

A Level Psychology

Summer 2023 Feedback for Paper 1





Getting to know you poll

Agenda

Overview of Paper 1, general points to consider.

Short and questions

- Short answer evaluative questions
- Short answer improvement question linked to the practical
- A short answer question with scenario

Extended response questions

- Evaluate as a command word
- Discuss as a command word

General Points to Consider



Performance – What Went Well

- Timing – low proportion on non-attempts
- Mathematical skills – greater proportion of full marks given for statistical calculations
- Understanding of the taxonomy of short answer questions – many able to meet the demands of questions more consistently
- Improved understanding of the command word ‘Discuss’ – understanding that A01/A02 skills were required for this command word
- Logical chains of reasoning for extended response command words, such as evaluate – there was an improvement in demonstrating A03 linked to the A01 content within the essays.

Performance – Even Better If...

- Depth of knowledge and understanding
- Understanding 'explain' in short answer questions
- Extended response command words need equal development of both skills
- A02 skills – making sure responses are not generic
- Making sure responses are answered in the space provided

Short Answer Questions



Q1c

Response A

(c) Explain **one** weakness of the study by Sherif et al. (1954/1961) in terms of reliability.

(2)

one weakness of sherif study is that he gained qualitative data through tape recordings + observations such as 'ladies first'. qualitative data requires interpretation which leaves it open to bias. this reduces the reliability of data gained about if prejudice can be caused due to formation of social groups + competition as it may not be analysed consistently.

(Total for Question 1 = 6 marks)

✖ (c) Explain **one** weakness of the study by Sherif et al. (1954/1961) in terms of reliability.

(2)

One weakness of Sherif et al is that it lacks reliability as it does not have a standardised procedure. Even though there were various experimentally induced situations the boys were placed in e.g. a tug of war and firing the water tank, they didn't have a set itinerary they followed and throughout the day were able to do as they please, this makes it hard to replicate the study to check for consistency in the findings that subordinate goals reduce prejudice.

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Response B

Q1c

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Response B

Q4b Response A

(b) Explain **two** strengths of your cognitive psychology practical investigation.

(4)

We used

1 Standardised procedure of showing each word for 5 seconds with a 2 second slide change interval. This increased reliability as we can repeat this experiment to check consistency on deep and shallow word processing affecting memory recall.

2 The practical was high in controls like completing the practical in silence and placing students the same distance away from the screen. This ^{increases} ~~means~~ validity as it reduces the effects of extraneous variables like talking as a distraction, so we have a true measure of ^{if} deep and shallow processing affects memory recall.

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Q4b Response B

(b) Explain **two** strengths of your cognitive psychology practical investigation.

(4)

1. A strength is that it was conducted in a quiet room where each individual was tested alone. This reduced distractions and any extraneous variables that may have affected ~~the~~ our findings. This improved the validity of our results and therefore supports the significance of the outcome.
2. Another strength would be that we eliminated any participants with ~~large~~ psychological knowledge. This allowed the prevention of demand characteristics affecting the findings of our practical. This therefore allowed our results to be valid and reliable.

Q4b Response B

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Q4c

(c) Explain **one** improvement you could have made to your cognitive psychology practical investigation.

(2)

One improvement would be to change the experimental design from repeated measures to independent measures. For example, a group would take part in the acoustically similar condition and a different group would take part in the acoustically dissimilar condition. This would reduce the impact of order effects on the participants recall of words.

Response A

(c) Explain **one** improvement you could have made to your cognitive psychology practical investigation.

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one improvement we could make to our psychology practical would be to carry it out with non-psychology students instead of psychology students who ~~would have been~~ were familiar with our procedure because they had learnt about ^{= the study we replicated part of} Baddeley. This would reduce the effect of demand characteristics as non-psychology students wouldn't be familiar with the aim of the study. This will make our results a more ~~valid~~ valid representation of their short term memory recall.
(Total for Question 4 = 8 marks)

Response B

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Response A

Response B

Q10

10 Marigold is a teacher at a primary school. She is concerned about the behaviour of a nine-year-old boy in her class. The boy often refuses to sit on a chair at his desk, instead he sits on the floor next to Marigold. When he is asked to sit at his desk, he leaves the classroom and sits in the corridor.

Marigold decides to use behaviour shaping. She hopes to encourage him to first sit on a chair next to her, and then eventually shape his behaviour until he sits on a chair at his desk.

Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of Marigold using behaviour shaping to encourage the boy to sit on a chair at his desk.

Strength

A strength of Marigold using behaviour shaping is that ~~the~~ it doesn't happen abruptly. The boy will not be forced to sit on a chair away from Marigold, rather taking small steps which slowly change his behaviour and ease him into sitting away from Marigold, building a rapport and being an ethical way to change his behaviour.

Weakness

A weakness of using behaviour shaping is that it is time consuming. Marigold may not have the time to ~~too~~ sit with the boy and slowly work with him until he is confident to move away as she has a whole class to look after. The boy may not listen the first time taking multiple sessions which may be difficult for Marigold.

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Strength

One strength of behaviour shaping is that the procedure is progressive in stages agreed by both ^{Marigold and the boy} ~~parties~~ so that the behaviour can be worked on in easy small steps as opposed to asking for ~~the~~ the final goal immediately from the boy of sitting on the chair at the desk. It allows for small levels of accomplishment and encouragement at each stage.

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Extended Response Questions



Q3

3 Evaluate agency theory as an explanation of obedience.

(8)

Milgram's Agency theory comes from his study. He aimed to understand why good people did bad things.

Milgram claimed that people have 2 states of mind. ~~Autonomous~~ ^{Agentic}, where you act out someone else's command. And ~~Agentic~~ ^{Autonomous} state, where you act on your own free will. This is hard to prove as we cannot actually see into people's minds, so cannot be sure of what they are thinking.

Milgram also told us that as people transition from ~~Agentic~~ ^{Agentic} to ~~Autonomous~~ ^{Autonomous} state, they experience moral strain. This can be shown in Milgram's experiment as the teachers were laughing, getting agitated, sweating. However, Milgram also noticed a momentum of compliance. That if the teacher did small tasks first, they felt compelled to keep going. Hence why 100% of people went to 300 Volts.

However, Agency ignores why some people obey authority figures and some don't. One explanation is an internal or external locus of control. If someone is easily influenced they have an external locus of control. Meaning Agency theory cannot explain individual differences.

Socialisation also impacts a way a person views obedience. If a person is brought up not to respect their elders or obey teachers then they will have a ~~low obedience~~ tendency to not obey authority figures.

Milgram also found that displacing the responsibility of giving the shocks to the learner made people more comfortable with doing it. This happens in the agentic state. People were more likely to shock the learner if they knew the experimenter was taking responsibility. This means that people will ~~do not take responsibility of their actions.~~ ~~do not take responsibility of their actions.~~ ~~do not take responsibility of their actions.~~

High levels of authority make moral strain occur sooner. The person feels bad so is more likely to continue.

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On high levels of empathy make moral strain occur sooner. The person feels bad so is more if too continue.

Q3

3 Evaluate agency theory as an explanation of obedience. SPARR

(8)

Agency theory states that

Society is hierarchal and we have evolved to uphold and obey that hierarchy. Agency theory states that there are 2 main states from which we operate in. The autonomous state which is when an individual acts according to their own judgement and holds responsibility for their own actions. When ~~ordered~~ ^{ordered} by an authority figure we go through an agentic shift and enter the agentic state where we mindlessly carry out orders given out by the authority figure and hold them responsible for our actions. Individuals are said to experience moral strain, ^{which is feelings of anxiety and distress} when carrying out tasks as it goes against their moral grounds. ^{Through the socialisation} ~~We have been so~~ process we have been taught to obey authority figures from a young age such as teachers or parents. Support for this theory comes from Milgram '63 where 65% of the participants obeyed the authority figure and increased voltage upto ~~450~~ 450v and some participants were even seen to be showing signs of moral strain such as sweating and anxiety and hesitation when verbally prodded to carry out the task thus strengthening theory. However, Milgram's experiment was a lab experiment ^{meaning} ~~meaning~~ if was carried out in an artificial setting and the tasks asked to ^{be} carried out by participants were unnatural to them thus reducing ecological validity of the study.

weakening the theory. An alternative theory that better explains obedience could be social impact theory which looks at multiple different factors such as strength, immediacy and number of sources as causes for obedience rather than alternating between two states thus weakening theory.

Agency theory ^{can} ~~has~~ explain real world phenomena such as the Holocaust where Nazi soldiers ^{committed} ~~mindlessly~~ mass genocide ~~carried out~~ of Jewish people and mindlessly carried out Hitler's orders as they may have been in the agentic state and gave up their responsibility of actions up to him thus ^{supporting} ~~strengthening~~ the theory.

However, the theory is also reductionist as it attempts to explain obedience ~~in~~ with two states and ignores dispositional factors such as authoritarianism ^{that could play a role in obedience levels} personality and culture, thus weakening theory.

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Q5

5 Milo and Betty had watched a film together and were talking to their friends about the film. Milo described a scene where the main character had travelled by train to a big city where there were yellow taxis and really tall buildings. Betty said that the taxis were black, not yellow.

Betty also described how the main character had arrived at a train station but said it was in a town. She said that the main character had a large suitcase, but Milo claimed there was no suitcase, just a bag. Betty disagreed with Milo, she said because the main character was staying in the town for several weeks, it must have been a suitcase.

Discuss, using reconstructive memory (Bartlett, 1932), including schema theory, Milo's and Betty's recall of the film.

(8)

Reconstructive memory is the idea that memories are not exact copies of what was encoded or stored but are affected by prior knowledge and experiences in the form of schemas. Schemas are cognitive plans or scripts which are built up from prior experiences and knowledge. They affect how memory information is stored. Confabulation is the idea of filling in memory gaps with prior knowledge and schema. For example in Loftus and Palmer participants heard the word 'smashed' and automatically filled in the gap and said the car was going at much higher speed than it was. Rationalisation is the concept of making something make sense with the use of prior knowledge or experiences. For example, in Bartlett's war of ghosts story participants said "they died at sunset" this is because this made sense to them however the actual word was "sunrise".

Milo and Betty are showing clear signs of this after recalling a film they watched together to their friend. Milo remembered the main character travelling by train to a big city where there were yellow taxis and really tall buildings. Whereas Betty said the taxis were black. Either Milo or Betty could be remembering the taxi colour wrong due to schemas of past experiences or another film they watched without knowing they are rationalising. Betty also suggested the main character had a big suitcase because they were staying in town for several weeks. Betty could be confabulating and remembering a big suitcase because her prior knowledge and schema of going away for several weeks involve a suitcase whereas this might not have been the case.

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Q11

11 Dora has a phobia of boxes. When she was young, her parents bought her a toy in a box. Every time she lifted the lid of the box, a clown jumped out and scared her. Since then, she has been unable to open boxes and is frightened about what could be inside them.

Dora's family members open all boxes for her and reassure her that there is nothing dangerous inside each time. Dora regularly becomes upset when a box is delivered to the house. Her family members calm her down by making her a cup of tea and sitting with her until she feels safe.

Discuss how learning theories can explain the acquisition and maintenance of Dora's phobia of boxes.

(8)

The acquisition of Dora's phobia of boxes can be explained by classical conditioning. Classical conditioning is the learning of a behaviour based on associations which have been made. When Dora was given the toy as a child, ~~the box would~~ the box would initially have been a neutral stimulus for her which caused no response. The clown inside of it would have been an unconditioned stimulus which caused the unconditioned response of ^{Dora} feeling ^{afraid} ~~fearful~~. The more that she lifted the lid of the box and the clown jumped out, she would have developed an association between the clown and the box, causing the box to become a conditioned stimulus and to cause the conditioned response of being fearful. In this way, classical conditioning could explain Dora's acquisition of the fear of boxes.

The maintenance of Dora's phobia could be explained by reinforcement. Reinforcement suggests that the way an individual is either rewarded or punished after producing a behaviour can impact their likelihood of repeating it. The types of reinforcement are positive reinforcement, which involves giving the individual a reward as a result of good behaviour. Negative reinforcement is taking away something bad from the individual as a reward and punishment is punishing someone for a bad behaviour. Negative reinforcement may be an explanation for the maintenance of Dora's phobia as each time a box is delivered, her family members open it for her so that she doesn't have to. Additionally, Dora receives ~~positive~~ positive reinforcement each time she gets scared of a box because her family members make her a cup of tea and sit with her. She may enjoy this attention and therefore is encouraged to repeat her actions. In this way, reinforcement can be used to explain the maintenance of Dora's fear.

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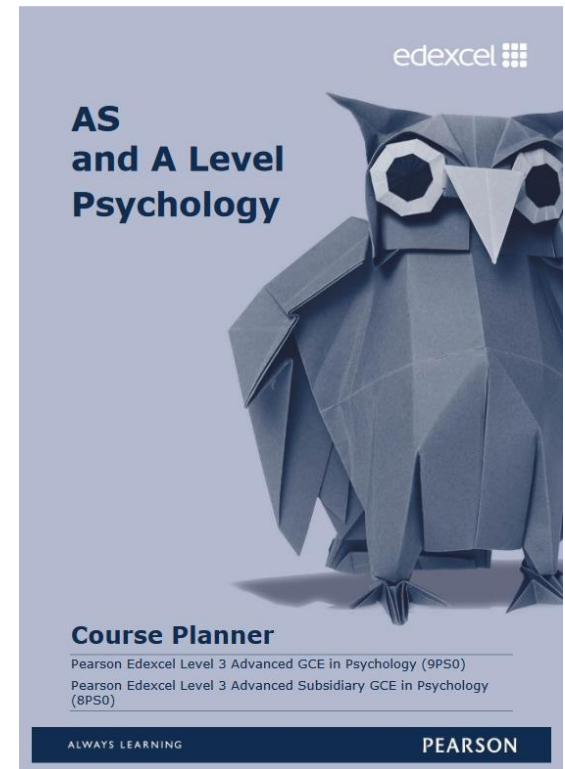
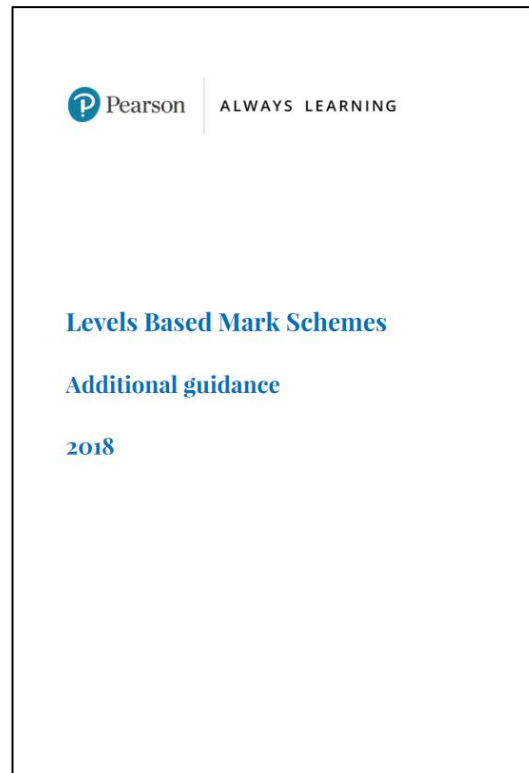
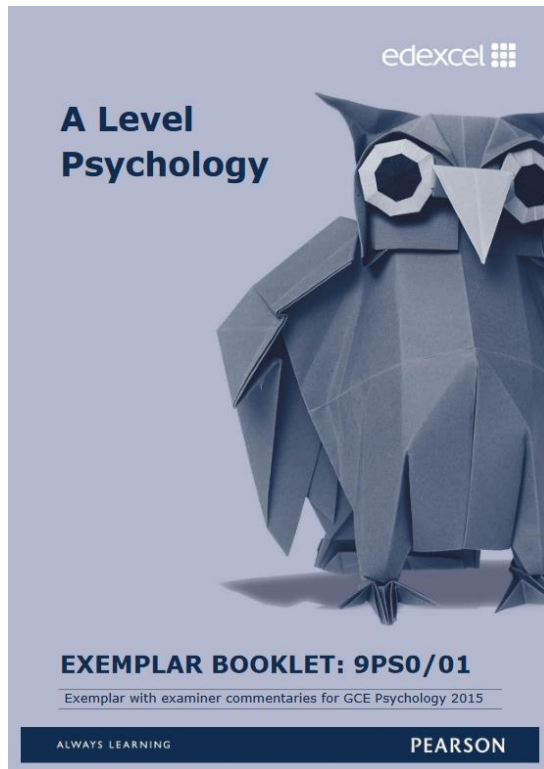
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Website resources



Considering delivery strategies and sharing best practice

1. Teaching strategies
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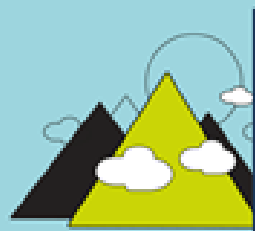


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