

GCSE Psychology

Preparing for our exams



Introduction

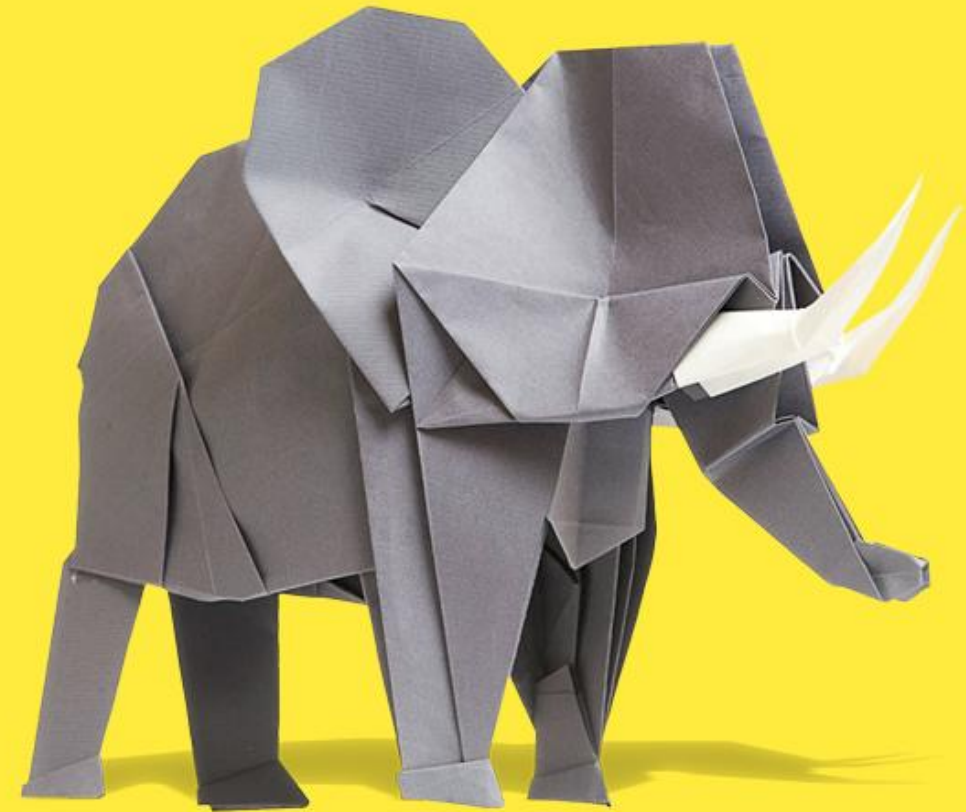


Introduction

Welcome to our training session designed specifically for teachers delivering Pearson Edexcel GCSE Psychology.

The session will focus on equipping you with the tools and strategies needed to effectively prepare your students for our exams.

GCSE (9-1) Psychology



Specification

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Psychology (1PS0)

First teaching from September 2017

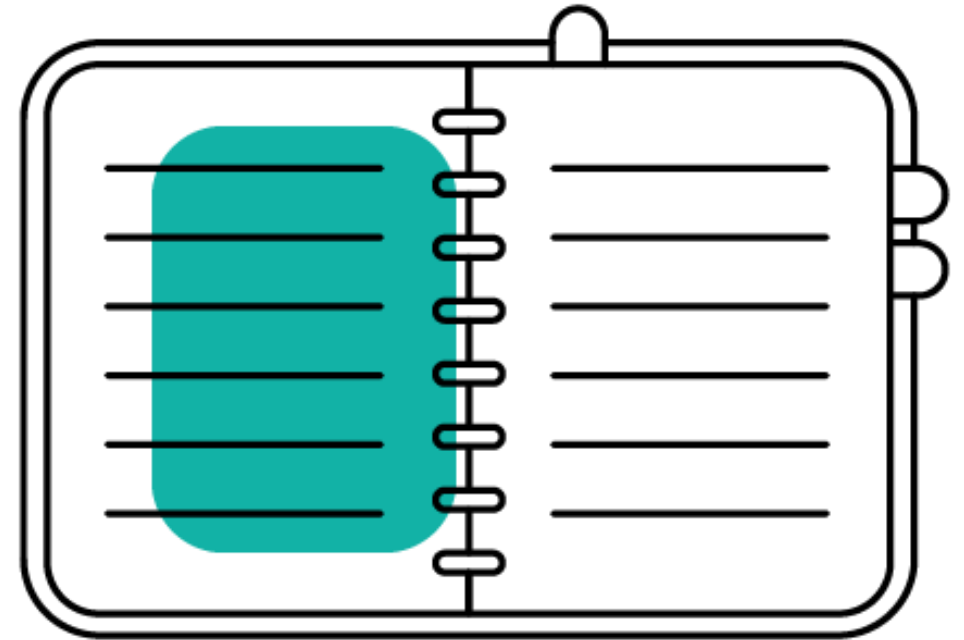
First certification from June 2019

Issue 1

Agenda

You will:

- discuss the requirements of mark schemes, including those relating to extended response questions
- identify common mistakes made by candidates and discuss how to avoid them
- observe real candidate responses, focusing on how marks were awarded
- be provided with strategies to use in the classroom to help better prepare your students for their exams



Polls & chat

Poll

How long have you been teaching Edexcel GCSE Psychology?

Poll

Rank the topics associated with preparing for exams in order of importance to you.

Question

What is the single most important thing you hope to take away from the session?

Preparing for our GCSE Psychology exams



Preparing for our exams

We will discuss how to:

- Contextualise a response (avoid generic statements)
- Get the justification mark
- Improve on conclusion questions
- Improve essay performance
- Help students learn more effectively

Please check the examination details below before entering your candidate information

Candidate surname		Other names
Centre Number	Candidate Number	
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Pearson Edexcel Level 1 / Level 2 GCSE (9-1)		
Wednesday 15 May 2024		
Afternoon (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)	Paper reference	1PS0/01
Psychology		
PAPER 1		
You do not need any other materials.		Total Marks
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Instructions

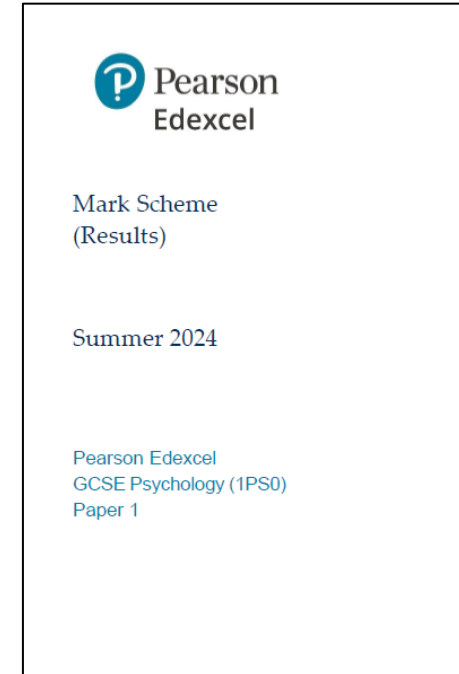
- Use black ink or ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes at the top of this page with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer all questions.
- Answer the questions in the spaces provided – there may be more space than you need.

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 98.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets – use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.
- In questions marked with an asterisk (*), marks will be awarded for your ability to structure your answer logically, showing how the points that you make are related or follow on from each other where appropriate.

Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Try to answer every question.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.



GCSE Psychology

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 (9-1) GCSE Psychology

Topic Guide 1

Development – How did you develop?

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How to contextualise a response (avoid generic statements)



Contextualising a response (avoiding generic statements)

35% of the marks across GCSE will be for AO2 application.

Where stimulus material / scenarios are used, students are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding to the context given.

Where no reference is made to a stimulus / scenario, a response or statement is considered generic.

Just using a person's name from the scenario or copying information given in the question is not considered application.

Students must:		% in GCSE
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35
AO3	Analyse and evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures to make judgements and draw conclusions	30
Total		100%

Contextualising a response – example 1

- 2 Jason is planning to use a questionnaire to investigate whether there is a difference in the use of social media by people of different ages.
- (b) Describe how Jason could use a stratified sampling technique to gather his participants.

(2)

Question number	Answer	Mark
2(b)	<p>One mark for understanding of sampling method.</p> <p>One mark for application to the scenario.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stratified sample is when the population is divided into categories and a representative number of people is calculated for the sample (1), so Jason could divide his target population of social media users into different age groups to get a proportionate sample of each age group (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(2)

Contextualising a response – Candidate A

- 2 Jason is planning to use a questionnaire to investigate whether there is a difference in the use of social media by people of different ages.
- (b) Describe how Jason could use a stratified sampling technique to gather his participants.

(2)

(b) Describe how Jason could use a stratified sampling technique to gather his participants.

(2)

Jason should identify subgroups within his target population, then gather a representative sample that is proportionate to the subgroups identified.

Contextualising a response – Candidate B

- 2 Jason is planning to use a questionnaire to investigate whether there is a difference in the use of social media by people of different ages.
- (b) Describe how Jason could use a stratified sampling technique to gather his participants.

(2)

(b) Describe how Jason could use a stratified sampling technique to gather his participants.

(2)

Stratified sampling is when you ~~use~~ divide your ~~target~~ participants into a representation of your target population. So, if 27% of the UK's population is over ~~60~~ ~~60~~ 60 years old, 27% of his participants should be over 60 years old.

Contextualising a response – example 2

32 Archie dreamt that he was running through a forest with his best friend and his grandma. As they came towards the end of the forest there was a large office building in front of them with a gorilla sitting in the doorway eating a pizza. The gorilla waved at Archie, who then fell through a hole that appeared in the floor. He then woke up.

Explain **one** reason why Archie may have had this dream.

You must use Activation Synthesis Theory to justify your answer.

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(Total for Question 32 = 2 marks)

Question number	Answer	Mark
32	<p>One mark for identification of a reason.</p> <p>One mark for reasoning/justification through a theory.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Archie's brain circuits activated during his sleep which could have triggered random memories of his grandma, best friend and pizza and the gorilla which combined into his dream (1), as activation synthesis theory (Hobson and McCarley, 1977) suggests that this random activation of neurons takes place during REM sleep and are what the brain synthesizes in an attempt to create meaning, becoming a dream (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(2)

Contextualising a response – Candidate A

32 Archie dreamt that he was running through a forest with his best friend and his grandma. As they came towards the end of the forest there was a large office building in front of them with a gorilla sitting in the doorway eating a pizza. The gorilla waved at Archie, who then fell through a hole that appeared in the floor. He then woke up.

Explain **one** reason why Archie may have had this dream.

You must use Activation Synthesis Theory to justify your answer.

The Activation Synthesis Theory states that at night, random neurons are fired which ~~cause~~ the brain tries to make sense of. There is a sensory blockade which stops the body feeling anything, but all feelings come from randomly firing neurons. Archie's brain would have then tried to make sense of the thoughts these neurons stimulated.

Contextualising a response – Candidate B

32 Archie dreamt that he was running through a forest with his best friend and his grandma. As they came towards the end of the forest there was a large office building in front of them with a gorilla sitting in the doorway eating a pizza. The gorilla waved at Archie, who then fell through a hole that appeared in the floor. He then woke up.

Explain **one** reason why Archie may have had this dream.

You must use Activation Synthesis Theory to justify your answer.

You must use Activation Synthesis theory to justify your answer.

Activation Synthesis Theory is ~~when~~ the belief that dreams are just randomly ~~fired~~ ^{memories} ~~memories~~ that are fired into the ~~the~~ synapse. This means that Archie's dream was random memories that have been formed into a story e.g. he went to the zoo, saw his grandma and ate some pizza.

Contextualising a response

Key things to remember:

- Answers need to relate to the stimulus material / scenario.
- Just using the name of the person from the scenario and/or repeating the question will not be considered application.
- Engaging with the stimulus material / scenario in a relevant and appropriate way is what is being assessed.
- If the question is for AO1 and AO2 using a scenario, there needs to be knowledge (AO1) for one mark and application (AO2) for the other mark.
- If the question is for AO2 and AO3 using a scenario, application (AO2) for one mark and reasoning/justification (AO3) for the other mark.

Contextualising answers – possible classroom strategies

- Peer marking
- Mark real candidate responses
- Question and mark scheme construction
- Any other ideas?

How to get the justification mark



Justification marks

Students must:		% in GCSE
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of psychological ideas, processes and procedures	35
AO3	Analyse and evaluate psychological information, ideas, processes and procedures to make judgements and draw conclusions	30
Total		100%

30% of the marks across GCSE will be for AO3

The AO3 content within 'Explain' questions is the reasoning/justification that is required

On paper 1, they are in relation to conclusions, improvements, and have some in the strengths and/or weaknesses

On paper 2, they are in relation to conclusions in research methods and are the two questions prior to the essays in the option sections have some AO3 – one which requires justification, the other typically is asking for strengths and/or weaknesses or ways that something can be reasoned/justified

For the AO3 justification mark, there needs to be reasoning why the identified point made is a strength / weakness / improvement etc.

Justifying an identified point – example 1

5 Leanne is investigating children’s development at a local school. She asks 30 pupils, aged 6 years old, 8 years old and 10 years old, to participate in her investigation.

Leanne asks the pupils to come to the gymnasium and put on a virtual reality (VR) headset, where they will see a simulation of a set of buildings. The buildings are different shapes and colours.

- A triangular blue building.
- A square red building.
- A rectangular black building.

From the pupils’ perspective, the triangular building is at the front and the rectangular building is at the back of the image. The pupils are asked to say what a person living on the opposite side of the town will see.

Table 1 shows the overall responses given by the pupils.

Pupil age	Number of pupils who said the triangular building would be at the front and the rectangular building would be at the back	Number of pupils who said the rectangular building would be at the front and the triangular building would be at the back
6 years old	26	4
8 years old	13	17
10 years old	3	27

Table 1

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

(2)

Question number	Answer	Mark
5(b)	<p>One mark for identification of a relevant improvement. One mark for justification, which must be linked to the improvement identified.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The investigation about the placement of the buildings could have been carried out in different schools, in a variety of areas across the country and not just the local school (1) which would give a wider variety of pupils of 6,8,10 years old so the findings regarding the set of buildings and how egocentric the children were could be more representative of all children of those ages from that country (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(2)

Justifying an identified point – Candidate A

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

(2)

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

(2) 5/5

Leanne could have made her investigation more realistic as it lacks ecological validity, ~~she~~ as the children were shown unusual buildings through virtual reality. She could improve this by carrying out the investigation in a real life setting free to free using normal everyday to day objects such as different ~~the~~ drinks in a row etc.

(Total for Question 5 = 4 marks)

Justifying an identified point – Candidate B

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

(2)

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

(2)

Leanne
Leanne could have added more children to her study and not skipped
ages e.g. using 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 year olds instead of just 6,
6, 8, 10 year olds as this would help us to get a clearer and
more exact answer as to what age children lose their eye
centrism egocentrism.

(Total for Question 5 = 4 marks)

Justifying an identified point – example 2

32 Tilly is struggling with her sleep. She finds it hard to go to sleep at night and sometimes sleeps until 11am. Tilly feels tired a lot of the time and is worried that her grades at school will suffer because of her lack of sleep.

Tilly visits her doctor to get help with her sleep. The doctor decides to test her hormone levels.

Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using hormones to explain Tilly's sleep problems.

Question number	Answer	Mark
32	<p>One mark for identification of strength/weakness (maximum two marks).</p> <p>One mark for justification, which must be linked to the strength/weakness identified (maximum two marks).</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tilly can have scientific medical tests for a low production of melatonin that could be making her unable go to sleep at night and staying awake when she should be sleeping (1), which gives the hormonal explanation of sleep problems credibility as hormones can be empirically tested to measure the levels when someone like Tilly is struggling to sleep (1). <p>Weakness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There may be other factors causing Tilly not to be able to sleep as she could be worrying about her schoolwork so much that it is causing her to be unable to go to sleep at night (1) which would mean that considering just her hormone levels ignores any other factors such as stress that could be causing the problems as it focuses too much on biological factors and ignores environmental factors (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(4)

Justifying an identified point – Candidate A

32 Tilly is struggling with her sleep. She finds it hard to go to sleep at night and sometimes sleeps until 11am. Tilly feels tired a lot of the time and is worried that her grades at school will suffer because of her lack of sleep.

Tilly visits her doctor to get help with her sleep. The doctor decides to test her hormone levels.

Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using hormones to explain Tilly's sleep problems.

Strength

The amount of melatonin she produces will effect how Tilly feels tired. Surely she will have a lack of melatonin suggesting why she isn't tired.

Weakness

A situational or environmental factor could be what is influencing Tilly's sleep. School could be stressful or it could just be that at night her blinds don't make her room dark enough to sleep in. Social media and technology could also influence Tilly's ability to sleep.

(Total for Question 32 = 4 marks)

Justifying an identified point – Candidate B

32 Tilly is struggling with her sleep. She finds it hard to go to sleep at night and sometimes sleeps until 11am. Tilly feels tired a lot of the time and is worried that her grades at school will suffer because of her lack of sleep.

Tilly visits her doctor to get help with her sleep. The doctor decides to test her hormone levels.

Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using hormones to explain Tilly's sleep problems.

Strength

Kim et al found that when rats were sleep deprived, they had ~~more~~ low melatonin levels. This explains the fact that Tilly may struggle sleeping at night as her pineal gland may not release enough melatonin, causing her to not feel tired. She could then take melatonin pills to improve her sleep cycle.

Weakness

Using hormones to explain Tilly's sleep problems is reductionist as it fails to consider other factors affecting her sleep. For example, Tilly may not see enough natural light during the morning, causing her to sleep until 11am. Food or medication may also be affecting her sleep.

(Total for Question 32 = 4 marks)

Justifying an identified point – example 3

25 Colin was shopping for new curtains for his living room window. He found some curtains that he liked, but there were lots of different sizes to select from.

Colin estimated how big the window was and bought curtains he believed would fit. When he returned home, the window was larger than he thought, so the curtains were too small.

Explain **one** reason why Colin found it difficult to estimate the correct size of the window.

You must use Haber and Levin (2001) to justify your answer.

(Total for Question 25 = 2 marks)

Question number	Answer	Mark
25	<p>One mark for identification of a reason.</p> <p>One mark for reasoning/justification through a concept.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The size of a window has token variance because house windows can come in a variety of sizes, so Colin underestimated the size of curtains he needed (1). Haber and Levin (2001) found that token variance reduced the accuracy of peoples’ size estimation as these objects have a greater divergence in size within the category, such as windows (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(2)

Justifying an identified point – Candidate A

25 Colin was shopping for new curtains for his living room window. He found some curtains that he liked, but there were lots of different sizes to select from.

Colin estimated how big the window was and bought curtains he believed would fit. When he returned home, the window was larger than he thought, so the curtains were too small.

Explain **one** reason why Colin found it difficult to estimate the correct size of the window.

You must use Haber and Levin (2001) to justify your answer.

It could be due to unfamiliarity in the window size.

It could be a window not seen or used often so

he may not be familiar enough to guess the size, resulting in

large variation in sizes, taken variant objects like that

cause cause errors in predicting size and distance.

Justifying an identified point – Candidate B

25 Colin was shopping for new curtains for his living room window. He found some curtains that he liked, but there were lots of different sizes to select from.

Colin estimated how big the window was and bought curtains he believed would fit. When he returned home, the window was larger than he thought, so the curtains were too small.

Explain **one** reason why Colin found it difficult to estimate the correct size of the window.

You must use Haber and Levin (2001) to justify your answer.

Haber & Levin found that the participants found it more difficult to judge the size of variable objects. Because windows are often variable and come in different sizes Colin may have found it difficult to estimate the size of a window.

(Total for Question 25 = 2 marks)

Justifying an identified strength/weakness/improvement etc.

Key things to remember:

- On paper 1, all 'Explain' questions concerning strengths and/or weaknesses, improvements, and conclusions (see later), reasoning/justification is required within the response.
- On paper 2, the two 'Explain' questions prior to the essays in the option topics typically concerning strengths and/or weaknesses, ways of reasoning, and conclusions in research methods (see later), reasoning/justification is required within the response.
- The strength/weakness/improvement etc. needs to be clearly and accurately identified for the first mark (AO2). It needs to be contextualised if there is a scenario.
- The identified strength/weakness/improvement etc. needs to be justified in terms of why it is a strength/weakness/improvement etc. for the scenario given in the question.
- Listing evaluative terms without appropriate reasoning/justification/exemplification of why the identified point is a strength/weakness/improvement etc. will not be enough to gain a mark.

Justification marks – possible classroom strategies

- Peer marking
- Mark real candidate responses
- Question and mark scheme construction
- Any other ideas?

How to improve on conclusion questions



Conclusion questions

- Candidates will be given an unseen stimulus material / scenario with data in their exams.
- Short answer questions (2–4 marks) that use the ‘Explain’ command word asking for ‘conclusion(s)’ assess AO3.
- The first awarded mark within ‘conclusion’ questions is the identification of the conclusion (first AO3 mark).
- The second awarded mark within ‘conclusion’ questions is the reasoning/justification using the data (second AO3 mark).

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

Conclusion questions – example 1

4 Sergio wanted to see the influence of practice and effort on learning a new skill.

Sergio decided to show his niece and nephew how to juggle one weekend. He asked his niece to practise juggling every day for a week and when she sent him videos of her practising juggling, he sent her supportive messages and praised her effort. Sergio did not ask his nephew to practise juggling and did not send him any supportive messages.

Sergio was sent videos of his niece and nephew juggling at the beginning and the end of the week. He timed how long they could juggle for without dropping the juggling balls.

His results are shown in **Figure 2**.

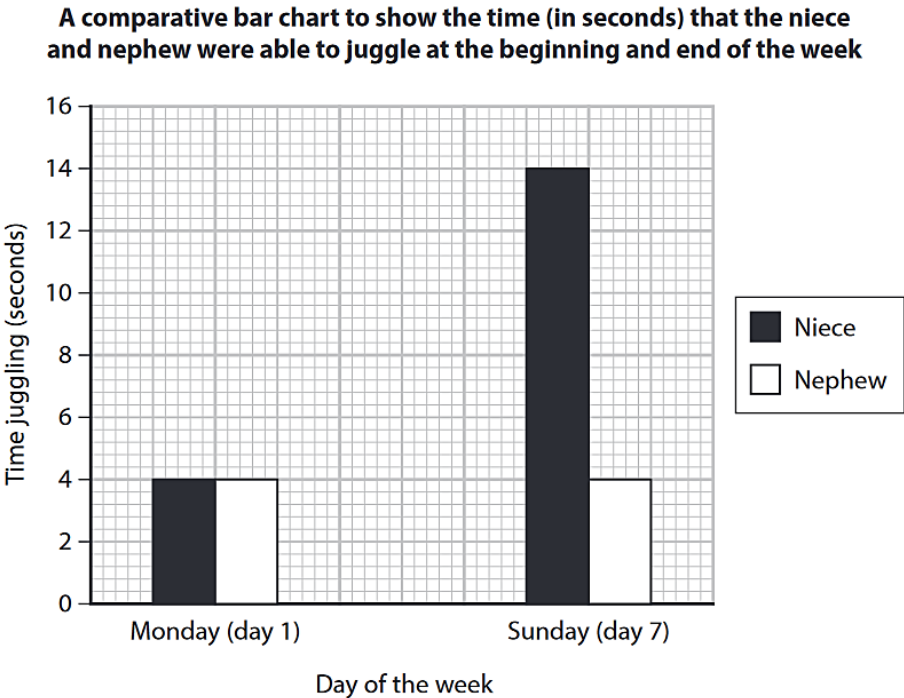


Figure 2

(a) Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from **Figure 2** regarding the role of practice and effort in learning a new skill.

(4)

Question number	Answer	Mark
4(a)	<p>One mark for each appropriate conclusion (maximum two marks).</p> <p>One mark for justification of each conclusion through analysis/interpretation (maximum two marks).</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One conclusion is that practice and effort improves juggling skills (1), which is shown by Sergio's niece being able to juggle for 10 seconds longer by day 7 (14 seconds) compared to day 1 (4 seconds) (1). A conclusion could be that getting supportive messages praising effort helps to encourage practise and learning to juggle (1) which is shown by his niece being able to juggle for 10 seconds longer than his nephew by day 7, who did not get any messages (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(4)

Conclusion questions – Candidate A

- (a) Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from **Figure 2** regarding the role of practice and effort in learning a new skill.

(4)

- (a) Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from **Figure 2** regarding the role of practice and effort in learning a new skill.

(4)

1. If you are given praise you will be more motivated to continue learning the new skill. This is because you want to keep receiving praise and make the person proud of your achievements.
2. If you practice more often you are more likely going to be able to learn the skill. As shown in figure 2, Sergio's niece goes from 4 to 14 seconds that she can juggle all because she put effort into practising everyday.

Conclusion questions – Candidate B

- (a) Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from **Figure 2** regarding the role of practice and effort in learning a new skill.

(4)

- (a) Explain **two** conclusions that could be made from **Figure 2** regarding the role of practice and effort in learning a new skill.

(4)

1 One conclusion that could be made is that when practice and effort is supported by process praise, new skills will develop quicker. This is evidenced by the niece's 10 second improvement after being supported through process praise and the nephew, who had no praise's ^{lack of} ~~improvement of~~ improvement.

2 Another conclusion is that practice and effort helps to develop new skills. This is evidenced by the niece who ^{and} ~~was asked to~~ put in practice [↑] efforts ~~compa~~ improvement of 10 seconds and the nephew's 0 second improvement after he put no practice in. This conclusion is also evidenced by Gunderson's theory of practice and effort.

Conclusion questions – example 2

19 Mikel was investigating the role of the hemispheres of the brain.

He recruited a participant with damage to their left hemisphere and another participant with damage to their right hemisphere.

Mikel gave the participants two tasks.

Task 1 – Word category task – the participant had to pick one word from a selection of four that fitted a different category of words to the other three (see **Figure 3**).

Task 2 – Shape category task – the participant had to pick one shape from a selection of four that fitted a different category of shapes to the other three (see **Figure 3**).

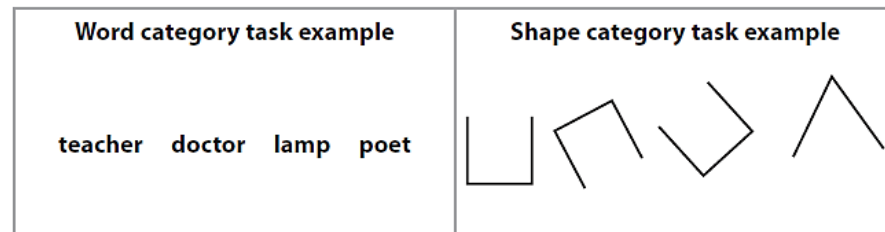


Figure 3

Each participant was given 25 task items to respond to and their total number of correct responses was recorded.

Mikel's results are shown in **Table 4**.

	Task 1 – percentage of correct responses	Task 2 – percentage of correct responses
Participant with damage to the left hemisphere of the brain	4 %	8 %
Participant with damage to the right hemisphere of the brain	92 %	6 %

Table 4

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

Question number	Answer	Mark
19(a)	<p>One mark for a conclusion made.</p> <p>One mark for justification of the conclusion through analysis/interpretation.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The left hemisphere is involved in both verbal and spatial abilities (1). This is shown by the participant with damage to their left hemisphere performing poorly on both verbal and spatial tasks, scoring just 4% and 8% respectively (1). <p>Accept any other appropriate response.</p>	(2)

Conclusion questions – Candidate A

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

One conclusion is that participants with damage to their left hemisphere are ~~go~~ better at the shape category task. This can be seen as they had 89% correct responses to task 2 and only 47% correct responses to task 1.

Conclusion questions – Candidate B

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

The left hemisphere controls our ability to read and do word association. When it is damaged participants are unable to complete word related tasks.

Conclusion questions – Candidate C

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

(a) Explain **one** conclusion that could be made regarding the role of the hemispheres of the brain using the data in **Table 4**.

(2)

From the data in table 4 we could conclude that the ~~right~~^{left} hemisphere of the brain is likely to do with language and word processing. We can see this as ^{the participant} those with a healthy ~~no~~ left hemisphere was able to answer correctly 88% more of the time than the participant with damage to the left hemisphere.

Conclusion questions

Key things to remember:

- If 'Explain' is used and the question asks for a 'conclusion', an appropriate conclusion is required as well as reasoning/justification using data from the source.
- The conclusion needs to be clearly and accurately identified for the first mark in relation to the scenario.
- Once the conclusion mark has been awarded, a second mark can be awarded for appropriate justification using data from the source.
- Describing the data with no appropriate conclusion will not be creditworthy.

Conclusion questions – possible classroom strategies

- Pair / small group work
- Peer marking
- Mark real candidate responses
- Question and mark scheme construction
- Any other ideas?

How to improve essay performance



Essays in GCSE Psychology

Candidates will be required to do 5 essays in their final exams:

- Paper 1 will have 2 essays (2 x 9 mark)
- Paper 2 will have 3 essays (1 x 12 mark, 2 x 9 mark)

Total mark allocation of essays is 48 marks (out of 177 raw marks) which equates to more than 27% of their marks for the GCSE psychology qualification.

Essays use specific command words – Evaluate, Assess – and are marked differently to short answer questions – levels-based marking is used where the quality of the response is judged using level descriptors.

It is important for candidates to understand:

- what assessment objectives (AOs) are being assessed with each command word
- how much to write and what to include.

Essay questions

Paper 1

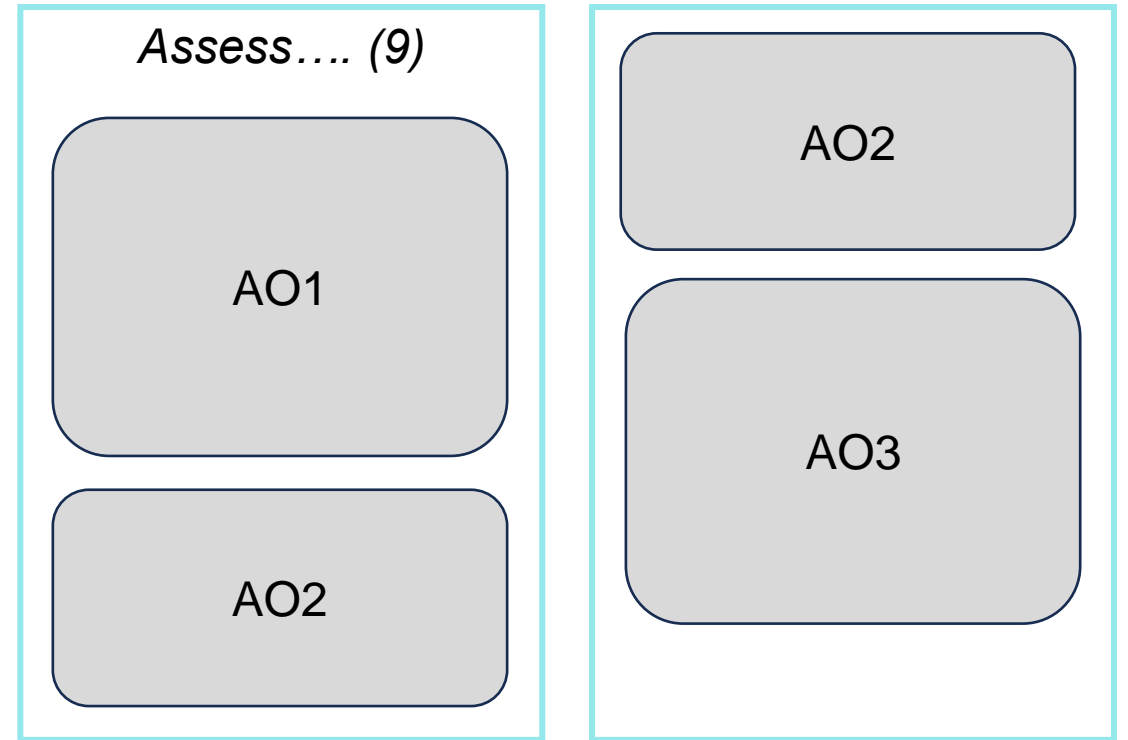
- Paper 1 will have two essays worth 9 marks each and will use the 'Assess' command word.
- AO1, AO2, AO3 will all be required as part of the essays.
- The first essay will always assess issues and debates (1.3, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, 5.3, 11.3).
- The second essay will always assess the interrelationships between the core topic areas (topics 1–5).

Paper 2

- Paper 2 will have three essay questions – one worth 12 marks (research methods) and two worth 9 marks (one in each chosen option topic).
- AO1, AO2, AO3 will all be required as part of the essays.
- The essay in section A will always use the 'Evaluate' command word and will assess research methods.
- The essays in the option topics will always use the 'Assess' command word and will consider content from that topic.

Essays

- All of the mark schemes require a balance between the AOs presented by the candidate.
- Approximately equal amounts of AO1, AO2, AO3 should be presented.
- For a 9-mark question, usually candidates write approximately 1.5–2 pages when achieving a level 3 response.
- For a 12-mark question, usually candidates write approximately 2.5–3 pages when achieving a level 3 response.
- Candidates should aim to organise their writing with structure and logical chains of reasoning.



*Possible approach to organising an essay
(separated approach)*

Levels-based mark schemes

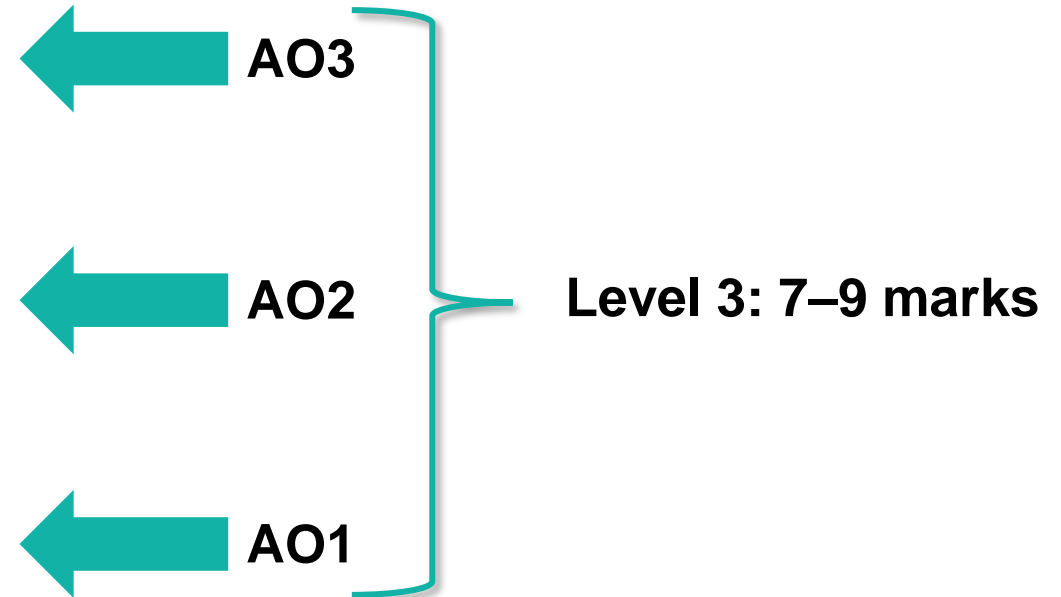
Candidates may benefit from being guided through the difference between the levels and what is required to achieve the higher levels and therefore marks.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge and understanding of a limited range of psychological ideas (AO1). • Provides little or no reference to relevant psychological ideas related to the context (AO2). • Limited attempt to deconstruct relevant psychological ideas. Limited consideration of supporting/refuting evidence, leading to generic judgements (AO3).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates mostly accurate understanding of some relevant psychological ideas (AO1). • Provides some reference to relevant psychological ideas related to the context but this may be limited or lack relevance at times (AO2). • Deconstructs relevant psychological ideas using mostly logical chains of reasoning. Some consideration of supporting/refuting evidence, leading to a judgement (AO3).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological ideas (AO1). • Provides sustained reference to relevant psychological ideas related to the context (AO2). • Deconstructs relevant psychological ideas using logical chains of reasoning. Sustained consideration of supporting/refuting evidence, showing an awareness of competing arguments, leading to a judgement (AO3).

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of psychological processes and procedures, may not always be relevant (AO1). • Little or no application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Limited attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures. Little or no connections between the elements in the question, with unsupported, generic judgements. Limited conclusion that is not fully justified (AO3).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Some application of psychological processes and procedures to the context but may be limited or lack relevance (AO2). • Some attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures but may draw on limited evidence. Mostly logical chains of reasoning, leading to judgements. Basic conclusion reached but may be superficial (AO3).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Relevant and accurate application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Sustained and accurate evaluation of psychological processes and procedures, supported with accurate evidence. Sustained and logical chains of reasoning, leading to relevant judgements with justified conclusion (AO3).
Level 4	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive and accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures throughout (AO1). • Sustained relevant and accurate application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Comprehensive evaluation of psychological processes and procedures supported with accurate and thorough use of evidence. Sustained and logical chains of reasoning, leading to fully supported judgements with well-justified conclusion (AO3).

Marking a response

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of psychological processes and procedures, may not always be relevant (AO1). • Little or no application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Limited attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures. Little or no connections between the elements in the question, with unsupported, generic judgements. Limited conclusion that is not fully justified (AO3).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Some application of psychological processes and procedures to the context but may be limited or lack relevance (AO2). • Some attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures but may draw on limited evidence. Mostly logical chains of reasoning, leading to judgements. Basic conclusion reached but may be superficial (AO3).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Relevant and accurate application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Sustained and accurate evaluation of psychological processes and procedures, supported with accurate evidence. Sustained and logical chains of reasoning, leading to relevant judgements with justified conclusion (AO3).
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Examples

- There are examples of essays that have been marked in the following and all have commentaries indicating what levels were awarded and why:
- Examiner reports
See <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/psychology-2017.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FExam-materials&filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Document-Type%2FExaminer-report>
- Previous training materials
See <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/psychology-2017.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FTeaching-and-learning-materials&filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Document-Type%2FPast-training-content>
- Exemplar material
See <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/psychology-2017.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FTeaching-and-learning-materials&filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Document-Type%2FExemplar-material>
- Suggested classroom strategies are offered later where you may wish to use these to help support your learners.

Essays – example 1 – research methods

*5 Godden and Baddeley (1975) conducted a field experiment to test memory. They used lists of words that were learned and then recalled in either the same or different environments to learning.

They used scuba divers as participants who learned and recalled the words either underwater or on dry land. These environments were familiar to the divers.

The scuba divers were allocated into the following different conditions:

- Words learned underwater, recalled underwater.
- Words learned underwater, recalled on dry land.
- Words learned on dry land, recalled on dry land.
- Words learned on dry land, recalled underwater.

The word lists were prerecorded and presented to the scuba divers twice when they were in their learning environment. The words were read at two-second intervals in the recording.

Godden and Baddeley (1975) found that more words were recalled when the divers were in the same environment in which they had learned the words, compared to when learning and recall took place in different environments.

Evaluate the use of field experiments to investigate human behaviour.

(12)

Indicative marking points can be found in the 1PS0/02 2023 mark scheme, but the response is marked using the level descriptors (shown on the right)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of psychological processes and procedures, may not always be relevant (AO1). • Little or no application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Limited attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures. Little or no connections between the elements in the question, with unsupported, generic judgements. Limited conclusion that is not fully justified (AO3).
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Some application of psychological processes and procedures to the context but may be limited or lack relevance (AO2). • Some attempt to evaluate psychological processes and procedures but may draw on limited evidence. Mostly logical chains of reasoning, leading to judgements. Basic conclusion reached but may be superficial (AO3).
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures (AO1). • Relevant and accurate application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Sustained and accurate evaluation of psychological processes and procedures, supported with accurate evidence. Sustained and logical chains of reasoning, leading to relevant judgements with justified conclusion (AO3).
Level 4	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates comprehensive and accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological processes and procedures throughout (AO1). • Sustained relevant and accurate application of psychological processes and procedures to the context (AO2). • Comprehensive evaluation of psychological processes and procedures supported with accurate and thorough use of evidence. Sustained and logical chains of reasoning, leading to fully supported judgements with well-justified conclusion (AO3).

Essays – research methods – Candidate A

Evaluate the use of field experiments to investigate human behaviour.

(12)

A field experiment is an experiment conducted in a natural environment, but where the independent variable is assigned and investigated by researchers. In terms of the Godden and Bradley Study, the ~~environment~~ ^{experiment} is not conducted in a lab, rather familiar dry land or underwater environments to the divers.

A strength of field experiment such as this one is that it holds ~~or~~ higher ecological validity than a study conducted in a lab and therefore we can assume it is more generalisable to real life situations. Therefore some argue it is more efficient at investigating real human

behaviour for this reason.

A disadvantage of a field experiment can be found for the same reason however. The investigators are still able to control the independent variable, in this case, learning and recalling words ^{under} ~~or~~ water or on land, however it is much more difficult to control extraneous situational variables in a natural environment rather than a fabricated one. Due to the natural setting of a field experiment, researchers cannot control variables such as light intensity, noise levels, or presence of other people very easily and this could lead to disruption ^{during} ~~on~~ the study, and therefore unreliable results. It can also lower the validity as we can ~~to~~ not ensure that the ^{independent} variables ~~is~~ ^{are} being measured effectively due to influence of other variables.

Field experiments are useful in the way that they can often be cheaper than a lab experiment, as one doesn't have to spend money on ensuring the location is available and usable. This is beneficial to the researcher conducting the study.

Essays – research methods – Candidate A

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Field experiments are useful in the way that they can often be cheaper than a lab experiment, as one doesn't have to spend money on ensuring the location is available and usable. This is beneficial to the researcher conducting the study.

Essays – research methods – Candidate B

(12)

A field experiment is an experiment design conducted in a naturalistic environment with the experimenter ~~changing~~ manipulating the independent variable. Here, the independent variable was the environments used (on dry land or on water). This has many advantages.

For one, the independent variable and dependent variable can show a visible cause and effect.

For example, since there ~~was~~ were different locations used, we can understand that moving from one location to another for learning and recalling can reduce the ability to remember

things, shown by how the divers could ~~be~~ remember the word lists better when asked to learn and recall in the same environment. This is similar to Pitavins ^{subway experiments} ~~experiment~~ where the victim's race being changed allowed the finding that people of same race have a tendency to help each other.

~~Also~~ Another advantage is that it takes place in a naturalistic environment. This adds validity to the experiment as scuba divers may deal with struggles in remembering instructions given on dry land when in the water. This adds ecological validity, making the results more ~~useful~~ useful for other ~~scuba~~ scuba divers. They may understand that they should be given instructions underwater to improve their memory. However, this result may not be generalisable to ~~non-scuba~~ non-scuba divers or even divers that aren't familiar with the same environments as the ~~participants~~ participants were.

However, there have been measures to control extraneous variables, which are variables that could potentially affect the

Essays – research methods – Candidate B

dependent variable (ability to remember the word lists). For example, the intervals between the ~~repeated~~ reading of the words was kept ~~as~~ at 2 seconds. This improves the reliability of the study.

Also, the use of many different trials with different environment combinations improves the reliability and accuracy of the experiment since the relationships between the environments and memory can be clearly identified. However, since the scuba divers knew they were part of the experiment, their behaviour may have been unnatural and they may have shown demand characteristics (acting to satisfy the ~~given~~ aims of an experiment).

Therefore, Goden and Baddely ~~et al~~ could have tried to have a covert investigation which would reduce the demand characteristics of the ~~scuba~~ divers. They could test different areas of water as well.

In conclusion, there are many benefits

and drawbacks of field experiments, but overall, it was the best choice to be able to investigate the memory. Although word lists may be less ecologically valid, the results are still applicable to real life scuba divers to improve memory.

Essays – research methods – Candidate B

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Not really relevant

Essays – research methods – Candidate B

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Essays – example 2 – issues and debates

***27** The Chesworths are a family who love to play board games and card games together at the weekend and in the school holidays.

When at school, Gerard Chesworth is not competitive and always waits his turn and never shouts or screams. When the whole family are at home playing games they become very competitive, they all scream and shout a lot and Gerard joins in.

Recently, Gerard's father taught the family to play a new card game. Gerard found the game difficult to understand and kept forgetting the rules, which meant he lost most of the time. This made Gerard very upset, so he played the game repeatedly on his own in private.

The next time the family played the new card game, Gerard won quite a few times which made him happier. Gerard's brother started to come last all of the time. He stopped playing, stood up and told the family there is no point in playing any more as he would never improve.

Assess the Chesworth family's behaviour using **two** areas of psychology that you have studied.

(9)

Indicative marking points can be found in the 1PS0/01 2024 mark scheme, but the response is marked using the level descriptors (shown on the right)

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates isolated elements of understanding of a limited range of psychological ideas. (AO1) Attempts to apply understanding to elements in the context of the question, with flawed or simplistic links and connections made. (AO2) Limited attempt to deconstruct relevant psychological ideas. An unbalanced or one-sided argument that provides limited synthesis of understanding. Judgements are supported by limited evidence. (AO3)
Level 2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates mostly accurate understanding of some relevant psychological ideas. (AO1) Applies understanding to elements in the context of the question, with some logical links and connections made. (AO2) 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. (AO3)
Level 3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of relevant psychological ideas. (AO1) Applies understanding to elements in the context of the question to provide sustained linkage and logical connections throughout. (AO2) Deconstructs relevant psychological ideas using logical chains of reasoning. A balanced, well-developed argument that synthesises relevant understanding coherently. Judgements are supported by evidence throughout. (AO3)

Essays – issues and debates – Candidate A

*27 The Chesworths are a family who love to play board games and card games together at the weekend and in the school holidays.

When at school, Gerard Chesworth is not competitive and always waits his turn and never shouts or screams. When the whole family are at home playing games they become very competitive, they all scream and shout a lot and Gerard joins in.

Recently, Gerard's father taught the family to play a new card game. Gerard found the game difficult to understand and kept forgetting the rules, which meant he lost most of the time. This made Gerard very upset, so he played the game repeatedly on his own in private. ^{↳ development}

The next time the family played the new card game, Gerard won quite a few times which made him happier. Gerard's brother started to come last all of the time. He stopped playing, stood up and told the family there is no point in playing any more as he would never improve.

Assess the Chesworth family's behaviour using **two** areas of psychology that you have studied.

(9)

Conformity is when you follow what the group is doing because you want to fit in and be liked, within the group. Fixed mindset is when you believe that ~~an ability is~~ you are born with an ability or without an ability, so you ~~a~~ can't ~~a~~ improve because you weren't born with that ability. Growth mindset is when you believe that you can ~~improve~~ ~~it~~ with hard work and effort, you ~~can~~ can improve at a certain skill, even if you weren't very good in the beginning. Gerald is conforming to his family as he doesn't usually shout or scream, while when he is with his family and they are all shouting and screaming, he joins in, because he is trying to fit in with his ~~parent~~ family. Gerald has a growth mindset as he realised he wasn't good at the card game, but decided that he

could still do well at the game with ~~some~~ some practice and effort, as he played the game repeatedly to try to improve. Gerald's brother has a fixed mindset as he gave up with playing the game once he stopped doing well and said he would never improve, so he believes he can't possibly do better at the game as he believes he wasn't born with that ability.

Essays – issues and debates – Candidate A

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When at school, Gerard Chesworth is not competitive and always waits his turn and never shouts or screams. When the whole family are at home playing games they become very competitive, they all scream and shout a lot and Gerard joins in.

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Essays – issues and debates – Candidate B

27 The Chesworths are a family who love to play board games and card games together at the weekend and in the school holidays.

When at school, Gerard Chesworth is not competitive and always waits his turn and never shouts or screams. When the whole family are at home playing games they become very competitive, they all scream and shout a lot and Gerard joins in. *→ social influence*

Recently, Gerard's father taught the family to play a new card game. Gerard found the game difficult to understand and kept forgetting the rules, which meant he lost most of the time. This made Gerard very upset, so he played the game repeatedly on his own in private.

The next time the family played the new card game, Gerard won quite a few times which made him happier. Gerard's brother started to come last all of the time. He stopped playing, stood up and told the family there is no point in playing any more as he would never improve. *→ Dweck's mindset theory*

Assess the Chesworth family's behaviour using two areas of psychology that you have studied.

(9)

In psychology, we've studied about social influence and conformity. In the topic of social influence and Dweck's mindset theory in the topic of development. In conformity, there are three types: compliance, going along with the majority even when one doesn't agree, informational, going along with the majority because you genuinely agree and identification, going along with the majority and eventually changing your opinion. There are factors that affect conformity, such as the size of majority, unanimity of majority and task difficulty. Whereas Dweck's mindset theory states that there are two mindsets, a fixed mindset and growth mindset. People with a fixed mindset believe that intelligence, talents and abilities are born with and can't be improved, so they give up easily when faced with challenges whereas those with a growth mindset believe that hard work and effort lead to improvement and they see challenges as opportunities to improve at something.

In this scenario, Gerard Chesworth becomes very competitive when playing games at home with his family and they scream and shout a lot so Gerard joins in. However, he's not competitive in school and always waits his turn and never shouts and scream. This is probably because at home, Gerard sees his family getting very competitive so he conforms and joins in whereas in school, his classmates are probably not competitive, which is why he conforms with the majority and isn't competitive either. Gerard probably also has a growth mindset, which is why when he kept losing the new game, he played the game repeatedly on his own, and ended up improving and winning the next time they played. However, Gerard's brother has a fixed mindset, so he believes that his abilities are born with so when he lost the games, he quit and decided that there was no point playing since he would never improve, deciding that he has a fixed mindset and gives up easily when faced with challenges.

A study that supports conformity is Asch's study. Asch found that when there was a larger group, people tend to conform more than when the group was smaller. This shows that size of majority affects conformity, explaining why Gerard's behaviour changes in school and at home. Dweck's mindset theory can be applicable to reality such as in the Chesworth family's case, as it explains why some people improve through hard work, whereas some just give up when they come upon

Essays – issues and debates – Candidate B

difficulties. However, this theory assumes that mindsets
 are constant but there is a possibility that possibility
 that it might change. It also doesn't take ~~into~~
 genetics ~~and~~ into account as there could be a certain
 gene that affects the way someone faces challenges.
 However, this theory links to Bandura's study on process
 and person praise and how they predict motivational
 frameworks in later life, as process praise is found to
 correlate to incremental motivational framework, a
 growth mindset. So, the Chenmuth family's behaviour
 can be explained through conformity and Duck's
 mindset theory.

(Total for Question 27 = 9 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION F = 18 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 98 MARKS

Essays – issues and debates – Candidate B

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When at school, Gerard Chesworth is not competitive and always waits his turn and never shouts or screams. When the whole family are at home playing games they become very competitive, they all scream and shout a lot and Gerard joins in. *→ social influence*

Recently, Gerard's father taught the family to play a new card game. Gerard found the game difficult to understand and kept forgetting the rules, which meant he lost most of the time. This made Gerard very upset, so he played the game repeatedly on his own in private.

The next time the family played the new card game, Gerard won quite a few times which made him happier. Gerard's brother started to come last all of the time. He stopped playing, stood up and told the family there is no point in playing any more as he would never improve. *→ Duck's mindset theory*

Assess the Chesworth family's behaviour using two areas of psychology that you have studied.

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In psychology, we've studied about social influence and conformity in the topic of social influence and Duck's mindset theory in the topic of development. In conformity, there are three types: compliance, going along with the majority even when one doesn't agree, internalisation, going along with the majority because you genuinely agree and identification, going along with the majority and eventually changing your opinion. There are factors that affect conformity, such as the size of majority, unanimity of majority and task difficulty. Whereas in Duck's mindset theory states that there are two mindsets, a fixed mindset and growth mindset. People with a fixed mindset believe that intelligence, talents and abilities are born with and can't be improved, so they give up easily when faced with challenges whereas those with a growth mindset believe that hard work and effort lead to improvement and they see challenges as opportunities to improve at something.

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Essays – issues and debates – Candidate B

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Essays – possible classroom strategies

- Templates
- Round robin
- Peer marking
- Mark real candidate responses
- Question and mark scheme construction
- Any other ideas?

How to help students learn more effectively



General learning strategies

Cognitive psychology has recommended students should be encouraged to learn effectively.

Decades of research (e.g. Dunlosky et al., 2013; Pashler et al., 2007; Weinstein et al., 2018) has supported the use of certain learning strategies*.

Students should be encouraged to use these strategies when preparing for the A Level Psychology exams and include the following:

- Planning when to study
- Developing their understanding
- Reinforcing their knowledge

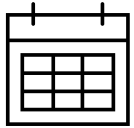
*for a more comprehensive guide, see Weinstein, Y., Sumeracki, M., & Caviglioli, O. (2018). *Understanding how we learn: A visual guide*. Routledge.

General learning strategies

Students should be encouraged to:

Learning strategies

Description



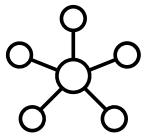
Plan when to study

Spaced practice

Spreading their studying out over time

Interleaving

Switching between topics when studying



Develop their understanding

Elaboration

Asking and explaining why and how

Concrete examples

Using specific examples for abstract concepts

Dual coding

Using words and visuals



Reinforce their knowledge

Retrieval practice

Recalling learned information from long-term memory

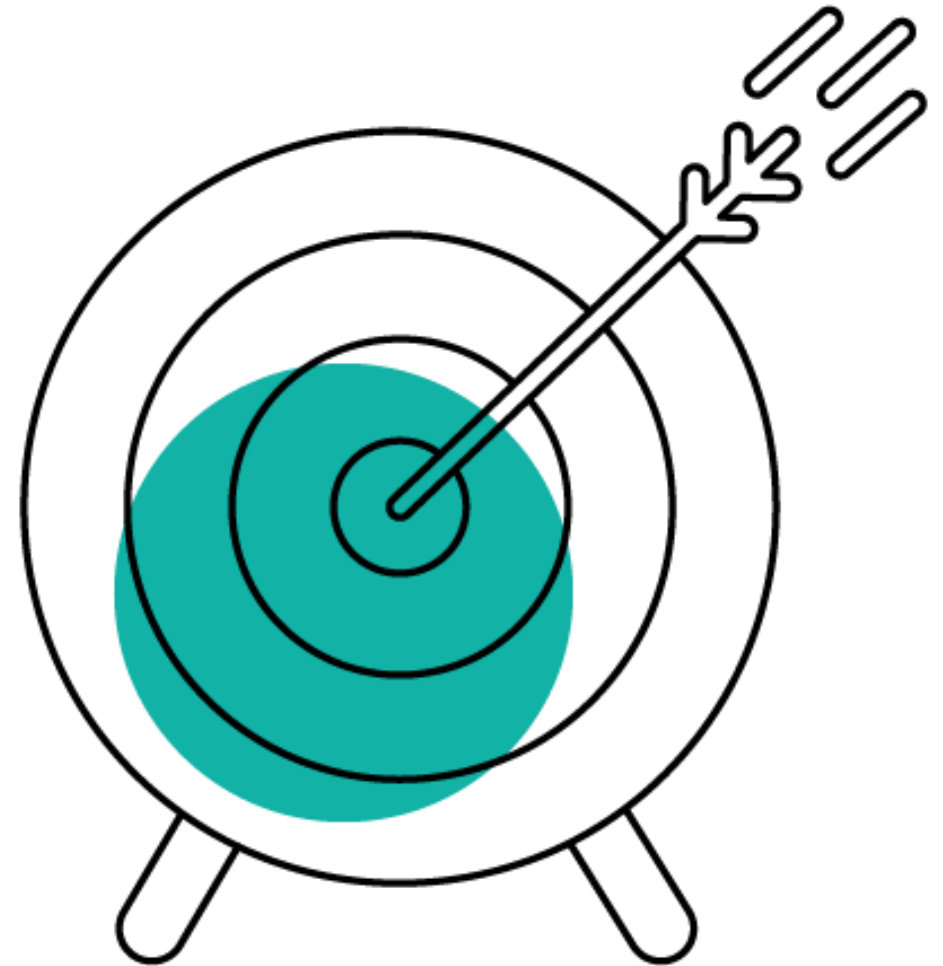
General advice for delivery

- Use past papers for examples of assessment.
- Use the Examiner Reports and attend the feedback events where possible.
- Use the Exemplars and other teaching and learning resources from the Pearson website. For example, the topic guides.
- Use the 'Ask the Expert' service if you are ever unsure.
- Do not rely on social media or textbooks – always use the primary sources and use the specification and information on the Pearson website as the definitive source for the qualification.

Summary

To help prepare candidates for the GCSE psychology exams it is recommended you use strategies to help candidates:

- Contextualise a response where an unseen stimulus / scenario is given as appropriate for AO1 & AO2 and AO2 & AO3 questions
- Fully justify any strengths/weaknesses/improvements etc.
- Give appropriate conclusions and justify these using data from the source
- Prepare for writing essays for each command word, mark allocation, and content by guiding them on what is required
- Plan their studying, develop their understanding and reinforce their knowledge.





Discussion

Support



Subject Advisor Support

Our subject advisors are experts in their fields and are here to support you throughout the year.

Psychology

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Tim Lawrence
Psychology



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