be credited.

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved marks in this question by providing some evaluative points. Most gave both methodological and ethical issues in their response.

Many discussed issues about the ethics of implanting a false memory in their study and were aware that this was possibly more unethical than the original Loftus and Pickrell study as a case study is more intensive. In addition, many discussed the possibility of bias in the study if family members were doing the questioning and/or observing the participant, issues about ecological validity and also the type of data collected. Most also contextualised their responses referring directly to their original idea and this has improved compared to previous sessions.

A few gave well developed points that achieved very high marks as they referred directly to their alternative idea. Some only briefly identified issues and needed to refer back to the context of their own study.

#### **Question 2**

- (a) The majority of candidates achieved some marks for their answer to this question. Many identified all of the ethical guidelines and could achieve a mark. Some then went onto explain that the guidelines are rules put in place that must be followed in psychological research and/or are there to protect the participants.
- (b) Many candidates received marks for this question by giving an ethical guideline that was broken in the Bandura study. Popular responses were to identify informed consent, right to withdraw, debrief and psychological harm. Some candidates contextualised their responses within the Bandura study. Some believed that informed consent was given by the parents or their teacher which is not mentioned in the core study. Stronger responses used the psychological harm issue and were able to describe in some detail how the children may have been harmed during the study.

- (c) The vast majority of candidates achieved some marks in this section. Most were able to describe an advantage and a disadvantage of attempting to meet ethical guidelines. Many appeared to find it difficult to put this into the context of the Bandura study and the error regarding consent from parents was carried forward from **Question 2(b)**. Common advantages included that meeting ethical guidelines ensures the participant is protected and it raises the status of psychology which could mean people will want to participate in psychological research in the future. For the disadvantages, most mentioned the problems with lack of ecological validity, demand characteristics and the difficulties that would be faced in researching certain topic areas such as aggression. Some candidates just gave a description of the ethical problems with the Bandura study and these candidates found it more difficult to access marks.
- (d) Many of the candidates answered appropriately for this question and were able to achieve high marks. Most candidates knew what was meant by reliability and some could give a description of why the Bandura study is reliable. Others confused this issue with validity and gave lengthy responses regarding the ecological and population validity of the study which was not creditworthy.

Common points included discussing the controls used in the study, the inter-rater reliability between the two observers and the attempt to match the children in terms of existing levels of aggression prior to the study. Some identified individual differences as an issue with the study lacking in reliability which was creditworthy.

## Section B

### Question 3

- (a) The vast majority of candidates achieved at least one mark for this question by stating that longitudinal studies take a long time. A very small minority went on to mention that they investigate the development of behaviour over time.
- (b) Candidates achieved at least one mark per study and many attempted to answer the question and wrote about the behaviour that was investigated in each study. Some just described the procedure and/or the results of the studies and did get some marks for this description. The study by Haney, Banks and Zimbardo produced the best answers and many were able to give detailed descriptions of the behaviours investigated of the guards and prisoners in the study. For the Freud study, most gave descriptions of the findings of the study but many mentioned that the Oedipus complex was investigated and that the focus was on the dreams, experiences and fantasies of little Hans. The Thigpen and Cleckley study produced the lowest marks for candidates. Most gave a detailed description of the personality of Eve White, Eve Black and Jane without focusing on the behaviours investigated. A few did mention the IQ test (a measure of intelligence) and also the EEG (a measure of brain activity) and memory test.
- (c) Many candidates identified at least two problems when psychologists use the longitudinal method. Common responses included bias, over-involvement of the researchers, cost and time and subject attrition. Candidates often used the evidence from part (b) to support their points.

### Question 4

- (a) There were many good responses to this question and many candidates achieved full marks by giving a clear and often quite detailed definition of the cognitive approach. Weaker responses that achieved one mark were often brief or a bit muddled. A few gave a definition of what is studied in psychology (i.e. human behaviour) without making it specific to the cognitive approach.
- (b) Some candidates' responses were weak for this question, often achieving three or four marks in total. Many could give general descriptions of some of the procedures of the studies but could not describe the cognitive processes investigated in each study. Some understood the requirements of the question very well and gave a focused response that achieved higher marks.
- (c) For this question, candidates needed to identify and discuss three problems psychologists have when they investigate cognitive processes with clear reference to a core study for each point. Many were able to describe one or two problems such as the fact that many cognitive approach studies are done in a lab and therefore lack ecological validity and a number of candidates discussed the ethical issues with the Held and Hein study.

# PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/31  
Specialist Choices

## Key messages

- Candidates should provide answers that equate to mark allocation, so an answer worth two marks should be short and an answer worth eight marks should be correspondingly longer.
- Candidates should note that this is a three-hour examination, it is expected that the amount of writing should be lengthy. A **Section B** essay (parts **(a)** and **(b)**) should take approximately 45–50 minutes and be at least 4 sides of paper in length.
- Candidates should read all parts of a question before beginning to answer to ensure that all parts of the question can be answered.
- Candidates should ensure that they know the difference between *describe* and *evaluate* for **Section B** questions and between *describe* and *suggest* for **Section C** questions.
- Candidates should look to quote psychological knowledge wherever possible. Anecdotal answers will not achieve top marks.
- Candidates should apply the methodological knowledge learned for Papers 1 and 2 (not just from what has been learned for Paper 3) to their **Section C** suggestions.
- Candidates should always seek to evaluate using psychological methods, approaches, issues and debates as appear in the syllabus rather than with general evaluation points.
- It is essential that each question is correctly labelled. It is beneficial to Examiners for candidates to arrange additional sheets of answer paper in the correct order and number each sheet, and for candidates to answer questions for each option in the correct order.

## General comments

### **Section A (all options)**

Candidates should write an amount appropriate to the marks allocated. If a description of two studies is needed for 4 marks, the allocation of marks is 2 + 2, whereas if a description of one study is required for 4 marks, then the same amount in total should be written as for the 2 + 2 format. Sometimes candidates wrote far too much for 2 marks.

### **Section B (all options)**

In question part **(a)** candidates should describe research studies. However, a common error was for candidates to incorrectly use the names of the authors of textbooks, rather than name the original author who conducted the research. For example, candidates will write ‘Roberts and Russell (2005) did a study on...’ and then repeat the same names (dates) for every study described. Candidates should refer to the author of the original study.

Some candidates evaluate in a very restricted way. For instance, they refer to usefulness and write that ‘the study by ‘X’ is useful; the study by ‘Y’ is useful’. To do this is to give an example which is creditworthy. However, when doing this there is no debate about the issue, an essential component. Another example is when a candidate writes ‘this study can be generalised’ and ‘this study can’t be generalised’. This again is giving examples but without debate. Candidates should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of making generalisations and giving examples to support those advantages and disadvantages. This is the strategy needed in order to gain top marks.

Some centres appear to have instructed candidates to use the same four evaluation issues whatever the question. This strategy is not recommended because it meant that candidates were writing about issues that just did not apply to the question. Taking this approach is likely to limit credit.

### **Section C (all options)**

In general answers did not always demonstrate sufficient methodological knowledge. This is evident in the ambiguous use of different methods, and in ambiguous comments about sampling and other aspects such as experimental design. Frequently candidates write ‘I will use a random sample of participants’ but need to include detail about how that sample will be gathered. Sometimes candidates write that their sample will include 50 males and 50 females and be balanced in terms of age range, etc. (describing the sample) but there will be no details about the sampling technique (i.e. how that sample will be gathered).

When a question instructs candidates to use a specific method, then that method must be used. Candidates often start with ‘I will conduct an experiment’ and write nothing further about the IV or DV or controls or apply a design (repeated measures, for example). These are essential features of an experiment and should be included. Candidates often use the term experiment incorrectly when they are conducting an observation or questionnaire. Candidates are also advised to focus on one method in detail rather than having several superficial sentences about a number of different methods. Candidates should always show their methodological knowledge because application of it scores most marks in this section.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### ***Psychology and education***

##### **Question 1**

- (a) Many candidates knew the term and explained it clearly, often using the work of Rogers (1951) as an example. Some candidates were not able to explain the term.
- (b) Many candidates described two applications in detail, such as open classrooms and co-operative learning, and scored full marks. Those candidates who did not know the term humanistic sometimes struggled to describe two applications, but there were candidates who knew two applications, even if they had not been able to provide a response in part (a).

##### **Question 2**

- (a) Answers to this question covered the entire mark range. Some candidates appeared not to know what is meant by a special educational need (SEN) and there were some weak answers as a result. Such answers tended to identify types but then either omit giftedness, or fail to consider either causes of SENs or strategies for educating children with an SEN. Better answers often covered the whole range of bullet points on the syllabus, organised their answers logically and had much more description in their answers.
- (b) Evaluative answers covered the whole range of marks with excellent answers showing thorough appropriate evaluation whilst at the other end of the mark range there were answers which had no evaluation at all. For the named issue of individual differences, candidates could have considered how individual differences creates problems for schools as each child may have specific and individual needs. However, realising there are individual differences can lead to the specific needs of each child being addressed.

##### **Question 3**

- (a) This question part required a description of creativity and for examples of how it could be measured. Whilst a few candidates divided their answer into three equal components (definition and two measures) and answered the question specifically, other candidates gave a vague but creditworthy definition of creativity but struggled to say how it could be measured. Guilford devised several tests to measure creativity: *quick responses*, a word association test; *remote consequences*, the suggestion of radical answers to unexpected events such as loss of gravity, and an *unusual uses* test which asks people to suggest unusual uses for everyday objects, such as a brick.

- (b) Candidates were given a free choice of method to investigate creativity in students studying different subjects. Most candidates chose to conduct a laboratory experiment and often compared arts with science students. Some candidates chose to use a questionnaire, and others an interview. Some answers included good methodological knowledge whilst others were quite basic. A few candidates suggested a range of methods writing nothing more than a sentence on each. One method in detail is the way to maximise marks.

#### Question 4

- (a) This question part required candidates to design and conduct an observational study of different types of verbal aggression. A few candidates decided to conduct an experiment and a few used a questionnaire. The named method must be used for the response to be creditable. Candidates using observation sometimes wrote about the type, response categories, number of observers, and other features of observations, but often these were incomplete and not always coherent. Candidates should know the main features of all methods and be able to apply them to a given situation.
- (b) Many candidates knew the difference between a corrective and a preventative strategy, and wrote answers which scored high marks, but there were those who did not know the difference and scored low marks. Preventative is what can be done to prevent any classroom behaviour from happening, in this instance physical aggression, and a corrective strategy is what is done following the happening of a physically aggressive behaviour.

#### **Psychology and health**

#### Question 5

- (a) Nearly all candidates scored some credit for providing a basic statement of what was meant by rational non-adherence, but only a few were able to provide enough elaboration to score full marks.
- (b) Some candidates gave detailed answers, understood the term and study and were awarded full marks. Other candidates explained rational non-adherence, but descriptions were very brief and only partial marks were awarded. The syllabus lists the Bulpitt (1988) study for this sub-topic as an example and so any other study of rational non-adherence was acceptable. Some candidates wrote about the Johnson and Bytheway study which could not be credited because this is concerned with 'customising treatment' and did not answer the question set.

#### Question 6

- (a) This question required candidates to describe what psychologists have found out about stress which produced answers at both extremes of the mark range. A number of candidates wrote excellent answers which covered a wide range of different aspects (such as from all three bullet points of the syllabus), showed accuracy, and were detailed with excellent understanding being evident. Some answers were too detailed. There were also answers where the range of information was limited, had important omissions or inaccuracies, or where the detail provided was brief.
- (b) Answers in response to this question followed the same pattern as for other part (b) answers. Some candidates write excellent evaluative answers. Other candidates have poor technique and either wrote only about the named issue or did not write about the named issue at all. In this instance those including the named issue often wrote poor answers. 'Questionnaires' (the named issue in this question) can appear in both the 'design a study' Section C and as an issue in Section B and this applies to both options. Knowledge about questionnaires should also be transferred from the AS component of the course.

#### Question 7

- (a) The question gave candidates a free choice of method, but one that would gather *qualitative* data. A few candidates interpreted qualitative as quantitative which could not be credited. Most candidates used a questionnaire, but often focussed on questions gathering quantitative data, often adding an open-ended question as the final question and nothing more. Candidates scoring high marks designed questionnaires with very few questions, all of which were open-ended, and the strongest answers mentioned how the data gathered could be categorised, using a number of judges, for example.

- (b) Candidates were required to describe one study for six marks, and the syllabus lists the non-verbal study by McKinstry and Wang on practitioner style of dress (clothes). Some candidates gave excellent descriptions of this study with ample detail and excellent understanding. Other candidates gave very brief responses and other candidates incorrectly described the McKinlay study on verbal communication. Questions in this part of Section C can ask for a description of one study (6 marks) or two studies (3 marks each) and so both types of answer should be part of examination revision plans.

### Question 8

- (a) This question required a field experiment to investigate whether rewards or punishments helped to reduce accidents. It was generally answered well by candidates and there were a few excellent answers. Strong responses included a range of methodological aspects (IV, DV, controls, etc.) and also included other important features, such as the sampling technique. A common omission was for candidates to write 'I would use an opportunity sample' but they needed to describe *how* the sample would actually be selected.
- (b) Top marks were awarded to those candidates who understood that rewards and punishments belong to the behaviourist approach who outline positive and negative reinforcement and positive and negative punishment. Answers including two (or more) of these strategies often scored very high marks. There were many anecdotal answers, with 'give praise' as a reward strategy and 'tell them off' as the punishment strategy which received limited credit.

### **Psychology and environment**

### Question 9

- (a) Candidates needed explain factors that make noise annoying. Quite a few candidates wrote nothing more than 'volume, unpredictability and perceived control' and although these are correct factors, more detail of the factors were required for full marks to be awarded.
- (b) All candidates were able to score some credit, despite some common sense answers. Some candidates went on to expand on the examples and scored full marks, whereas others did not.

### Question 10

- (a) Many candidates wrote excellent answers and had clearly worked very hard. Most candidates described a number of events and candidates scoring higher marks explained different methodologies (e.g. laboratory studies, simulations and accounts from survivors). These candidates often made the distinction between what psychologists do to (i) prevent events from happening, (ii) how they study the behaviour of people during events and (iii) how they can help afterwards, for those suffering from PTSD for example.
- (b) The named issue here was 'the usefulness of being prepared for an emergency event' which candidates should have considered as one of their three issues. Whilst many candidates provided full and thoughtful evaluation of usefulness, many candidates did not go beyond very basic comments such as the obvious 'it is an advantage because it is useful'. Other issues mentioned included evaluation of laboratory versus simulations, the types of data gathered (quantitative and qualitative) and one very strong response debated psychological realism pointing out that if a laboratory experiment creates psychological realism then although the ecological validity and mundane realism might be low, the realism created is very valuable and useful.

### Question 11

- (a) This question required candidates to design and conduct a field experiment to investigate seat design on trains. A few candidates wrote excellent answers using their subject knowledge to help their design. For example, Lundberg (1976) and Evans and Wener (2007) gathered physiological data from passengers on trains and some candidates suggested using the same techniques. This strategy is good, and encouraged. These candidates used the idea from other studies and incorporated it into their answer; they did not merely describe the studies, because description of other studies will not score marks.

- (b) Questions in this part of **Section C** can ask for a description of one study for 6 marks, as is the case here. For 6 marks, candidates should provide relatively detailed answers of around  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a side of answer paper. Answers which are no more than a few sentences are insufficient for this many marks. For this question, candidates could describe either the Karlin et al. study (1979) or the Langer and Saegert (1977) study. Most answers were quite brief and only a small number of candidates scored full marks.

### Question 12

- (a) This was an ‘open choice’ question and candidates could use any method they wished. Answers scoring top marks suggested conducting a field experiment with the IV being rural and urban communities. They would then have a person needing help with a DV of how many people helped or did not help from each community. A few candidates used knowledge from the Piliavin et al. study to inform their design.
- (b) Some candidates scored full marks for good descriptions. Candidates need to be able to distinguish between theory and study, but often two studies were described, typically those by Soderberg et al. (1994) and Amato (1983) when the question required a description of two theories. The syllabus lists three theories: adaptation level, behaviour constraint, and environmental stress and overload.

### **Psychology and abnormality**

### Question 13

- (a) Many candidates were able to provide a good explanation of the term ‘impulse control disorder’, with many listing its features or providing an example to elaborate beyond the basic.
- (b) This question required description of two impulse control disorders. The syllabus lists kleptomania, pyromania and compulsive gambling and most candidates successfully described two of these. Some candidates described other abnormalities such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and phobias, which could not be credited.

### Question 14

- (a) Most candidates scored high and top marks for their answers to this question on schizophrenia. Often a full range of different aspects from the syllabus was included, (i.e. all three bullet points) such as types, explanations and treatments. Many candidates had been very well prepared. Although the DSM-V no longer refers to ‘types’ of schizophrenia, credit was still awarded to candidates who described different types, as reference to this appears in the 2017 syllabus.
- (b) The named issue to include was the ‘nature-nurture’ debate which applies very clearly to this topic area. Many candidates realised this and made excellent points, although sometimes answers were limited to ‘this explanation is nature and this is nurture’ which is not sufficient evaluation for high marks. Other candidates did not include the named issue and there were some who do not evaluate, often continuing their descriptions from part (a).

### Question 15

- (a) This question required candidates to conduct an interview, and many candidates struggled to provide a good answer. Candidates should note that they can transfer their knowledge of questionnaires to interviews because of the similarities between the two. Briefly, interviews can be structured, unstructured or semi-structured. They can be face-to-face or conducted over a telephone. They can include closed or open-ended questions and there needs to be some way of scoring and analysing the responses of participants.
- (b) This question part asked for a description of the cognitive explanation of phobias, which was allocated three marks, and for one example supporting the explanation (allocated the remaining three marks). Although many candidates addressed both these components, and scored high marks, not all candidates did. It is important that candidates taking the abnormal option know what a cognitive explanation is.

### Question 16

- (a) This question part asked candidates to design and conduct an observational study collecting quantitative data from a person with OCD. Most candidates were able to answer this question appropriately, but a few candidates conducted an experiment, and a few used a questionnaire.

Successful candidates wrote about response categories in which observations of various behaviours could be recorded. The best answers applied their knowledge of OCD to help determine the categories. For example, one feature of OCD might be cleaning/washing behaviour, so to observe and record how many times and for how long the person washes in a given period of time answers the question perfectly.

- (b) This question part asked for one way in which information about OCD has been collected quantitatively, which was allocated three marks, and one way in which it has been collected qualitatively (allocated the remaining three marks). Many answers scored full marks. For many candidates, their answers consisted of a description of the MOCI (Maudsley Obsessive-Compulsive Inventory) and a description of the case study of 'Charles' by Rappaport (1989). Some candidates knew only one of these and a small minority could not answer the question.

### ***Psychology and organisations***

#### Question 17

- (a) This question led to a number of answers incorrectly focusing on leadership in general but 'contingency theory' needed to be addressed.
- (b) There were three types of answer for this question: those who could not answer the question; those who knew the basics and wrote no more than a few sentences, for limited credit, and those who wrote far too much, knowing the work of Fiedler in ample detail (and nearly always scoring full marks).

#### Question 18

- (a) This question on satisfaction at work was answered well by most candidates. Some answers were brief and basic, but these still received some credit. Better answers had more detail and covered a range of the bullet points of the syllabus. The strongest answers covered the syllabus bullet points, but were more detailed (1.5–2 sides and more of answer paper), were organised and showed very good understanding of the topic area. These candidates often distinguished between theory and ways to measure satisfaction/dissatisfaction showing good understanding.
- (b) Answers at the top end of the mark range applied a range of evaluation issues to what they had described in part (a), and some high marks were awarded. Some evaluations were rather weak, either because the named issue was not included, only the named method was included, advantages and disadvantages of issues were not considered or examples of studies were absent. The named issue was 'interviews' and better answers showed good understanding of the features involved when applying this method.

#### Question 19

- (a) For this question part candidates had to describe two personnel selection decision-making procedures/models. Most candidates answered correctly, describing two from a choice of three: multiple regression model, multiple cut-off model and the multiple hurdle model. Some candidates knew nothing more than a sentence about each, but were able to make some creditable points.
- (b) This question required the design of a questionnaire, and so answers should have included features specific to questionnaires such as questionnaire design (e.g. open or closed), examples of questions (that clearly test the preferred procedure/model), and how the answers will be scored. Some candidates did this very well and included many methodological features, whilst others had weak or no examples of questions or other aspects. Candidates should also include general methodological aspects such as the sample and how the sample will be selected, ethical considerations, and where the study will be conducted.

**Question 20**

- (a) A number of different methods were used by candidates to investigate need for achievement including observations, experiments and questionnaires. Stronger answers were from candidates using a questionnaire because answers from males and females could then be easily compared. Candidates scoring high marks gave examples of questions and often outlined the rating scale with many suggesting the use of a Likert-type scale. Answers like this show good application of what they have learned.
- (b) This question required description of a theory for 6 marks. For candidates who knew about McClelland they described his achievement-motivation theory (1961) which includes three work related needs: need for achievement, need for power and a need for affiliation. Candidates also mentioning his TAT (Thematic Apperception Test) were awarded credit for its inclusion in their answers.

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/32  
Specialist Choices

## Key messages

- Candidates should provide answers that equate to mark allocation, so an answer worth two marks should be short and an answer worth eight marks should be correspondingly longer.
- Candidates should note that this is a three-hour examination, it is expected that the amount of writing should be lengthy. A **Section B** essay (parts **(a)** and **(b)**) should take approximately 45–50 minutes and be at least 4 sides of paper in length.
- Candidates should read all parts of a question before beginning to answer to ensure that all parts of the question can be answered.
- Candidates should ensure that they know the difference between *describe* and *evaluate* for **Section B** questions and between *describe* and *suggest* for **Section C** questions.
- Candidates should look to quote psychological knowledge wherever possible. Anecdotal answers will not achieve top marks.
- Candidates should apply the methodological knowledge learned for Papers 1 and 2 (not just from what has been learned for Paper 3) to their **Section C** suggestions.
- Candidates should always seek to evaluate using psychological methods, approaches, issues and debates as appear in the syllabus rather than with general evaluation points.
- It is essential that each question is correctly labelled. It is beneficial to Examiners for candidates to arrange additional sheets of answer paper in the correct order and number each sheet, and for candidates to answer questions for each option in the correct order.

## General comments

### **Section A (all options)**

Candidates should write an amount appropriate to the marks allocated. If a description of two studies is needed for 4 marks, the allocation of marks is 2 + 2, whereas if a description of one study is required for 4 marks, then the same amount in total should be written as for the 2 + 2 format. Sometimes candidates wrote far too much for 2 marks.

### **Section B (all options)**

In question part **(a)** candidates should describe research studies. However, a common error was for candidates to incorrectly use the names of the authors of textbooks, rather than name the original author who conducted the research. For example, candidates will write ‘Roberts and Russell (2005) did a study on...’ and then repeat the same names (dates) for every study described. Candidates should refer to the author of the original study.

Some candidates evaluate in a very restricted way. For instance, they use issues such as usefulness and write that ‘the study by ‘X’ is useful; the study by ‘Y’ is useful’. To do this is to give an example which is creditworthy. However, when doing this there is no debate about the issue, an essential component. Another example is when a candidate writes ‘this study can be generalised’ and ‘this study can’t be generalised’. This again is giving examples but without debate. Candidates should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of making generalisations and giving examples to support those advantages and disadvantages. This is the strategy needed in order to gain top marks.

Some Centres appear to have instructed candidates to use the same four evaluation issues whatever the question. This strategy is not recommended because it meant that candidates were writing about issues that just did not apply to the question. This was most evident for the health promotion question when candidates were writing that one issue is ‘social desirability’, and another issue is ‘follow-up’. These are relevant points

to mention, but there are very limited advantages and disadvantages of these ‘issues’. If a follow-up is done, it is an advantage, if it isn’t, it is a disadvantage. This issue doesn’t lend itself to extensive debate, just a simple mention of the point, and was often in relation to only one study. Taking this approach is likely to limit credit.

### **Section C (all options)**

In general answers did not always demonstrate sufficient methodological knowledge. This is evident in the ambiguous use of different methods, and in ambiguous comments about sampling and other aspects such as experimental design. Frequently candidates write ‘I will use a random sample of participants’ but need to include detail about how that sample will be gathered. Sometimes candidates write that their sample will include 50 males and 50 females and be balanced in terms of age range, etc. (describing the sample) but there will be no details about the sampling technique (i.e. how that sample will be gathered).

When a question instructs candidates to use a specific method, then that method must be used. Candidates often start with ‘I will conduct an experiment’ and write nothing further about the IV or DV or controls or apply a design (repeated measures, for example). These are essential features of an experiment and should be included. Candidates often use the term experiment incorrectly when they are conducting an observation or questionnaire. Candidates are also advised to focus on one method in detail rather than having several superficial sentences about a number of different methods. Candidates should always show their methodological knowledge because application of it scores most marks in this section.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Psychology and education**

##### **Question 1**

- (a) Answers to this question were often vague with many candidates providing anecdotal answers. Evidence of psychological knowledge was needed for full marks. Strong answers often referred to the work of Brophy (1981) who suggested that praise is to command the worth of or to express approval or admiration.
- (b) Those candidates who wrote about the work of Brophy in part (a) often extended his work here because Brophy focused specifically on effective praise: it should be specific; it should be sincere, credible, and spontaneous. It should be to reward the attainment of clearly defined and understood performance criteria; it should provide information about the individual student’s competencies in recognition of noteworthy effort or success at a difficult task and it should attribute success to effort and ability. Candidates describing a number of these features often scored full marks. Alternatively candidates could focus on behaviourist principles emphasising praise as positive reinforcement.

##### **Question 2**

- (a) There were some superb answers with full marks being awarded for candidates who considered all three approaches, included appropriate examples and showed they understood the principles on which the approaches are based. A small number of candidates incorrectly wrote about teaching and learning styles. These are from a different topic area and if what was written about these styles wasn’t made explicitly relevant to perspectives then no marks could be awarded.
- (b) Answers in response to this question followed the same pattern as for other part (b) answers. Some candidates wrote excellent evaluative answers, following the ‘formula’ and even extending it. Other candidates wrote only about the named issue or did not write about the named issue. For the named issue of usefulness, many candidates could not progress beyond ‘this is useful/this is not useful’ often without giving a reason. Strong responses considered a range of issues and used examples from the different perspectives to support their advantages and disadvantages.

### Question 3

- (a) This question part asked candidates how children with learning difficulties or disabilities could be educated. Appropriate answers included *segregation* where children can be educated in specialist units or *integration* whereby children are educated in mainstream schools in exactly the same way as children who are not disabled or have no difficulty. Candidates knowing the latter two types often scored good marks, but sometimes failed to score top marks because of a lack of detail in their answers. A few candidates incorrectly wrote about gifted children (and accelerated learning) which could not be credited.
- (b) There was no named method so candidates were free to choose. Most candidates chose to apply a questionnaire but often failed to include methodological aspects of questionnaires, such as whether it is open or closed or how the answers would be scored. A few candidates applied a range of different methods, but often wrote nothing more than a sentence about each and needed to provide more detail. Again, some candidates incorrectly focussed on giftedness, which could not be credited.

### Question 4

- (a) The question required candidates to design a study which correlated data. Very few candidates could do this successfully, showing a weak knowledge of correlation. To correlate, the data gathered needs to be quantitative and for each variable use a scale on a range appropriate to the variable (in this instance IQ and emotional intelligence). Qualitative data could not be used and data put into categories, such as 'high', 'medium' and 'low' emotional intelligence could not be correlated either.
- (b) This question part was very well answered by most candidates. Those in the middle of the mark range outlined Sternberg's three basic types (analytical, practical and creative intelligence) but often with little elaboration. Those candidates at the top of the mark range added appropriate elaboration to the basic types and often went on to mention the resulting seven types of analytical creator, analytical practitioner, creative practitioner, etc.

### Psychology and health

#### Question 5

- (a) Most candidates were able to score limited credit for providing a simple statement of what was meant by verbal communication, such as 'the use of words'. The better responses focussed their answer to the question, usually by stating 'when the patient is explaining their symptoms to the practitioner', or 'when the practitioner is giving the diagnosis to the patient'. Some candidates incorrectly wrote about *non-verbal* communication.
- (b) This question part required candidates to describe two studies investigating *verbal* communication. Correct answers included the descriptions of the Ley study (1988 and later variations) and the McKinlay (1975) study, the latter focusing on the understanding of terms used by women who were pregnant. A few candidates only described one study for limited credit. Some candidates described the *non-verbal* McKinstry and Wang study which could not be credited.

#### Question 6

- (a) This question asked candidates to describe what psychologists have found out about health promotion. There were many excellent answers which were well organised, covered a wide range of relevant studies and where understanding of what was written was evident. A number of candidates did not write about health promotion, instead focussing on how ill-health could be prevented, mentioning primary, secondary and tertiary prevention for example, and a few candidates wrote anecdotal answers.

- (b) The named issue for this question was ethics, and candidates scoring high marks considered various ethical issues, such as the psychological harm that fear arousal techniques may have, with the Janis and Feshbach study being used in support. Such answers would then consider alternative techniques, such as providing information, which does not arouse fear at all and is therefore ethical. These candidates considered a range of other issues, such as the generalisability of studies and the use of children as participants. Weaker responses provided general comments which often showed a lack of psychological knowledge.

### Question 7

- (a) This question required candidates to use observation to investigate pain in males and females. Strong responses often wrote about their study being a covert, naturalistic, non-participant observation that would gather structured data in response categories. The use of appropriate terminology will always achieve marks. Many candidates did not conduct an observation, instead proposing the use of questionnaires, interviews and specific measures of pain. Answers need to address the named method to be creditable.
- (b) Although a few candidates scored full marks, many candidates could not provide any creditable response. One of the most common ways to assess pain behaviour in a clinical setting is the UAB Pain Behaviour Scale outlined by Richards et al. (1982). This is for use by nurses (for example) who observe people who are in hospital for a week or more. Nurses observe each patient daily and rate each of 10 behaviours such as mobility, down-time, and others on a 3 point scale scoring 0/0.5/1 for each. Ratings are totalled so pain behaviour over a period can be recorded.

### Question 8

- (a) Candidates were required to design a study using a correlation, but most answers did not address correlation and so scored very limited marks. Many answers stated 'I will conduct a study using a correlation' but then did not mention correlation again. Candidates should be familiar with the term correlation; it is used in many core studies, including Baron-Cohen et al. and Dement and Kleitman. Some candidates chose to use a questionnaire, which would provide quantitative data which could be correlated, but then had two age categories (18–24 and 50–60) as an IV which could not be correlated. Some candidates suggested gathering qualitative data, but this type of data cannot be correlated. Only a few candidates suggested correlating actual age with score on a questionnaire which was appropriate.
- (b) Most candidates were able to describe two studies in response to this question part. Most common was the aeroplane crash said to be caused by cognitive overload and reported by Barber (1988). Also featured were studies involving accidents and age, transient states and the accident-prone personality. Other studies mentioned by candidates included those by Furnham (1999) on extraverts, and that by Magnavita (1997) on type A personality. A few candidates wrote about the sinking of the titanic which could not be credited, as illusion of invulnerability was restricted by the question.

### Psychology and environment

### Question 9

- (a) Most candidates scored full marks for this question part. Nearly all candidates were able to explain that a catastrophe was 'man-made' rather than being 'natural'.
- (b) Most candidates could give two examples and many scored all the available marks. Some candidates gave a vague outline (or identified an event, such as 'three mile island') rather than a description, and others gave examples of natural disasters.

### Question 10

- (a) Many candidates incorrectly wrote about crowds (and collective behaviour) which could not be credited. Types of *crowd* and *crowd behaviour* is very different from the unpleasant psychological experience of *crowding* which often results from high social density.
- (b) The named issue here was the usefulness of animals in psychological research and many candidates provided full and thoughtful evaluations using the range of studies mentioned in part (a) to support their advantages and disadvantages, such as the studies by Calhoun and Christian et al. Some candidates considered methods as an issue and contrasted laboratory and field experiments and others chose to debate ethics. One misunderstanding is the Christian et al. study on deer. This was not a field experiment; the deer were put on the island with good intention as a safe place for them to live. It was only forty years later that Christian et al. reported on the events realising that the deer died of crowding.

### Question 11

- (a) This question was generally answered well by most candidates and there were a few excellent answers. The strongest answers identified the type of territory, described it and then gave a supporting example. However, a number of candidates confused territory with personal space. For example, primary territory was confused with Hall's intimate personal space zone which could not be credited.
- (b) Again, some candidates confused territory with personal space and wrote answers based on the invasion of personal space which could be credited. Some candidates did not design and conduct a questionnaire as the question required, often suggesting having people place a territorial marker and observe whether people respected the marker or not. Candidates must apply the named method that appears in the question.

### Question 12

- (a) This question required candidates to conduct a field experiment. Most candidates provided appropriate answers, but some candidates did not mention IV, DV or controls, and at this level these aspects should always be a fundamental component of any experiment. Many candidates used appropriate terminology and often suggested creative designs.
- (b) There were many superb answers written in response to this question with many candidates scoring full marks as they described an appropriate study in ample detail. Most common was the study by Jacobs and Limman (1991) on squirrels and also popular were the studies by Walcott. Some candidates confused two different studies by Walcott. In one he drugged pigeons before releasing them to fly home, and in a different study he tested magnetite by placing a Helmholtz coil on the head of pigeons' which disrupted any magnetic affect that may be present.

### Psychology and abnormality

### Question 13

- (a) Some candidates knew the term, provided very good explanations and scored full marks. Many candidates guessed at the term. Failure to function adequately appears on the syllabus under definitions of abnormality so it is important that candidates know what the term means (and to be able to give examples of it).
- (b) To score marks in this question part candidates were required to give two examples of failing to function that shows abnormality. Some candidates responded 'not going to work', for example, but the reason for this may not be an abnormality. Some candidates were able to provide full answers that showed understanding, for example, 'people with agoraphobia may not have been outside their home for many months, and as a result they cannot function adequately such as not being able to work, to socialise or even to go out to get food'.

#### Question 14

- (a) Many candidates scored high and top marks for their answers to this question on phobias. Often a full range of different aspects from the syllabus was included such as: types (e.g. agoraphobia), explanations (behavioural, psychodynamic and cognitive) followed with descriptions of various treatments such as systematic desensitisation. Answers were often detailed and impressive with the depth of knowledge and understanding shown. Some candidates incorrectly described prescribing drugs (such as anti-depressants) or electro-convulsive therapy (ECT) which would not be used to treat a phobia.
- (b) Evaluation for this question followed the same types of answer seen in other evaluation questions. Marks are maximised by considering three (or more) issues, one of which must be the named issue. In relation to the named issue of the psychodynamic/psychoanalytic approach, some candidates did not know what this was, whilst others provided a full and thorough debate of the strengths and weaknesses of it, and used examples of little Hans in support. Many candidates considered ‘usefulness’ as an issue, which led to limited evaluation, it is recommended that candidates select the most appropriate issues and debates for the topic.

#### Question 15

- (a) Candidates were able to describe the genetic explanation of schizophrenia and many scored the full 3 marks for the first required explanation. Some candidates wrote just as well (and scored another 3/3 marks) for the cognitive explanation, the work by Frith (1992) featuring, but some candidates struggled to write more than a basic, one sentence response here, which reduced their overall mark.
- (b) Many candidates provided confused responses for this question, providing methodologically inappropriate suggestions.

#### Question 16

- (a) This question asked candidates to describe cognitive restructuring. Nearly all candidates began with a description of Beck’s theory, which was logical, but many ended with a brief sentence about restructuring. Some candidates muddled the work of Beck with Ellis and wrote about rational emotive therapy. Whilst there are similarities, there are also differences between these two approaches. Answers covered the entire mark range.
- (b) This question part required candidates to consider the long-term effectiveness of restructuring and this would logically involve a longitudinal study. Some candidates did this and wrote excellent answers. Others made appropriate suggestions but did not clearly identify their suggestion as a longitudinal study. A few candidates provided very brief responses, for instance stating that ‘I would then invite the patient/client back after several weeks and ask them whether the restructuring had worked’, for limited credit.

#### Psychology and organisations

#### Question 17

- (a) Those candidates who provided some elaboration, such as a quote or an example, scored full marks, but some candidates wrote very brief, common sense responses.
- (b) A small number of candidates were not able to describe Alderfer’s ERG theory, and some appeared to guess. Other candidates knew what E, R and G stood for (existence, relatedness and growth) but could not elaborate. Candidates scoring full marks described all three and often stated how each linked to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

### Question 18

- (a) Candidates were required to describe what psychologists have learned about organisational work conditions. Many answers considered a range of different aspects, but many were very anecdotal with nothing more than 'the temperature needs to be not too hot and not too cold' and the same general comment was applied to noise, lighting, etc. The quoting of names (dates) is highly desirable to show evidence of the research studied. Often candidates only considered physical and psychological conditions, with the ergonomics bullet point of the syllabus featuring much less frequently.
- (b) Answers covered the entire mark range. There were some very strong answers achieving full marks. Some responses were limited to brief statements such as 'organisational work conditions have high ecological validity' and 'studying organisational work conditions is useful'. Some responses about the named issue of individual differences were also limited to brief statements such as 'there will be individual differences in preference for temperature, lighting, noise...'

### Question 19

- (a) Candidates were required to describe a theory of group development. The theory proposed by Tuckman (1965) was most popular and often candidates scoring full marks added 'adjourning' to the four basic stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing.
- (b) This question left the choice of method to the candidate and a wide range of methods were applied, some more successfully than others. Observing group members was a common theme, but the methodological details were not always included. Candidates should always include features specific to the method. For observations, inclusion of the type (controlled, natural, participant, etc.), coding/response categories and sampling type (event, time, etc.) and whether or not there are two or more observers are essential features. General features can also be included that relate to the sample, the sampling technique, ethics, etc.

### Question 20

- (a) This question required the design of a questionnaire, and so answers needed to include features specific to questionnaires such as questionnaire design (e.g. open or closed), examples of questions (that clearly test worker commitments), and how the answers will be scored. Some candidates did this very well, whilst others had weak or no examples. A suggestion should also include general methodological aspects such as the sample and how the sample will be selected, ethical considerations, and where the study will be conducted.
- (b) Many candidates were able to describe clearly what was meant by both absenteeism and sabotage. For absenteeism, a distinction was often made between voluntary and involuntary with some candidates relating it to job dissatisfaction. For sabotage, candidates often referred to attempts to assert control and attempts to ease the work process. Weaker answers often progressed no further than 'absenteeism is being absent from work.'

# PSYCHOLOGY

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Paper 9698/33  
Specialist Choices

## Key messages

- Candidates should provide answers that equate to mark allocation, so an answer worth two marks should be short and an answer worth eight marks should be correspondingly longer.
- Candidates should note that this is a three-hour examination, it is expected that the amount of writing should be lengthy. A **Section B** essay (parts **(a)** and **(b)**) should take approximately 45–50 minutes and be at least 4 sides of paper in length.
- Candidates should read all parts of a question before beginning to answer to ensure that all parts of the question can be answered.
- Candidates should ensure that they know the difference between *describe* and *evaluate* for **Section B** questions and between *describe* and *suggest* for **Section C** questions.
- Candidates should look to quote psychological knowledge wherever possible. Anecdotal answers will not achieve top marks.
- Candidates should apply the methodological knowledge learned for Papers 1 and 2 (not just from what has been learned for Paper 3) to their **Section C** suggestions.
- Candidates should always seek to evaluate using psychological methods, approaches, issues and debates as appear in the syllabus rather than with general evaluation points.
- It is essential that each question is correctly labelled. It is beneficial to Examiners for candidates to arrange additional sheets of answer paper in the correct order and number each sheet, and for candidates to answer questions for each option in the correct order.

## General comments

### **Section A (all options)**

Candidates should write an amount appropriate to the marks allocated. If a description of two studies is needed for 4 marks, the allocation of marks is 2 + 2, whereas if a description of one study is required for 4 marks, then the same amount in total should be written as for the 2 + 2 format. Sometimes candidates wrote far too much for 2 marks.

### **Section B (all options)**

In question part **(a)** candidates should describe research studies. However, a common error was for candidates to incorrectly use the names of the authors of textbooks, rather than name the original author who conducted the research. For example, candidates will write ‘Roberts and Russell (2005) did a study on...’ and then repeat the same names (dates) for every study described. Candidates should refer to the author of the original study.

Some candidates evaluate in a very restricted way. For instance, they use issues such as usefulness and write that ‘the study by ‘X’ is useful; the study by ‘Y’ is useful’. To do this is to give an example which is creditworthy. However, when doing this there is no debate about the issue, an essential component. Another example is when a candidate writes ‘this study can be generalised’ and ‘this study can’t be generalised’. This again is giving examples but without debate. Candidates should focus on the advantages and disadvantages of making generalisations and giving examples to support those advantages and disadvantages. This is the strategy needed in order to gain top marks.

Some Centres appear to have instructed candidates to use the same four evaluation issues whatever the question. This strategy is not recommended because it meant that candidates were writing about issues that just did not apply to the question. Taking this approach is likely to limit credit.

### **Section C (all options)**

In general answers did not always demonstrate sufficient methodological knowledge. This is evident in the ambiguous use of different methods, and in ambiguous comments about sampling and other aspects such as experimental design. Frequently candidates write 'I will use a random sample of participants' but need to include detail about how that sample will be gathered. Sometimes candidates write that their sample will include 50 males and 50 females and be balanced in terms of age range, etc. (describing the sample) but there will be no details about the sampling technique (i.e. how that sample will be gathered).

When a question instructs candidates to use a specific method, then that method must be used. Candidates often start with 'I will conduct an experiment' and write nothing further about the IV or DV or controls or apply a design (repeated measures, for example). These are essential features of an experiment and should be included. Candidates often use the term experiment incorrectly when they are conducting an observation or questionnaire. Candidates are also advised to focus on one method in detail rather than having several superficial sentences about a number of different methods. Candidates should always show their methodological knowledge because application of it scores most marks in this section.

### **Comments on specific questions**

#### **Psychology and education**

There were too few responses to write a meaningful report for this option.

#### **Psychology and health**

##### **Question 5**

- (a) Nearly all candidates were able to provide a basic statement of what was meant by a 'self-report' measure of pain, and most of these candidates gained full credit by elaborating, or by writing about the application of a questionnaire, such as the MPQ, which the patient fills out.
- (b) Some candidates wrote about an observational technique, such as the UAB, and scored good marks, whereas others knew a little and scored partial marks. The UAB (University of Alabama at Birmingham) Pain Behaviour Scale outlined by Richards et al. (1982) is for use by nurses (for example) who observe people who are in hospital for a week or more. Nurses observe each patient daily and rate each of 10 behaviours such as mobility, down-time, and others on a 3 point scale scoring 0/.5/1 for each. Ratings are totalled so pain behaviour over a period can be recorded.

##### **Question 6**

- (a) This question produced answers at both extremes of the mark range. There were some excellent answers which covered a wide range of different aspects (such as from all three bullet-points of the syllabus), showed accuracy, and were detailed with excellent understanding being evident. Some answers were too detailed. There were also weaker answers where the range of information was limited (only mentioned the causes of accidents), had important omissions or inaccuracies (e.g. muddled theory A and theory B), or where the detail provided was brief.
- (b) The named issue here was 'the usefulness of what has been found' which candidates should have considered as one of their three issues. Whilst many candidates did not go beyond very basic comments such as the obvious 'it is an advantage because it is useful' many candidates provided full and thoughtful evaluation of usefulness. For example, one candidate wrote 'it is useful to know that some people have the illusion of invulnerability because then we should not employ them in jobs that might put the public at risk. Knowing this might have meant the titanic would not have sunk with a different captain in charge'. Other issues mentioned included the debate about generalisations, and a few candidates considered determinism.

### Question 7

- (a) The question on patient disclosure of information gave candidates a free choice of method. Candidates scoring high marks often designed questionnaires and in most cases answers included features specific to questionnaires such as questionnaire design (e.g. open or closed), examples of questions (that clearly tested patient disclosure), and how the answers will be scored. Some candidates did this very well and included many methodological features, whilst others had weak or no examples of questions or other aspects. Any answer should also include general methodological aspects such as the sample and how the sample will be selected, ethical considerations, and where the study will be conducted. One strong answer compared data gathered by interview with that gathered by online/computer as this would most closely replicate the Robinson and West study.
- (b) Candidates were required to describe one study for six marks. The syllabus lists the study by Robinson and West (1992) as an example, and any other study of disclosure was acceptable. This question required a description of one study for six marks. A number of answers were quite brief. Although this often earned candidates three marks, answers needed to be more detailed to gain higher marks.

### Question 8

- (a) This question, asking for an experiment, meant that candidates had a little flexibility in that they could choose where to conduct their suggested study on adherence. The question was generally answered well by candidates and there were a few excellent answers. The strongest answers included a range of methodological aspects (IV, DV, controls, etc.) and also included other important features, such as the sampling technique. One common omission was for candidates to write 'I would use an opportunity sample' but description was needed of how the sample would actually be selected. Strong answers also clearly stated the IV and DV, with an IV of 'instructions to take medicine' and 'no instructions' and a DV of whether the medicine had been taken or not. Sometimes the DV was a simple 'have you taken your medicine' but some better responses suggested using an objective measure such as pill count, or through a sample test.
- (b) This question part required description of two studies for six marks, and so the description of each study could be relatively short. All candidates could identify at least one appropriate study and most could give a brief description of what that study was about. Some candidates then wrote nothing more, for limited credit, whereas others were able to include more detail.

### Psychology and environment

There were too few responses to write a meaningful report for this option.

### Psychology and abnormality

#### Question 13

- (a) This question asked about the term 'blood phobia'. Nearly all candidates had little difficulty in providing a very good explanation of the term, and most scoring full marks, with many correctly identifying features of a phobia and some explaining that blood and injection phobias had many similarities.
- (b) Whilst most candidates described applied tension successfully and in detail, scoring full marks, a few answers were lacking in detail. A small number of candidates confused applied tension with systematic desensitisation. For blood phobia, blood pressure *drops* sharply at the sight of blood, often leading the person to faint (pass out). The way to counter the drop in blood pressure is to *raise* blood pressure rather than (for most phobias) relaxing to *lower* blood pressure. Ost et al. (1989) outline the technique of applied tension as involving tensing the muscles in the arms, legs and body for about 10–15 seconds, relaxing for 20–30 seconds and then repeating both these five times.

#### Question 14

- (a) Most candidates scored high and top marks for their answers to this question on abnormal affect. Often a full range of different aspects from the syllabus was included, (i.e. all three bullet points) such as types, explanations and treatments. Many candidates were very well prepared. A small number of candidates appeared to be unfamiliar with the term abnormal affect, writing about abnormality in general rather than about mood disorder involving mania, depression or both.
- (b) The named issue to include was ‘reductionism’ which applies very clearly to this topic area. Many candidates made excellent points, however, there was often the view that reductionism is only negative, for example, ‘the problem with Beck’s theory is that it is reductionist because it only looks at cognitive aspects’. Reductionism isn’t all negative. The scientific method is reductionist in that it isolates an IV and controls all other variables allowing just one factor to be tested at a time. Indeed holism also has problems in that although different factors interact, it is very difficult, maybe impossible, to study all of them at the same time. Reductionism allows Beck (for example) to focus in detail on one aspect. Debating issues like this, in addition to the other issues in the answer, is likely to result in a stronger answer than a list of advantages and disadvantages.

#### Question 15

- (a) This question part asked for a description of the deviation from statistical norms explanation of abnormality, which was allocated three marks, and deviation from social norms explanation (allocated the remaining three marks). Although many candidates addressed both these components, and scored high marks, not all candidates did. Most candidates could provide an outline sentence, some could elaborate and some could provide an example.
- (b) Most candidates scored good marks by suggesting they use either an interview or questionnaire to gather data. Sometimes methodology was good but at times it was lacking. If candidates choose to use a questionnaire for example, they should include question type (open ended, closed, etc.), answer format (yes/no, rating scale, etc.) and scoring (meanings of points scored). A few questions to ask participants is insufficient. In relation to participants, frequently candidates wrote ‘I will use a random sample of participants’ but needed to address how that sample will be gathered. This is important because to select a random sample of the general public is a very difficult thing to do. It is possible that candidates are confusing the term random, which means that everyone in the target population has an equal chance of being selected.

#### Question 16

- (a) This question part asked candidates to design and conduct a case study to investigate the features and causes of a person with OCD. A few candidates referred to conducting ‘an experiment’ when they appeared to mean ‘a study’ as there was no reference to any IV or DV. The named method must be used in order for the response to be creditable, and the features of it included. Many candidates referred to ‘one person/unit’, ‘data gathered being in-depth’ and many mentioned that it needed to be conducted over time, which would be appropriate in this instance (although not all case studies are conducted over time). Better answers suggested conducting an observation to gather the information about the features of the OCD and others suggested conducting an interview to assess the possible causes. Overall there were some very interesting answers with good knowledge of OCD evident.
- (b) This question asked for a description of one case study of OCD and all candidates chose to describe the case of ‘Charles’ by Rappaport (1989). Answers were often detailed and often maximum marks were awarded, other answers were limited by lack of detail.

#### Psychology and organisations

There were too few responses to write a meaningful report for this option.