



Examiners' Report

June 2023

International Advanced Level Psychology WPS01 01

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see such a strong candidate entry in this paper, which gave a wide range of responses. Candidates showed sound psychological knowledge and understanding in both the social and cognitive sections of the paper. Responses demonstrated that centres had covered the content in sufficient depth. A few blank responses showed some individual gaps in knowledge; however, they were not limited to a specific question or part of the paper, indicating that candidates approached this paper confidently and at a suitable pace to complete it in the time available.

The social practical was not reported confidently or clearly. Unfortunately, the responses to questions involving the investigation were generic and obtained little credit overall. Responses should refer to the use of a questionnaire. Centres are reminded that the practical investigation must adhere to ethical principles in both content and intent.

Strengths and weaknesses were also often generic and did not refer to specific details about the theory or the study. It was not evident in many cases in what way the identified feature was considered a strength or weakness and thus there was no Assessment Objective (AO) AO3 credit.

The remainder of this report focusses on individual questions and gives specific examples, with the aim of highlighting areas of good practice and common errors that can be used to help prepare candidates for future exams.

Question 1 (a)

There were two marks available for this question. Many candidates knew what an opportunity sample was but did not express the concept clearly, making it indistinguishable from a volunteer sample.

The word 'random' was often used inappropriately.

The second mark was given for an example of an opportunity sample, enabling many candidates to access 1 mark.

1 In your studies of social psychology, you will have learned about sample selection and sampling techniques.

(a) State, using an example, what is meant by an opportunity sampling technique.

(2)

Opportunity sampling is when the experiment needs a sample and therefore asks anyone who is available and over the age of 16 to participate. For example Milgram's 1961 experiment where he managed to gather 40 participants from his university to participate in the experiment.



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Examiner Comments

The description of an opportunity sample is correct but the example is not correct (1)

Total:

1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Read the question carefully and include an example

Question 1 (b)

Most candidates had some knowledge of what a stratified sample was but lacked precision in their response.

Often groups were named, such as an age group or gender, but no link was made to the proportions of those groups. Although an example was not required in this question it could explicate the concept and allow credit.

(b) Describe what is meant by a stratified sampling technique.

(2)

A stratified sampling technique involves dividing a group of potential participants into strata or groups of certain people based on certain factors, and selecting an amount of people from each of the ~~strat~~ groups that you want in your study for diversity.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The first sentence is correct but the later part of the answer is not quite accurate.

If the candidate had mentioned representativeness or proportionality it would have been a more apt description.

Total: 1 mark

Question 2 (a)

One mark was available for identifying a strength and a further mark for the justification of that strength.

Candidates often described the different powers in social power theory but gave no indication of why these powers might be a strength.

Some candidates offered experimental evidence, such as Milgram's studies, but did not link these findings to a power such as legitimate or coercive power, therefore there was no link back to the theory.

A number of candidates confused social power with social impact theory and, occasionally, with agency theory.

2 In your studies of social psychology, you will have learned about explanations of obedience, including social power theory and agency theory.

(a) Explain **one** strength of social power theory as an explanation of obedience.

(2)

One advantage of social power theory is that it explains the behaviour of past events through society like the soldiers of the Holocaust. Their officers had legitimate power and coercive power over them explaining why they had to be obedient. This is a strength as ^{valid} it links social power theory to the Holocaust.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

There is a mark for the first sentence and a mark for the second sentence.

The candidate has identified a strength and linked it to the social power theory.

Total: 2 marks

Question 2 (b)

Most candidates had a good knowledge of agency theory and used Milgram's experiment to illustrate support for the theory.

Other candidates only mentioned Milgram's studies and did not link back to agency theory at all, thus gaining no marks.

A frequent answer for a weakness was that agency theory did not take individual differences into account; however, justification was not given and the response was not elaborated sufficiently to gain the second mark.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of agency theory as an explanation of obedience.

(4)

Strength

One strength of agency theory is that there has been lots of evidence supporting the theory. One example is Milgram, who did an study to investigate if people are capable to learn of others if an authority figure demands them to. He found out that 65% of people would fully obey in a real life situation.

Weakness

Gretchen Bender ~~was~~ didn't obeyed the experimenter's ~~the~~ instructions in Milgram study because of her experience on the Nazi of Germany. She told them she didn't wanted to see anyone suffer ever again or experience harm. This shows that the ~~conclusions~~ of agency theory's conclusions cannot be applied to the whole population.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The strength is identified and exemplified by Milgram's experiment (2)

The weakness is also a good point but the exemplification is not so strong (1)

Total: 3 marks

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of agency theory as an explanation of obedience.

(4)

Strength

Agency theory clearly is able to support the fact people do obey instructions if they believe that the authority figure will take responsibility for the result of their actions. For example, in Milgram's experiment the experimenter was seen as legitimate ^{by the participants} which is why 65% of them obeyed up to 450 volts because they believed that the authority figure (experimenter) will take responsibility for the consequences of their actions. ^{as they had internal locus of control} But increases the validity of the theory.

Weakness

However, the Agency theory does not account for individual differences like how in Milgram's study ^{why some} participants questioned the legitimacy of him and why they refused to go past 300 volts. This shows that not everyone acts as agents towards their own will.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

A strength is identified and clearly exemplified by Milgram's experiment (2)

There are also marks for the weakness, which again is linked back to agency theory (2)

Total: 4 marks

Question 3 (a)

The social practical involves a questionnaire including open and closed questions. It should be based on a topic within the specification, such as obedience or conformity.

(a) It was often not obvious whether the candidates had carried out a questionnaire. Many responses did refer to a social topic but a few candidates had used a practical from another part of specification such as aggression, stress, memory, which did not gain credit.

Question 3 (b)

(a) This question must relate to the procedure only, therefore no marks for results etc.

No credit is given if the answer is generic and does not relate specifically to a social practical.

Candidates often gained marks through examples of the open and closed questions they had used.

Likert scales were credited and any other points that might be involved in construction, such as a pilot study, were acceptable.

(b) Describe how you constructed the questionnaire for your social psychology practical investigation.

(3)

We used closed-questions such as "Do you obey authority figures such as teachers, Yes/No" for objective and statistical data. We also used open-ended questions such as "Explain why you obey police officers" for rich, in-depth qualitative data. The questionnaire wasn't longer than 1 page ~~front and back~~ front and back to avoid boredom of participants.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The examples of open and closed questions are credited.

The final sentence also gains credit because this is part of constructing a questionnaire.

Total: 3 marks



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Examiner Tip

Using examples can make your answers more focussed.

Question 3 (c)

(a) Generally, candidates found questions about improvements to a study difficult.

It is important that the response must not be generic and refer both to the social practical and qualitative data or open questions.

Changing the method is not creditworthy. Many of the responses did not gain credit because they were generic or tried to change the method. An improvement must be put forward – identifying a weakness is not enough.

(c) Explain **one** improvement you could make to how you gathered the qualitative data in your social psychology practical investigation.

(2)

Make sure none of the questions were leading questions so this doesn't affect results of the investigations and ~~causes~~ ~~causing~~ cause participants to answer a certain way.

For example, rephrase the question "Do you believe women are more obedient than men?" and turn it into "Is there a difference in obedience between men



The suggested question is a closed question – quantitative data – therefore it is not an improvement to gathering qualitative data.

Total: 0 marks

Question 3 (d)

(a) For this item, the improvement must link to the analysis of the qualitative data.

There were many generic answers. Candidates found this difficult and rarely justified their answers. There is no credit for saying that they will use thematic analysis – this is a demand of the specification so they should already have done this.

Larger samples etc do not really refer to analysis of qualitative data. Another researcher to help with thematic analysis is acceptable and can be justified so could gain credit if it related specifically to the investigation.

(d) Explain **one** improvement you could make to how you analysed the qualitative data in your social psychology practical investigation.

(2)

Due to the overwhelming data and personal
resources we didn't collect the data into sub
groups. To improve the analysis of the qualitative
data we should have grouped the obedient
gender in one group, the unknown in a middle,
and the very obedient in another group.
And analyse the correlation between ~~gender~~ and obedience

(Total for Question 3 = 8 marks)



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Including more groups in the analysis can be an improvement.

This response is linked to the social practical and obedience.

It is not elaborated enough for the AO3 mark.

Total: 1 mark



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Make a comment on the way in which it would be an improvement.

(d) Explain **one** improvement you could make to how you analysed the qualitative data in your social psychology practical investigation.

④

(2)

One improvement would have been to have a wider range of themes. We conducted thematic analysis on our qualitative data and ~~idea~~ condensed the patterns and themes into only 2. This ^{reduced the credibility of} ~~made our results less~~ our results ^{reasons for} on obedience and dissent as the full reasoning was not included. By having a wider range of themes, it would have improved the reliability. **(Total for Question 3 = 8 marks)**



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

There is a clear identification of an improvement in this response.

It is linked to analysis of qualitative data and related to obedience.

There is not quite enough for a justification mark.

Total: 1 mark

Question 4

This question was an 8-mark open response question assessed using the levels-based marking criteria. There was equal demand on knowledge/understanding and justification/exemplification.

Many candidates showed a good knowledge of conformity but gave simple descriptions or definitions of the different types of conformity, which did not relate specifically to the effect of individual differences.

Culture, gender, and personality were mentioned in many essays but not elaborated. Candidates were not very confident with evidence or justification for these points.

Superficial or unsupported points limited many responses to the lower marking bands. Some responses started with conformity but digressed into a discussion of obedience. Candidates should be very clear about the relationship between obedience and conformity.

4 Assess how factors such as individual differences, situation and culture can affect conformity.

(8)

Conformity is when a person changes their behaviour ~~beliefs~~ publicly ~~or~~ to either avoid being ridiculed in the setting they are in or to be awarded.

Individual differences such as personality can affect conformity. Adorno et al (1950) stated that people with high F-scale ratings have right-wing authoritarianism which can lead to someone conforming to social roles without question. However, Be'gue et al (2015) states that people in political parties who are left wing are more open to experience and are less likely to conform to what they believe is wrong.

People being in different situations can also affect conformity levels. For example Zimbardo (1971) found that in his study, people did conform to the roles they were given as guards and prisoners. They internalised the roles and became what they were asked to become. In the Asch line study (1951), during the unanimity task variation, a participant (confederate) changed their answer and the naive participant changed theirs too due to the social support they got so they conformed.

Cultures that are individualistic do not change their beliefs easily as they put the needs of individuals before the needs of the group. They will not easily conform unless they feel it is right.

Cultures that are collectivistic put the needs of the group ^{first} before the needs of the individual. Even though members do not necessarily agree, they will conform.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This essay has a good point and counter point about personality.

Asch's study also illustrates a point about conformity.

On the final page there is also a point about culture.

This response shows mostly accurate knowledge with a superficial assessment.

Total: 4 marks

Level 2

Question 5 (a)

The command term for this question is 'State' so the features of the episodic buffer can be stated simply.

There was considerable variation in the responses given. A link or communication with the long-term memory (LTM) was the most popular answer.

Many candidates were able to identify one feature but were unsure about a second. There was some confusion between the role of episodic buffer and the central executive.

5 In your studies of cognitive psychology, you will have learned about features of working memory, including the episodic buffer.

(a) State **two** features of the episodic buffer.

(2)

1. The episodic buffer help move information or memories ~~from~~^{between} the central executive of the short term memory ~~to~~ and the long term memory.
2. It also helps control and organise information traveling between the other subsystems ; the phonological loop and the visuospatial sketchpad and then also the main component being the central executive.



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Examiners Comments

A mark is credited for each feature.

Total: 2 marks

Question 5 (b)

Candidates often experience difficulties with strengths and weaknesses.

This question requires two weaknesses of the working memory model. Many candidates achieved a mark by identifying that the central executive was not fully explained in the model; this was less often developed for the justification point.

Lieberman was used effectively to illustrate the limitations of the Visuo-spatial sketch pad, otherwise little experimental evidence was presented and the AO3 mark not credited.

(b) Explain two weaknesses of the working memory model proposed by Baddeley and Hitch (1974).

- central executive barely studied

- Lieberman: visuo-spatial sketch and phonological loop not together
blind people inner scribe (4)

1 One weakness is that the central executive model, which is arguably the most important part of the working memory model (WMM), has barely been studied and there's barely even any proof that it exists or even how it works, which makes this theory a lot of invalidity.

2 There's contradicting information in the WMM. The working memory model states that in the visuo-spatial sketchpad, ~~connects~~ information from the inner scribe (spatial awareness) and visual information work together. However, Lieberman pointed out this isn't the case since blind people usually have good spatial awareness without any visual information.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Each weakness has a clear AO1 point which is exemplified.

Total: 4 marks

Question 6 (a)

Most candidates worked out the mode correctly and achieved this mark. A few candidates calculated the mean instead.

Question 6 (b)

The range was mostly calculated correctly although no credit was given for only giving the upper and lower figures.

Question 6 (c)

Some candidates were unsure of ranking , especially when ranks were tied and thus only achieved 1 mark for the difference between scores.

Even when the final answer of T was correct, few candidates provided the sum of ranks for both negative and positive scores.

Candidates should show their workings in their answer.

Credit may be given for workings, even if the answer is incorrect.

(c) Complete **Table 2** and calculate the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test for Max's data.

The formulae and statistical tables can be found at the front of this paper.

You **must** show your calculations.

(4)

Participant	Condition A Number of details that were recalled correctly	Condition B Number of details that were recalled correctly	Difference	Ranked difference
A	26	20	6	3.5
B	14	15	-1	1.5
C	28	21	7	5
D	19	9	10	6
E	21	21	0	—
F	26	13	13	7
G	20	14	6	3.5
H	24	25	-1	1.5

Table 2

negative differences rank total = 1.5 + 1.5 = 3 ← T value
 positive differences rank total = 3.5 + ~~5~~ + 5 + 6 + 7 + 3.5 = 25

T value 3.....



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Examiner Comments

All the stages of the calculation are shown clearly.

Total: 4 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Show your workings clearly in your answer.

Question 7 (a)

There were 2 application marks for this item.

Candidates approached this question confidently and tried hard to give a memory task suitable for a field experiment. Those that only gained 1 mark usually did not give a timescale, which suggested that it was a short-term memory task.

7 Bashir wants to investigate the duration of short-term memory. He intends to use a field experiment for his investigation.

(a) Describe a task that Bashir could give his participants to test the duration of short-term memory.

(2)

Bashir could monitor participants in a Year 11 classroom, where they are asked to recall 10 words for 8 seconds and then are given a math problem to solve for 1 minute. After the 1 minute, a teacher could ask the participants to recall the 10 words in order to and Bashir can observe it to see if the duration of the short



This response identifies pupils working in their natural environment (classroom).

The task is suitable and the timescale is just acceptable although a little long for short-term memory (STM).

Total: 2 marks

Question 7 (b)

There were application marks (AO2) available for identifying a weakness that Bashir might encounter and AO3 marks for exemplification of that weakness.

Candidates had good awareness of the disadvantages of a field experiment but did not make explicit or meaningful links to the scenario; thus the response was generic.

Often, extraneous variables were mentioned without elaboration, or any suggestion of how they would affect Bashir's study.

(b) Explain **two** weaknesses of Bashir using a field experiment to investigate the duration of short-term memory.

(4)

1 field experiment is hard to control the ~~the~~ extraneous variables, such as the light different. Bashir investigate the duration ~~about~~ of STM, if there ~~are~~ is extraneous variable, the results cannot to make sure that IV changed DV.

2 Field experiment is lack of control, it's ~~so~~ hard to conduct a experiment with good control.



There are 2 marks for the first weakness.

It is linked to a memory investigation and there is an exemplification point because Bashir cannot be sure that the independent variable (IV) changed the dependent variable (DV).

The second weakness is generic and gains no credit.

Total: 2 marks



Always relate points back to the scenario.

Question 8

This essay has four AO1 descriptive marks about the multi-store model of memory (MSM) model and four AO2 application marks.

The AO2 must refer to the scenario and use the information given there. Candidates displayed a sound knowledge of the MSM and applied it to the scenario well.

Candidates who reached the higher mark bands expanded the application to consider both the STM and the LTM and developed their comments.

Some candidates confused the MSM with the working memory model (WMM), achieving no credit.

- 8 Smaragda has started a new job and needs to learn to use the new computer system. She is struggling to remember the correct icons to click to access different features of the computer system.

Smaragda had read the instruction manual on her first day of work but cannot remember all the instructions that were contained in it. She has taken the instruction manual home to read again. Smaragda has decided to access the work computer system from home while she has the instruction manual.

Discuss how the multi-store model of memory (Atkinson and Shiffrin, 1968) could be used to help Smaragda remember how to use the new computer system.

You must make reference to the context in your answer.

(8)

The multi-store model of memory by Atkinson and Shiffrin contains 3 stores, the Sensory Store / register, the Short term store and the long term store. The Sensory register is where it says that we experience the world through our 5 senses and depending on that information enters the Sensory store and the duration is few milliseconds about 20-30 milliseconds and the capacity of the store is 2-3 items. From the Sensory it is the Short term where information must have been given attention to enter the short term and the duration is about 20-30 seconds and capacity is 5-9 items and encoding is visual and acoustic. From STS it is the long term where information must be rehearsed to stay in the long term or less information will decay and the duration and capacity is infinite. The encoding is semantic.

Smaragda has to pay attention when learning the use of computer system in order for her short-term memory to remember. Smaragda didn't remember all the information

on her first day because she read the instructions the first time and wasn't able to practise more time so that it stays in her long-term store. Smaragda has taken the instructions manual home so that she can pay full attention to it and try to make sense of how it should be work so that it can be stored into her short-term store and after that she has to keep on practising the instructions so that it sticks to her long term store that will now make it easy to remember and operate the machine. The multi-store model about short-term memory and long-term memory will now help Smaragda remember the instructions if she pays attention to and reproduces it like keep on practicing at all times.



The description of MSM shows accurate knowledge and understanding of the model and the AO2 is promising.

It is relating back to the scenario but only focusses on attention and rehearsal.

This just reaches Level 3.

Total: 5 marks

Level 3

Question 9

There are 6 AO1 knowledge/understanding marks and 6 AO3 justification/exemplification marks in this essay.

Both contemporary studies were answered equally well. Centres should be commended on the detail to which these studies have been considered.

Because these are key studies correct facts are expected and a high standard of detail is required. Although many candidates had a secure knowledge of the procedures and results, there were a few inaccuracies in the methodology of Yi Huang. Candidates focused on the AO1 and evaluation was often generic or underdeveloped.

To reach the higher mark bands candidates should develop chains of reasoning and draw the descriptive points into the evaluation.

9 In your studies of social psychology, you will have learned about one of the following contemporary studies in detail:

- Yi Huang et al. (2014) -
- Huan et al. (2014).

Evaluate your chosen contemporary study.

(12)

Chosen study

Yi Huang et al. (2014)

Yi Huang et al. developed a study with the aim to review if conformity would affect internalisation and if conformity would on long term impact the views of beauty of people. In his initial study he used 17 Chinese university students (12 women, 5 men, ranging between the ~~age~~ with ~~age~~ ranging years in their 20's. The subjects were all right handed and they were checked to make sure they had proper eyesight. They were shown 280 pictures of Chinese women with neutral faces and they were asked to ~~rate~~ ^{rate} their attractiveness on a scale of 1-8. Every time they ~~rated~~ ^{rated} them, they were shown an alleged average of their attractiveness from 200 other Chinese people. After three months they were called back (unaware this would happen) and they repeated the same exercise with the same faces in a random order. This experiment was repeated with other groups, each with a different time interval for being called back of 1 day, 3 days, 7 days and of course the original group of 3 months. It was found that participants only up to three days changed their answer, leading to the conclusion that conformity can only have an impact up to three days so no long term impacts.

Overall, this study has a high level of validity, due to the extensive measures that were put in place to control external variables such as eyesight. However, unfortunately, it cannot control personal variables such as the fatigue that participants could've been experiencing during the test.

It also unfortunately has issues with generalisability, since all of the participants were Chinese so these results cannot be generalised to other cultures or countries. Although, in all of these groups overall almost the same amount of men and women were used, with a small insignificant higher number of women, but overall it can be gender generalisable.

It's also important to note that it lacks ecological validity. As it was stated before this is a lab experiment where many variables were controlled, and these aspects wouldn't happen in real day to day life. However, it can be argued that it has some small aspect of ecological validity since the test was about ^{rating} ranking people's attractiveness, which is something many people do in day to day life.

It's also very easy to analyse the data since it's all quantitative. However, there have been studies such as Izuma and Adolf (2013) which contradict these results and show that conformity can impact for a longer time, months even.

In conclusion, this study overall has a lot of validity but it cannot be generalised to all and it has issues with validity.



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Examiner Comments

The AO1 is well-written and demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding.

The AO3 is showing some development.

Total: 8 marks

Level 3

9 In your studies of social psychology, you will have learned about one of the following contemporary studies in detail:

- Yi Huang et al. (2014)
- Huan et al. (2014).

Evaluate your chosen contemporary study.

(12)

Chosen study

Huan et al. (2014).

Huan's aim was to test conformity in Human babies and apes (chimpanzees and orangutans). He wanted to see if they would abandon a learned task after seeing a peer use a different task and get the same reward.

He used 18 2 year old babies, 12 chimpanzees and 12 orangutans. Huan ~~used~~ had 3 different colored boxes and a bunch of balls. Individually, they would teach each participant that one of the boxes could give them a reward (chocolate for kids and peanuts for the apes) if they threw a ball in it. Once the participant threw the ball 8 times out of 10 in the correct box consecutively, they were moved 2 m away and watched 3 of their peers do the same but get rewarded for ~~the~~ putting a ball in a different box. Afterwards, the participant was brought back to the boxes and given balls and Huan watched to see if they would mimic their peers or stick to their originally learned box.

The results were that only 2 apes and 2 chimpanzees conformed switched techniques (2 orangutans didn't stick to theirs or conformed, they use a whole ~~different~~ ^{different} box) while 6 kids conformed. Hain concluded that humans were more likely to conform than animals / apes.

Hain had a very low generalisability because he used only 18 humans (all 2 years old) and 24 apes. The results can't be generalized to tweens, teens and adults or can the apes results be generalized to humans because animals and humans think and act differently.

Although the study was very ethical in terms of keeping the participants safe (no distressing tasks, no harmful tasks), the study was slightly unethical as babies can't give consent and consent was taken from the parents and because animals cannot consent.

The study is applicable in ^{nurseries} ~~nurseries~~ or daycares (the kids results) to help watch out for toddlers who conform to dangerous behaviour and in Zoo's (the apes results) since the Zoo's can use the results on how to teach the apes certain behaviours and on what to ~~avoid doing~~ ~~infront of~~ prevent apes from doing so that their peers don't conform and mimic them.

Hain's study is very reliable as the study was very standardised and controlled. All the participants were given the same task and used the same

apparatus. This makes the study replicable for other psychologists to recreate and test Hauns results. The method of teaching is also very reliable since the participants were rewarded with suitable snacks for doing the desired behaviour. (giving the human toddlers chocolate and the chimpanzees and orangutans peanuts) However, the study lacks ecological validity because the task given to the participants is artificial, chimpanzees and orangutans in the wild or in sanctuaries don't usually get peanuts for putting a ball in ~~the~~ a box. This also applies to the human children.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The AO1 is well-written and is accurate and thorough, reaching Level 4 standard.

The evaluation has some development and is quite varied.

It is a very good Level 3 response.

Total: 10 marks

Level 3

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Generic points should be avoided. In application questions, reference should be made to the scenario or context
- Be able to give specific responses that are linked clearly to the question content. For example, when evaluating a study, it should be very clear how the point made relates to that study
- Apply knowledge of psychological themes to a given scenario. Using just a name or a single term is insufficient for contextualisation
- Learn studies (especially key studies) thoroughly, so that they can incorporate accurate details into their responses
- Take careful note of the mark allocation to judge the required depth of a response, and gain more credit
- Use evidence and supporting studies to expand logical chains of reasoning and reach balanced conclusions or informed judgements, in extended open response questions
- Review the command terms in the specification to answer questions more fully, for example the difference between 'describe' and 'explain'

Grade boundaries

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