

Examiners' Report

June 2025

GCSE Psychology 1PS0 01

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Introduction

The summer 2025 examination was the third full series since 2019 without the support of advance information. The performance of the candidates is summarised below, with advice on how to improve in future series.

Candidates performed at a similar level to previous series in terms of the questions focussed on knowledge and understanding only. Questions Q06 and Q14 were indicative of this where candidates were mostly able to recall factual information from named areas on the specification. However, candidates need to ensure they are learning named content effectively because there were areas for improvement, such as on Q18a.

Candidate performance on questions requiring AO1 and AO2 was similar, albeit slightly better, to previous series. On some questions candidates performed very well, such as Q04a, Q07, Q08a, and Q12a where they were able to recall and apply their knowledge effectively. However, on other questions they found this difficult, such as Q20b, where the majority had difficulty in both recalling and applying their knowledge in an effective manner.

Similar to previous series, questions requiring strengths and/or weaknesses had a mixed performance. Some were answered better than others, such as Q03b. However, some were generally found difficult by candidates, such as Q09b. Where candidates were able to identify a strength and/or weakness, the majority found difficulty in then elaborating on this appropriately for the higher marks. Again, this remains a focus for centres to help support candidates with for future series.

The questions that required a conclusion were at a similar level of performance to previous series. There are still some candidates who repeat the data/information from the source material without offering a conclusion, which needs to be avoided in future series. There are many candidates who show a good aptitude for these questions, with conclusions very evident within their responses. Q13a was well-answered, in general.

Questions that focussed on improvements again had an extremely similar level of performance to previous series. Some candidates were able to identify an improvement effectively and justify this fully, whereas others found it difficult to suggest a relevant improvement. General performance on Q08b and Q13b was better than that of Q15b for this skill.

Performance on the essays was similar to previous series. However, the issues and debates essay (Q22) had a much higher performance than that of all previous series, perhaps due to the focus on the nature-nurture debate. The synoptic essay (Q23) showed a similar level of performance to previous series. The Assessment Objective (AO3) and balance were the differentiating elements once again and were more evident in the best responses.

The remainder of this Report on the Examination will focus on each individual question, which can be used to help prepare candidates for future 1PS0/01 examinations.

Question 1

For Q01, candidates were required to select the correct two responses regarding the findings from Gunderson et al's (2013) study. The majority of candidates were able to identify at least one finding correctly from the study, with many selecting both findings correctly.

Question 2

Candidates were required to describe the difference between the two stages of morality for Q02. The best responses used connectives (eg, whereas, however) and showed accurate understanding of each of the stages.

Weaker responses did not use connectives or gave inaccurate recall about one or both stages. Candidates should always use connectives with these types of questions in future series.

2 Describe the difference between the conventional and post-conventional stages of morality.

The conventional stage of morality is when you abide by laws and try to fit into society's 'norms'. ~~The post~~ whereas the post-conventional stage of morality is when you believe that people have ~~for~~ ^{their own} reasons for doing things and when you have your own morals that may/may not abide by law.



This response is given 2 marks for an accurate, appropriate comparison using connectives.

Question 3(a)

For Q03(a), candidates were required to give two appropriate conclusions that could be made from the data provided in Figure 1, with justification of the conclusions through analysis/interpretation.

The best responses gave two clear conclusions regarding how appropriate the tasks were and then supported these with relevant evidence from the graph.

Weaker responses tended to give conclusions only or repeat information from the graph with no conclusion, which should be avoided in future series.

- (a) Explain two conclusions that could be made using the data in **Figure 1** in terms of how appropriate the tasks given to the three groups of students were in learning a new concept.

(4)

- 1 Tasks that are too easy may allow the students to only be able to make limited progress - and unfortunately ~~too easy~~ does not challenge them to their full potential. This is seen in the graph as at the start of the week ~~the~~ group 1's average test performance was 60% and by the end it was 70% meaning it ~~is~~ had only increased by 10%.
- 2 The task given to group 3 would be considered inappropriate due ~~to~~ to it being too difficult. This does not allow students to reach their full potential, better yet learn anything new as they were making no progress. As shown on the graph the average test performance was 50% both at the start and the end of the week, therefore showing that no progress can be made when challenges are too difficult. No progress can also lead to lack of self-esteem which in turn would affect the motivational framework of the students.



This response is given 4 marks:

- first conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)
- second conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)

Question 3(b)

Q03(b) required candidates to identify a strength and a weakness of Alessia's investigation (AO2) and then fully justify the strength and weakness (AO3).

The most common strength was ecological validity, with varied weaknesses offered.

The best responses identified a relevant strength and weaknesses and fully justified them.

Weaker responses tended to identify the strength or weakness only or give generic statements. Generic statements should be avoided in future series.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of Alessia's investigation into learning a new concept.

(4)

Strength

It ~~is~~ is a task that has relevance in education at school so has ecological validity as children need to learn concepts as tasks meaning that it can be applied to everyday learning to ensure students are given tasks that challenge them but are not impossible for them.

Weakness

The students had different starting points so individual differences may mean that children in group 3 struggled more with science in general than the other students in other groups meaning that the results could be due to other factors and extraneous variables which would decrease the validity of the results.



This response is given 4 marks:

- Strength identification of a relevant strength in context (1)
- appropriate justification (1)
- Weakness identification of a relevant weakness in context (1)
- appropriate justification (1)

Question 4(a)

Question Q04(a) required candidates to demonstrate accurate understanding of the pre-operational stage (AO1) and exemplify how the stage could be used to explain the scenario (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of the pre-operational stage and suitable exemplification.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of the pre-operational stage or produced responses that were inaccurate.

- 4 Gastón wanted to investigate what stage of development children from a local community group were in.

He showed them two circles of marbles. Both circles had the same number of marbles, but Gastón spaced out the marbles more in Circle A (see **Figure 2**). He then asked the children which circle had the most marbles.

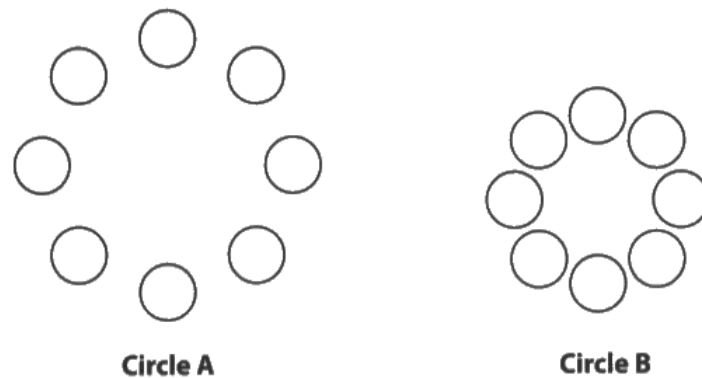


Figure 2

- (a) Explain what someone is likely to say about which circle had the most marbles if they are in the pre-operational stage of development.

You should refer to the pre-operational stage of development in your answer.

(2)

In the pre-operational stage of development, children have not yet developed conservation, so if it looks different, they think it is a different amount. Therefore, the children would think Circle A has more marbles, as they take up more space and are spread out.



This response is given 2 marks:

- understanding of the pre-operational stage (1)
- application to the scenario (1)

Question 4(b)

Q04(b) required candidates to demonstrate accurate understanding of the formal-operational stage (AO1) and exemplify how the stage could be used to explain the scenario (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of the formal-operational stage and suitable exemplification.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of the formal-operational stage or produced responses that were inaccurate.

- (b) Later, the children were given a picture of a 14-year-old person and were told they lived with their parents, ate a lot of healthy food and worked hard at school. They were then asked what this person might be like in 20 years' time.

Explain what someone is likely to say if they are in the formal operational stage of development.

You should refer to the formal operational stage of development in your answer.

(2)

Children in the formal operational stage of development are able to think abstractly and creatively, and logic. So a child in the formal-operational stage of development is likely to suggest a logical answer - for example: 'This person will have a good job and be strong & healthy' as they ate healthy and worked hard in school.



This response is given 2 marks:

- understanding of the formal operational stage (1)
- application to the scenario (1)

Question 5

Candidates were required to define 'reductionism' and then give a suitable example for Q05.

The best responses gave a clear, accurate definition of reductionism and then offered an appropriate example.

Weaker responses either gave a definition or an example or gave incorrect responses.

It would be useful for centres to help support candidates with their understanding of reductionism for future series because a proportion of candidates do not have an accurate understanding of the concept.

5 Define the term 'reductionism' as used in psychology. Use an example in your answer.

Reductionism is when you look or think of something in its individual basic parts. An example of reductionism is the multistore model of memory as this has many different parts. For example short term memory, long term memory and rehearsal.

(Total for Question 5 = 2 marks)



This response is given 2 marks:

- appropriate definition (1)
- suitable example (1)

Question 6

For Q06, candidates were required to show accurate understanding of each part of the procedure of the study.

The best responses gave two clear parts of the procedure, usually focussed on the stimulus the participants were given or the instructions they were given.

Weaker responses tended to give one part of the procedure or offered vague and sometimes inaccurate statements, which were sometimes from other studies altogether.

6 State two parts of the procedure used in Peterson and Peterson (1959).

- 1 participants had to look at a trigram and see if they could recall after interruption
- 2 participants had to count down in 3s or 4s until they were asked to recall



This response is given 2 marks: 1 mark for each accurate statement as part of the procedure.

Question 7

For Q07, candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of the role of attention in memory (AO1) and exemplify how attention in the memory process could be used to explain the scenario (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of the role of attention in memory and suitable exemplification to the scenario regarding Ronald.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of the role of attention in memory, or produced responses that were inaccurate, such as focussing on rehearsal instead.

7 Ronald was on his first aeroplane flight with his two young children.

Before the aeroplane took off, the flight crew demonstrated some important safety information. This included where the life vest was located, how to put on the life vest and inflate it, how to use an oxygen mask and where the exits were. Ronald's children distracted Ronald, so he was unable to listen to the safety briefing by the cabin crew.

Describe what is likely to happen if there is an emergency on the flight.

You should refer to the role of attention in memory in your answer.

What is likely to happen is that Ronald will not know the important safety information as he didn't pay attention. The multi-store model of memory tells us that we must pay attention to move things into our short-term memory store, or the information is lost. So ~~that~~ the safety information would've been lost from Ronald's short-term memory, meaning he won't know it.



This response is given 2 marks:

- understanding of the role of attention in memory as part of the Multi-Store Memory (MSM) (1)
- application to the scenario (1)

Question 8(a)

For Q08(a), candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of anterograde amnesia (AO1) and exemplify how anterograde amnesia could be used to explain the scenario (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of anterograde amnesia and suitable exemplification to the scenario regarding Lucia.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of the anterograde amnesia or produced responses that were inaccurate, such as focussing on retrograde amnesia.

- 8** Lucia is concerned about her partner who has had a fall and hit their head. They have been very confused since the fall and Lucia has arranged for a psychological evaluation to see if her partner has anterograde amnesia.

Lucia's partner is given a test by the psychologist to determine whether they have anterograde amnesia. The psychologist gives Lucia's partner 10 news events that were reported on social media since their fall and asks them to recall everything they can about the events.

- (a) Explain what the psychologist is likely to find if Lucia's partner has anterograde amnesia.

inability to form new memories
You should refer to anterograde amnesia in your answer.

(2)

The psychologist will find that Lucia's partner is unable to recall the news events, as anterograde amnesia is where a person is unable to form new memories after an accident.



This response is given 2 marks:

- application to the scenario (1)
- understanding of anterograde amnesia (1)

Question 8(b)

Q08(b) required candidates to identify a relevant improvement for the test given to Lucia by the psychologist, with justification of the improvement provided.

The best responses gave a relevant improvement, most commonly related to the type of test given, and then supported this with justification.

Weaker responses gave an improvement only or suggested inappropriate improvements for the investigation.

Where candidates do give an appropriate improvement, they need to ensure they are elaborating on their suggested improvement sufficiently to be able to gain full marks.

Some candidates gave weaknesses of the investigation, not related to improvements, which should be avoided in future series.

(b) Explain one improvement that could have been made to the test the psychologist gave to Lucia's partner.

(2)

Ask about other things like what she did yesterday and today. This is because Lucia's partner may not watch the news or pay very much attention to it, so they won't know about them. Asking about what they did yesterday is a more accurate and reliable way of testing for anterograde amnesia because then they will be able to see if they can remember or not. This will increase validity of the findings for testing for anterograde amnesia.



This response is given 2 marks:

- relevant improvement (1)
- for justification linked to the improvement (1)

Question 9(a)

For Q09(a), candidates were required to give an appropriate conclusion that could be made from the data provided in Table 1, with justification of the conclusion through analysis/interpretation.

The best responses gave a clear conclusion regarding memory over time and then supported this with relevant evidence from the table.

Weaker responses tended to give a conclusion only.

Some responses only repeated information from the table with no conclusion, which should be avoided in future series.

9 Megan was interested in investigating participants' memory of a story.

Megan went into a school in Japan and asked the children to read an unfamiliar story about a sea adventure that included unknown names, contained unusual content and had 330 words.

The children were asked to read the story twice and were then asked to try to reproduce the story the next day at school by writing it out on a piece of paper. They were then asked to try to recall the story once every six weeks, over a 24-week period.

The results of Megan's investigation are shown in **Table 1**.

Reproduction	Average number of words accurately recalled	Average number of errors compared to original story
The next day	180	5
After 6 weeks	120	8
After 12 weeks	80	10
After 18 weeks	50	14
After 24 weeks	30	18

Table 1

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that Megan could make using the data in **Table 1**.

(2)

After a long period of time, information is not retained as well compared to when it was first taken in. Evidence to show this is that the next day from the story being told there were only 5 average errors compared to 18 errors 24 weeks later.



This response is given 2 marks:

- conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)

Question 9(b)

Candidates were required to identify a strength and a weakness of using Bartlett's (1932) study to account for the findings of Megan's study (AO2) and then fully justify the strength and weakness (AO3) for Q09(b).

Similar to previous series, candidates found this type of question difficult. The best responses provided an accurate strength and weakness and then fully justified them in relation to the scenario.

Weaker responses tended to identify the strength or weakness only, gave generic information, or produced responses that were inaccurate and tried to apply this to the scenario.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using Bartlett's (1932) War of the Ghosts study to account for the findings of Megan's investigation.

(4)

Strength

~~One strength~~ A strength of using Bartlett to account for the findings, is that they both had to remember unfamiliar stories to them, meaning they had no previous knowledge about it, which could help account for Megan's investigation, as results could be similar.

Weakness

A weakness of using Bartlett to account for the findings, is that the conditions were not the same in both investigations. ~~But~~ This could mean that results could differ a lot, so ~~it~~ ~~could both they could~~ it would not work out.



This response is given 2 marks:

Strength

- identification of a relevant strength in context (using an unfamiliar story to assess memory) (1)
- appropriate justification (1)

Weakness

No rewardable content

Question 10

For Q10, candidates were required to select the correct two responses regarding the findings from Young's (2007) study.

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify correctly at least one finding from the study.

Question 11

For Q11, candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of how drugs could be used as a treatment for depression (AO1).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of antidepressants and suitable elaboration for the second mark. Most commonly they showed knowledge of Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) and their mode of action.

Weaker responses only gave brief understanding of drugs for depression or produced responses that were inaccurate, such as focussing on non-biological treatments (eg Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)).

11 Describe how drugs could be used as a treatment for depression.

Drug therapies such as SSRIs help treat depression by blocking the reuptake of serotonin, meaning it is around in the synaptic gap for longer and is more likely to be used. This therefore helps increase good mood and reduces the low mood experienced with depression.



This response is given 2 marks:

- process (reuptake) (1)
- the impact of reuptake (reuptake means the neurotransmitter effects last longer which helps regulate mood) (1)

Question 12(a)

For Q12(a), candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of a symptom of addiction (AO1) and exemplify how the symptom could be used to explain the scenario (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of a symptom of addiction and suitable exemplification to the scenario regarding Jeremie.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of a symptom of addiction or produced responses that were inaccurate.

12 Jeremie used to watch his father on online auction sites. Jeremie was interested in the bidding and how much pleasure 'winning' an item gave his father.

Jeremie joined the online auction sites when he became old enough to buy the items himself. He has been buying hundreds of items from the auctions and has recently been diagnosed with an internet addiction to online auction sites.

(a) Explain how **one** symptom of addiction will affect Jeremie.

(2)

A symptom of addiction is replacing time doing fun activities to instead spend time engaging with the addiction and using the substance or doing the activity. This will affect Jeremie as he will find himself refusing to ~~go on~~^{engage} with his hobbies or activities he enjoys doing in his free time. He will say no to plans such as meeting friends in order to buy items from the online auctions.



This response is given 2 marks:

- understanding of a symptom of addiction (1)
- application to the scenario (1)

Question 12(b)

Candidates were required to identify a strength and a weakness of using learning theory to account for Jeremie's addiction (AO2) and then fully justify the strength and weakness (AO3) for Q12(b).

The best responses provided an accurate strength and weakness and then fully justified them in relation to the scenario.

Weaker responses tended to identify the strength and/or weakness only, gave generic information, or produced responses that were inaccurate and tried to apply this to the scenario.

Some candidates described how Jeremie may have become addicted to auction sites using learning theory as their strength, which should be avoided in future series if they are asked about a strength of the theory.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using learning theory to account for Jeremie's addiction.

(4)

Strength

~~Let~~ A strength of using learning theory to account for Jeremie's addiction is that it is supported by evidence – for example, if we explain Jeremie's addiction as a result of him imitating his father, a role model, a supporting piece of evidence for that explanation would be Bandura's; Ross, and Ross's 1970s study conducted in the 1950s that showed that children will imitate aggressive behaviour from a same-sex model.

Weakness

~~Some aspects of learning~~ A weakness of using learning theory to account for Jeremie's addiction is that it may be reductionistic, as it only requires other factors that can cause addiction – for example, Jeremie may have inherited a genetic predisposition from his father that made it easier for him to become addicted.



This response is given 4 marks:

Strength

- identification of a relevant strength in context (supported with Bandura inc findings) (1)
- appropriate justification (1)

Weakness

- identification of a relevant weakness in context only (ignores genetic factors) (1)
- for appropriate justification (1)

Question 12(c)

Q12(c) required candidates to demonstrate accurate understanding of CBT (AO1) and exemplify how the treatment could be used to help Jeremie with his addiction (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of CBT and suitable exemplification. Most common parts of CBT were homework and identifying the irrational ways of thinking.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of CBT, identified a number of different parts of CBT without any understanding shown, or produced responses that were inaccurate.

(c) Explain **one** way that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) could be used to help Jeremie with his addiction.

(2)

cognitive behaviour therapy helps to change the thought processes and behaviours in their everyday life so they are able to function without feeding their addiction. CBT will help Jeremie to change his thought processes to not feel the constant need to be drinking. This will therefore change his behaviour and develop healthier habits in his daily life.



This response is given 2 marks:

- understanding of CBT (1)
- application to the scenario (1)

Question 13(a)

For Q13(a), candidates were required to give an appropriate conclusion that could be made from the data provided in Table 2, with justification of the conclusion through analysis/interpretation.

The best responses gave a clear conclusion regarding stressful life events and depression and then supported this with relevant evidence from the table.

Weaker responses tended to give a conclusion only or misread the table, thinking they were age categories and not stressful life events.

Some responses only repeated information from the table with no conclusion, which should be avoided in future series.

- 13 Mary wanted to see the influence of life events on depression. Mary recruited participants from a local business who had experienced or were currently experiencing depression.

← volunteered

← quantitative

Mary gave the participants a closed-ended questionnaire which asked them about the type and number of stressful life events they had experienced in the past five years. She also asked them about the length of time (in months) they had experienced depressive symptoms and the severity of their depression, on a scale of 0–32, where 32 indicated extremely severe symptoms.

Mary's results are shown in Table 2.

Stressful life events (past five years)	Average length of depressive symptoms (in months)	Average severity of depressive symptoms (0–32)
0–5	6.3	12.5
6–10	12.4	13.2
11–15	15.3	12.7
16+	25.6	12.9

Table 2

- (a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made from the data in Table 2.

(2)

the more stressful life events a person experiences, the longer the average length of depressive symptoms are. As those who experience 0–5 stressful life events have around 6.3 months of symptoms whereas 16+ have around 25.6 months



This response is given 2 marks:

- conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)

Question 13(b)

Q13(b) required candidates to identify a relevant improvement for Mary's investigation, with justification of the improvement provided.

The best responses gave a relevant improvement, usually related to the use of open-ended questions or a more varied sample, and then supported this with a justification.

Weaker responses gave an improvement only or suggested inappropriate improvements for the investigation.

Where candidates do give an appropriate improvement, they need to ensure they are elaborating on their suggested improvement sufficiently, to be able to gain full marks.

Some candidates gave weaknesses of the investigation, not related to improvements, which should be avoided in future series.

(b) Explain **one** improvement that could be made to Mary's investigation.

One improvement is that Mary could use ⁽²⁾ open ended questions to gather qualitative data as well as the closed ended questions. This is an improvement as with qualitative data she could gain a more in depth insight into depression + stressful life events, making her research more valid.

(Total for Question 13 = 4 marks)



This response is given 2 marks:

- relevant improvement (1)
- justification linked to the improvement (1)

Question 14

Question 14 required candidates to describe the function of the parietal lobe.

The best responses gave an accurate description of the function of the parietal lobe, usually focussing on two separate functions.

Weaker responses gave a brief function of the parietal lobe, offered an inaccurate suggestion, or did not attempt the question.

14 Describe the function of the parietal lobe.

the parietal lobe, which contains the motor cortex and the somato sensory cortex, is in charge of perception, ~~sensation~~ sensation processing and touch.



This response is given 2 marks:

- processing perception (1)
- processing touch (1)

Question 15(a)

For Q15(a), candidates were required to show accurate understanding of two conclusions from Sperry's (1968) study.

The best responses gave two clear conclusions, with a variety of responses offered.

Weaker responses tended to give one accurate conclusion, offered vague and sometimes inaccurate statements, which were sometimes from other studies altogether, or only gave findings from the study.

A minority of candidates used a reverse argument for each conclusion, which limited their mark and should be avoided in future series.

15 (a) State two conclusions from Sperry (1968).

- (2)
- 1 left hemisphere responsible for language processing / production
- 2 right hemisphere responsible for spatial tasks



This response is given 2 marks: 1 mark for each accurate conclusion.

Question 15(b)

Q15(b) required candidates to identify a relevant improvement for Sperry's (1968) study with justification of the improvement provided.

The best responses gave a relevant improvement, usually related to the use of a control group, and then supported this with justification.

Weaker responses gave an improvement only and did not elaborate.

Where candidates do give an appropriate improvement, they need to ensure they are elaborating on their suggested improvement sufficiently to be able to gain full marks.

Many candidates suggested inappropriate improvements for the study, such as only using more participants without any clarification about who they would be, instead focussing on sample size only, which should be avoided in future series.

(b) Explain **one** improvement that Sperry (1968) could have made to his investigation.

(2)

Sperry could've tested on people with a damaged corpus callosum who had not had a seizure, as maybe it was the seizure that tampered with the hemispheres, not the corpus callosum. This would increase validity and representation of the target population.



This response is given 2 marks:

- relevant improvement (1)
- justification linked to the improvement (1)

Question 16(a)

For Q16(a), candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of Damasio et al's (1994) study (AO1) and exemplify how the study could be used to explain the scenario involving Marvin (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of Damasio et al's (1994) study and suitable exemplification to the scenario, which were linked.

Weaker responses gave some understanding from Damasio et al's (1994) study with exemplification that was inconsistent, only gave understanding or exemplification of Damasio et al's (1994) study or produced responses that were inaccurate.

16 Marvin is a tutor at an evening school teaching different languages. He speaks English as his first language but also speaks Spanish, French and Polish. Every evening he has classes with people of a wide variety of ages and levels of ability who have joined the school to learn a new language.

On the way home one evening, Marvin was involved in an accident which injured his brain. The doctors have said Marvin has damaged areas of his frontal lobes, including his ventromedial region and Broca's area.

(a) Explain how Marvin is likely to find the brain damage affects his life.

You should refer to Damasio et al. (1994) in your answer.

(2)

Damasio et al studied phineas gage who had damaged the ventromedial region and as a result, he underwent severe personality changes and became more aggressive. Marvin is likely to ~~see~~^{find} that his personality changes and he may become more aggressive. Marvin may find when teaching, he is often rude or ~~too~~ becomes very frustrated with his students.



The response is given 2 marks:

- AO1 for understanding of Damasio study (1)

- AO2 for application to the scenario (1)

Question 16(b)

Candidates were required to identify a strength and a weakness of using Damasio et al's (1994) study to account for the findings of Marvin's brain damage (AO2) and then fully justify the strength and weakness (AO3) for Q16(b). Similar to previous series, candidates found this type of question difficult.

The best responses provided an accurate strength and weakness and then fully justified them in relation to the scenario.

Weaker responses tended to identify the strength or weakness only, gave generic information, or produced responses that were inaccurate and tried to apply this to the scenario.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using Damasio et al. (1994) to account for the outcome of Marvin's brain damage.

(4)

Strength

Damasio discovered that Gage's frontal lobe had been damaged and that behavioural issues like irritability and impulsiveness were increased because of it. Marvin also damaged his frontal lobe so Damasio's study of Gage can show ~~and~~ how ~~account for~~ Marvin will likely be affected by his injury.

Weakness

Marvin damaged his ^{frontal lobe and} Broca's area in the accident too (which controls speech) whereas Gage only damaged his frontal lobe so Damasio's study of Gage cannot account for how Marvin's speech may be affected by the damage to his Broca's area.



This response is given 4 marks:

Strength

- AO2 for identification of a relevant strength in context (similar brain damage) (1)
- AO3 for appropriate justification (1)

Weakness

- AO2 for identification of a relevant weakness in context (differences in brain damage) (1)
- AO3 for appropriate justification (1)

Question 17(a)

Q17(a) required candidates to demonstrate accurate understanding of the occipital lobes or another relevant part of the brain (AO1). Then, they had to exemplify how damage to the occipital lobes or another relevant part of the brain could be used to explain the scenario in relation to Sandy's patient (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of the occipital lobes and suitable exemplification. Other areas of the brain involved in the processes involved in the scenario were accepted, too.

Weaker responses only gave understanding or exemplification of a relevant part of the brain or produced responses that were inaccurate.

17 Sandy has been asked to investigate the function of 'Region G' of the brain.

She decides to give some tests to one of her female patients who has damaged 'Region G' of their brain:

- Colour naming test: The patient is asked to name what colour they see when presented with a coloured piece of paper.
- Recall test: The patient is asked to recall the months of the year in order and when they were born.
- Pressure test: Physical pressure is applied to the patient when they are blindfolded and they have to say where they can feel the pressure being applied.

The patient performed well on the recall test and pressure test but performed poorly on the colour naming test.

- (a) Explain which region of the brain the patient is likely to have damaged from their performance in the tests.

You should refer to the function of the damaged region in your answer.

(2)

the occipital lobe processes visual information and is involved with sight. the patient is likely to have damaged this as they are unable to name the colour suggesting that the occipital lobe has been unable to process this information.



This response is given 2 marks:

- AO1 for understanding of the function of the damaged region (here the occipital lobe) (1)
- AO2 for application to the scenario (1)

Question 17(b)

Q17(b) required candidates to identify a relevant improvement for Sandy's investigation with justification of the improvement provided.

The best responses gave a relevant improvement, usually related to the use of males as well as females, and then supported this with justification.

Weaker responses gave an improvement only and did not elaborate. Where candidates do give an appropriate improvement, they need to ensure they are elaborating on their suggested improvement sufficiently, to be able to gain full marks.

Many candidates suggested inappropriate improvements for the study, such as just using more participants without any clarification about who they would be, instead focussing on sample size only, which should be avoided in future series.

(b) Explain **one** improvement Sandy could have made to her investigation.

(2)

Sandy would have used a control participant ~~to~~ without brain damage to check that the patient's ^{poor} performance is due to brain damage and not that the ^{colour} test was too difficult, lending validity as Sandy can be sure that it is the independent variable (brain damage) is ~~definitely~~ affecting the results.



This response is given 2 marks:

- for relevant improvement (1)
- for justification linked to the improvement (1)

Question 18(a)

For Q18(a), candidates were required to show accurate understanding of each type of clothing from Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973).

The best responses gave two clear types of clothing, usually one aspect of what the guards were wearing and one aspect of what the prisoners were wearing.

Weaker responses tended to give one appropriate type of clothing or offered vague, and sometimes inaccurate, statements.

18 You will have studied Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973).

(a) State the **two** types of clothing that were worn by the participants in Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973).

(2)

1 The guards wore military uniform with Barons.

2 The prisoners wore loose muslin smocks with identification numbers.



This response is given 2 marks:

- military-like uniform (1)
- muslin smock (1)

Question 18(b)

For Q18(b), candidates were required to select the correct two responses regarding the rules from Haney, Banks and Zimbardo (1973).

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify at least one rule correctly, from the study.

Question 19

For Q19, candidates were required to give two appropriate conclusions that could be made from the data provided in Table 3, with justification of the conclusions through analysis/interpretation.

The best responses gave two clear conclusions regarding conformity to majority influence and then supported these with relevant evidence from the graph.

Weaker responses tended to give conclusions only or repeat information from the graph with no conclusion, which should be avoided in future series.

Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from the data in **Table 3** in terms of conformity to majority influence.

1 the number of students who gave the same wrong answer for the high quiz is a lot higher at 50% for class 1 and 30% for class 2. This means that they conformed more as they do not know how to act because it was a hard quiz

2 for the easy quiz class 1 had 5% giving the wrong answer and 15% for class 2 who gave the same wrong answer. This means that if there is more people saying the wrong answer you are more likely to follow along with them even if you do not agree



This response is given 4 marks:

- first conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)
- second conclusion (1)
- justification through analysis/interpretation of the data (1)

Question 20(a)

For Q20(a), candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of a situational factor affecting bystander intervention (AO1) and exemplify how the factor could be used to explain the scenario regarding Keira (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of a factor affecting bystander intervention and suitable exemplification to the scenario.

Weaker responses generally applied the factor affecting bystander intervention to the scenario only, gave a factor affecting bystander intervention only, or gave generic or inaccurate information.

20 Keira is at school at break time and she sees a boy from a lower year group being verbally and physically harmed by older students. She sees the older students insult the younger student and trip him over, leading to his glasses being smashed.

There are lots of students around who see the younger student being insulted and physically hurt by the older students and they do not intervene or go and tell a teacher.

Keira does not go and help the younger student and walks past so she is not late for her next lesson.

(a) Explain **one** situational factor that could account for Keira not helping the younger student.

(2)

One situational factor that may prevent Keira helping younger student is a large crowd this would trigger bystander effect as reluctant to help due as assume others will (diffusion of responsibility). Keira therefore even though saw student in lower year physically harmed does walk past and does not help as sees lots of other students and so assumes they may help.



This response is given 2 marks:

- AO1 for understanding of a situational factor (diffusion of responsibility) (1)

- AO2 for application to the scenario (1)

Question 20(b)

For Q20(b), candidates were required to demonstrate accurate understanding of a personal factor affecting bystander intervention (AO1) and exemplify how the factor could be used to explain the scenario regarding Keira (AO2).

The best responses gave both appropriate understanding of a factor affecting bystander intervention and suitable exemplification to the scenario.

Weaker responses generally applied the factor affecting bystander intervention to the scenario only, gave a factor affecting bystander intervention only, or gave generic or inaccurate information.

(b) Explain **one** personal factor that could account for Keira not helping the younger student.

(2)

One personal factor would be Competence; whether you believe you have the ability to help. There ~~for~~^{fore}, Keira may have believed she didn't have the ability to overpower the older boys and help the younger one leading to her not intervening.



This response is given 2 marks:

- AO1 for understanding of a personal factor (competence) (1)
- AO2 for application to the scenario (1)

Question 21

Candidates were required to identify two ways of preventing blind obedience to account for the scenario involving the football players and the manager (AO2.). Then they were to fully justify the ways identified using concepts or research evidence (AO3) for Q21.

The best responses provided two accurate ways and then fully justified them in relation to the scenario.

Weaker responses tended to identify the way only, gave generic information, or produced responses that were inaccurate and tried to apply this to the scenario.

- 21 A football team is in the final match of its season and is trying to win a trophy. The team is not as good as the other team it is playing.

The manager of the football team asks his players to kick and hurt the opposition players during the match. He tells them to shout insults at them and push them over in an effort to win the match.

Explain **two** ways to prevent blind obedience to the football manager.

You must use concepts or research evidence about obedience to justify your answer.

1 ~~In Milgram's experiment~~. In an experiment done with nurses regarding the use of an unsafe medication, it was seen that when the nurses were able to talk to each other about their decision, the amount of blind obedience decreased. This means that if the team players talked to each other about what their manager wants them to do, they may not follow the orders given and so the amount of blind obedience decreases.

2 If the manager of the football team was standing away from the players as he asked them to shout insults at the opposing team, the amount of team players following ^{the orders} would decrease, resulting in the amount of blind obedience decreasing. This was seen in Milgram's study that when the authority figure was in a different room, the amount of participants who gave the 450V shock decreased when compared to ~~the participants~~ when the authority figure was in the room.

(Total for Question 21 = 4 marks)



This response is given 4 marks:

- AO2 for identification of the first way (confer - peer support) (1)
- AO3 for justification of the way using research evidence (1)
- AO2 for the second way (proximity) (1)
- AO3 for justification of the way using research evidence (1)

Question 22

Q22 required candidates to assess the nature-nurture debate for depression, with reference to the individual and societal impacts of the condition.

This was an extended open-response question, with the 'Assess' taxonomy, which targets AO1, AO2 and AO3 content.

- AO1 was looking for knowledge and understanding of nature, nurture or depression
- AO2 was for application to individual and societal impacts of the depression
- AO3 was analysis and evaluation of nature and nurture in relation to depression, leading to judgements/conclusions of how far each side of the debate is supported

Assessment of this question was through a levels-based mark scheme where a 'best-fit' approach was used; deciding which level most closely describes the quality of the answer.

Each AO was judged separately and where the components met the requirement for the level fully (and perhaps has elements of the level above), then marks were given at the top of the level.

Where the components met the level but barely, marks were given at the bottom end of the level.

When a response was imbalanced (ie one or more AOs were stronger than another) a compromise was found. Consideration was also given regarding this question requiring balance between the AOs (AO1: 3, marks, AO2: 3 marks, AO3: 3 marks).

This was the highest-performing synoptic issues and debates essay since the assessment began in 2019. This is perhaps due to the focus on the nature-nurture debate. Candidates find this topic less challenging than the other issues and debates topics on the specification, such as reductionism, which was assessed in 2024.

The best responses demonstrated accurate and clear understanding of depression and the nature-nurture debate and considered a balance between the AOs.

They made a concerted effort to apply their knowledge and understanding of depression and the nature-nurture debate to how they affect individuals and society.

They used varied evidence to support and refute their arguments. The most common evidence focused on was Caspi et al's (2003) study. They considered the relative strengths and weaknesses of the nature-nurture debate.

Weaker responses attempted to define nature and nurture, with little or no relation to depression or how the condition affects individuals and society.

Similar to previous series, candidates still found it difficult to reach the 7-9 mark range in general for this issues and debates essay. This was largely due to a lack of AO2 and/or AO3 and balance in the essays, which remains a focus for centres to help support candidates with for future series.

*22 Depression is a common mental health issue. Researchers have identified that both nature and nurture factors are involved in how it is caused.

As an individual, the symptoms and treatment of depression can affect the ability to cope, from completing basic day-to-day activities to employment. It can also put a strain on family relationships.

In wider society, depression can have an impact on many different areas including employment, health services, emergency services and public funding.

Assess the importance of whether depression is caused by nature or nurture factors.

(9)

Nature refers to biological factors that influence behaviour. Nurture refers to environmental factors that influence behaviour. The diathesis stress model is a explanation of depression that states depression can be caused by genes and stressful life events occur ~~it can also~~ they can both trigger depression. Regarding to nature, an individual who has inherited genes that cause depression may find it increasingly hard to ~~to~~ avoid relapse, treat symptoms and caused and may find it harder to feel motivated to do basic day-to-day activities. This is because one of the symptoms of depression is unmotivation. This links to Caspi et al. who found that the 5-HTT gene ~~with~~ ~~can~~ included with a stressful life event can cause depression. ~~The~~ Therefore, this emphasises how ~~nature~~ depression is caused by nature because genes ~~are~~ inevitably inherited from parents will ~~always~~ cause depression. ~~&~~ This also reinforces the concept of the diathesis

stress model that states depression can be caused by a gene (as well as a ~~stressful~~ stressful life event). Regarding to nurture, environmental factors such as family and work stress can cause depression. It can affect an individual's work performance, ~~that is~~ which impacts the economic state of the business because they would have to spend money recruiting employment staff. This can also affect health services and emergency services such as the NHS because they would have to spend more money on things such as therapy and antidepressants. This also links to Caspi who found that a stressful life event must occur for depression the cause of depression. ^{Nature} ~~This also~~ links to the genetic explanation of depression. However, this theory is reductionist and deterministic. It is deterministic because it assumes that if you have a gene ~~to~~ that you are likely to get depression. However this is untrue because a ~~g~~ stressful life event must be present when explains how the theory is reductionist because it ignores other factors such as social wellbeing. However, a strength of Caspi is that it is generalisable which means that the findings can be applied to other people. This is because his study ~~is~~ included 247 participants which is a very diverse sample which suggests that his theory is highly applicable to the explanation that nature (genes) cause depression. However, a weakness of Caspi is that ^{it} ~~is may be~~ unreliable.

this means that if we repeat the study we may not get the same findings because he allowed participants to complete a questionnaire. This is a weakness because it increases chances of social desirability bias which is when participants lie on questionnaires. This could mean that his findings are unreliable and invalid. Overall, the importance of both nature and nurture cause depression because there are many reliable studies and theories supporting both arguments.



This response is given 6 marks.

AO1: Level 2 Demonstrates mostly accurate understanding of some relevant psychological ideas
AO2: Level 2 Applies understanding to elements in the context of the question, with some logical links and connections made
AO3: Level 2 Deconstructs relevant psychological ideas using mostly logical chains of reasoning.

An imbalanced argument that synthesises mostly relevant understanding but not entirely coherently, leading to judgements that are supported by evidence occasionally

Overall: Level 2

Total: 6 marks

Question 23

Q23 was a synoptic essay that required candidates to assess Giovanni's behaviour, using two areas of psychology that they had studied. This was an extended open-response question with the 'Assess' taxonomy, which targets AO1, AO2 and AO3 content.

- AO1 was looking for knowledge and understanding of psychological content
- AO2 was looking for application to the scenario/stimulus material
- AO3 was analysis and evaluation of the psychological content, leading to judgements/conclusions of how useful it would be for the scenario given about the Giovanni's behaviour

Each AO was judged separately and where the components met the requirement for the level fully (and perhaps had elements of the level above), then marks were given at the top of the level.

Where the components met the level but barely, marks were given at the bottom end of the level.

When a response was imbalanced (ie one or more AOs were stronger than another) a compromise was found.

Consideration was also given regarding this question requiring balance between the AOs (AO1: 3, AO2: 3, AO3: 3).

The best responses focussed on producing AO1, AO2, and AO3 content to attempt to balance their essay. They included at least two topic areas in their response (the question directs them to a minimum of two areas), which most commonly included social influence (topic 5) and memory (topic 2).

There was an effort to include AO3, which typically included research such as Peterson and Peterson, Asch, and Piliavin et al. As with previous series, weaker responses tended to focus on a single topic area and gave brief, simplistic statements regarding their knowledge of this area. They made a limited attempt to apply it to the scenario, with no attempt at evaluation or analysis.

Candidates performed similarly to previous series in general, with stronger AO1 and AO2 and most performing in Levels 1 and 2.

Similar to previous series, the quality of the AO1 and AO2, as well as the presence and quality of the AO3, separated the candidates.

Support with balance of essays and the AO3 element remains a focus for centres to help support candidates with for future series.

- *23 Giovanni was at school at lunchtime when his friend asked him if he was going to the concert of their favourite band the following summer. Giovanni said he had no money to pay for a ticket, so his friend suggested he get a part-time job. Giovanni's friend said most of their friends had part-time jobs that fitted around school and were all saving their money to pay for a ticket to the concert.

Giovanni went to his local shop and was successful in getting a job as a newspaper delivery person. He had to deliver newspapers to the same houses each day and remember a specific route which started and ended at the shop.

When Giovanni was delivering newspapers one morning, he looked through the window of a house and saw an elderly person on the floor in distress. Giovanni tried to get into the house to help the person, but could not, so rang the emergency services who arrived soon after. The paramedics said the person was lucky that Giovanni had raised the alarm as they did not have any family so were unlikely to have been helped.

Assess Giovanni's behaviour using two areas of psychology that you have studied.

(9)

Bystander Intervention is one's ability and inclination to help someone in need. It can be influenced by a situational factor of noticing the event. This suggests that Giovanni was inclined to intervene and try and help the person in distress because he noticed that he was on the floor. This idea is supported by Piliavin's study where he found that majority of people who witnessed someone to appear distressed and in need, offered help. Piliavin's study was a field experiment meaning it's ecological validity was high as participants, likely behaved normally because they were in a familiar environment. This means we can accurately apply the conclusions that when an

event is noticed, people are more likely to help to explain why Giovanni helped the elderly person.

Conformity is the act of matching the behaviour ^{and beliefs} of others in order to be accepted as part of a group. ~~Then~~ Internalisation is the strongest form of conformity and is when an individual permanently accepts the ideas and norms of a group in order to be accepted. It also usually leads to behaviours aligning with those beliefs. So, when Giovanni heard about all his friends getting jobs, it is likely he felt compelled to also get one so he could go to this concert with them as that would make him part of the group. A strength of this explanation of his behaviour is a similar thing was found in

The MSM suggests that to move information from the STM to the LTM it must be rehearsed. So, in order for Giovanni to learn his paper route, he probably rehearsed it which moved that information to his LTM. Whilst this does explain how he may have remembered his route, the case study of K.F found that

we have multiple STM registers as he had damaged his verbal register but his visual processing worked perfectly. This suggests that the MSM is a reductionist explanation of the processes of memory and therefore oversimplifies how information may have learned his paper cuts.



This response is given 7 marks.

AO1: Level 3 Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological ideas

AO2: Level 3 Applies understanding to elements in the context of the question to provide sustained linkage and logical connections throughout

AO3: Level 2 Deconstructs relevant psychological ideas using mostly logical chains of reasoning.

An imbalanced argument that synthesises mostly relevant understanding but not entirely coherently, leading to judgements that are supported by evidence occasionally

Overall: Level 3

Total: 7 marks

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- Be prepared to recall information from named content on the specification, such as studies like Young et al (2007) (Q10), Sperry (1968) (Q15), Damasio et al (1994) (Q16), and Haney et al (1973) (Q18)
- Include both AO1 knowledge and understanding and AO2 application where there is stimulus material/a scenario for questions that require the AO1 and AO2 content. Read these questions very carefully and offer material related to the question asked
- Apply strengths and weaknesses to stimulus material/scenarios and elaborate fully on why it is a strength or weakness for the study given
- Continue to offer a conclusion in the first instance and then support this using appropriate data/information from the source material in the relevant questions requesting conclusions
- Use appropriate improvements that are applied appropriately to the stimulus material/scenario and ensure full elaboration to say how it would improve the study given. Avoid pre-learned improvements because these may not be relevant to the scenario provided
- Balance essays using AO1, AO2 and also AO3 content. Ensure accuracy and include the requisite depth to the arguments to reach the higher mark bands

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

