

Examiners' Report

June 2025

Int Advanced Level Psychology WPS03 01

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June 2025

Publications Code WPS03_01_2506_ER

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Introduction

It was pleasing to see the majority of candidates attempting all questions. In both the developmental section and optional sections, candidates demonstrated their ability across a wide range of questions.

There appeared to be a renewed focus in addressing the Assessment Objective (AO)2 requirements of a question. There was a growing number of candidates no longer only citing a name but choosing elements of the scenarios to illustrate their points.

The quality of a number of the extended open-response essays where the taxonomy of 'evaluate' was used was pleasing to see. The eight-mark essay in the developmental section where candidates were required to evaluate Erikson's stages of psychosocial development was particularly well-answered.

There was a good understanding of the eight stages. Indeed, a number of candidates introduced the fact that a ninth stage had been added given the increasing ageing population worldwide. The AO3 element was strong, where both strengths and weaknesses were given, offering competing arguments that allowed candidates to achieve the higher-level mark bands.

The responses for the introductory questions in the developmental section in respect of "Piaget's theory of cognitive development" were also well-detailed and demonstrated a good level of understanding.

It would be beneficial for candidates to revisit the prescribed studies in each of the sections. The contemporary study of choice elicited a number of blank entries and, for some, the knowledge and understanding of both Ding et al (2012) and Ashdown and Bernard (2012) was limited.

A number of candidates may need to revise the requirements of a bar chart because the title was often incomplete, not including both variables, meaning they were unable to achieve the full range of marks.

Question 1(a)

This is an AO2 question that required candidates to identify a correct stage of development from Piaget's theory of cognitive development in relation to the scenario.

The majority of candidates identified the sensorimotor stage of development correctly. Some candidates stated 'the first stage', which was not enough for the mark. If the candidate had elaborated with detail from the scenario, for example, first stage because she is six months old, then it would have gained the mark because it is clearly linked to the scenario.

SECTION A

Developmental Psychology

Answer ALL questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

- 1** Gianna is six months old. Her father likes to play games with her. He shows Gianna her favourite teddy bear. He hides the teddy bear while she is watching but she does not look for it once it is out of sight.

- (a) Identify which stage of development Gianna is in, according to Piaget's stages of cognitive development.

(1)

sensorimotor



This response achieves 1 mark: A one-word answer "sensorimotor" is enough for the mark because this does not make it generic. Candidates will have had to look at the scenario to make the correct decision.

Question 1(b)

Candidates were required to describe why Gianna did not look for her teddy bear in relation to Piaget's stages of cognitive development and with reference to the scenario.

Many candidates were able to explain accurately that she may not have obtained object permanence due to being six months old, for 1 mark. They went on to explain that she no longer looked for the teddy bear because she forgot that it exists, which linked back to object permanence for the second mark.

Some candidates successfully used the concepts of mental representations and schema to explain why Gianna did not look for the teddy bear.

A number of candidates tried to use egocentrism as a concept. That was not applicable to the scenario because this was not an egocentrism issue.

(b) Describe, using your knowledge of Piaget's stages of cognitive development, why Gianna does not look for the teddy bear.

(2)

Gianna is displaying a characteristic of the sensorimotor stage known as object permanence. Piaget states that children in the sensorimotor stage live in the "now" and therefore do not understand the concept of things existing beyond their line of sight. Therefore once the bear is out of sight it ceases to exist to Gianna and she does not look for it.



This response achieves 2 marks: identifying the sensorimotor stage is a link to the scenario, even though it is not stated, because it is a correct judgement, based on Gianna's age, why she has not obtained object permanence (1) describing that because the bear is out of sight, it ceases to exist for Gianna (1)



If the question requires 2xAO2 description marks, candidates need to use two elements of the scenario to illustrate their points.

Question 1(c)

Question (Q)1c was an AO2 'describe' question that required candidates to use the concept of conservation in relation to Micah's scenario.

This question was answered well by many candidates. There was a strong understanding of conservation and this was linked to the scenario, commonly by stating Micah's age. This was then described as to why Micah may not have achieved conservation. Candidates continued, for the second mark, to explain conservation in terms of the scenario, linking it to why Micah said no or thinner glass, volume of water or taller.

Some candidates explained conservation in the form of logical reasoning and even went further, using one of two sub-stages (function sub-stage) to explain why it had not been achieved.

A small number of candidates tried to use the concept of centration, which is correct, but it had to be linked to the scenario in some way to achieve the mark.

Egocentrism was also stated in some responses, but again, this not applicable to the tasks given in the scenario, so not creditworthy.

- (c) Gianna's brother, Micah, is five years old. His teacher showed him two equal glasses of water and asked him if the quantity of the liquid was the same in each glass. Micah said yes. The teacher then poured one of the glasses of water into a taller, thinner glass. The teacher asked Micah for a second time if the quantity of the liquid in each glass was still the same, and he said no.

Describe why Micah might think that one glass has more liquid than the other, when asked for the second time.

(2)

Micah is in the pre-operational stage, hence he hasn't developed the idea of conservation. Therefore when the physical appearance of the liquid changes, he thinks that its property also changes.

(Total for Question 1 = 5 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks for: Micah being in the pre-operational stage of development (1) Identifying the correct stage is enough for a link to the scenario, because this correct judgement could only have been made by understanding the appropriate age of Micah applying the concept of conservation, with the link of liquid to the scenario (1)

Question 2(a)

This was an AO1 and AO3 question that required candidates to suggest an improvement that could be made to the Strange Situation procedure.

There was a number of different responses for this question that were equally creditworthy.

Some candidates suggested including fathers or other primary caregivers to make the results more applicable to a wider range of genders of caregivers, so more applicable to everyday life. Other candidates chose to suggest that children from other countries/cultures other than only America should be included, so that it was more representative of children from wider cultures.

A number of candidates suggested performing the procedure in a more familiar/natural environment, for example the child's home, and then justified this by explaining this would make it more ecological in terms of validity, or less distressing for a child being separated from their mother in an unfamiliar environment.

Improvements that suggested a major change to the published procedure were not creditworthy because they were essentially changing the study. For example, some candidates suggested removing the stage where the mother leaves the room or having the mother remain in the room throughout all of the stages, to reduce infant distress. This would not be an acceptable improvement because without separation from the mother, the assessment would not be using the same 8-stage processes.

A question that requires an improvement to a study or investigation for two marks, is essentially a What, How, Why response.

The candidates need to identify:

- **What** needs to change
- **How** this will be done
- **Why** this makes it better

2 Mary Ainsworth developed the Strange Situation procedure to understand the types of attachment in children.

(a) Explain **one** improvement that could be made to the Strange Situation procedure.

(2)

Ainsworth developed the strange situation procedure (SSP) using only American children, so to improve it she could study children from other cultures such as Japan. This would prevent imposed etic and give insight into how attachment varies across cultures.



This response achieves 2 marks for: an identification that children from other cultures should be used (Japan is cited but would not be necessary because they have already told us the original sample was American children) (1) justifying it by explaining that preventing an imposed etic would give insight into attachment in varied cultures (1)



Improvements to a study or investigation need a What, How, Why response.

Question 2(b)

This question required candidates to identify one reason why cross-cultural research is used to study attachment types in children.

Many candidates suggested that the reason for the research was to look for similarities or differences in attachment types or to investigate the universality of attachment styles for the AO1 mark.

To gain the AO3 justification mark, the candidates needed to explain what their suggested reason would achieve, or how it could be measured. A number of candidates chose to use supporting evidence to justify the point. Other candidates explained that this would make the findings more generalisable to other cultures for the AO3 mark.

If candidates choose supporting evidence to justify a reason, then the findings or applications of the study need to be explained; just stating the name of the researchers is not creditworthy.

Attachment types in children have also been studied cross-culturally.

(b) Explain **one** reason why cross-cultural research is used to study attachment types in children.

(2)

One reason cross-cultural research may be used is to see whether there is a similar distribution of attachment types in different cultures. Any differences between the types of attachment types could imply different cultural approaches to child-rearing, which could help give more insight into the resulting adult behaviours of the children.

(Total for Question 2 = 4 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks: The AO1 mark is given for identifying the reason that it could be used, to see whether there are similar distributions of attachment types in different cultures (1) The AO3 mark was given for explaining what this may achieve, and help give insight into resulting adult behaviours of the child from different cultural perspectives (1)

Question 3(a)

This question required candidates to give an accurate description of how Bibha and Dalvie could have carried out an overt observation.

As an AO2 question, the response had to relate to the scenario; it also had to describe elements of an overt observation. Descriptions of procedures, data collection and also preliminary ethics (gaining informed consent from the parents and nursery) were acceptable.

References to covert observations, for example, Bibha and Dalvie being hidden, secret, one-way mirror or pretending to be teachers were not creditworthy because these were operations from a covert observation.

Describing methodologies that could equally apply to other experimental methods, for example dividing children into groups, also were not creditworthy.

Many responses suggested that informed consent should be gained from the parents/nursery for 1 mark. Another mark was gained for suggesting that they could record the children in the different activities listed in the scenario.

- 3 Bibha and Dalvie carried out an overt observation at their local nursery to investigate which types of play were more successful at encouraging children to play together. They introduced the children to activities such as building with blocks, drawing pictures, playing hide and seek and completing puzzles.

(a) Describe how Bibha and Dalvie could have carried out their overt observation at the local nursery.

(2)

They could take the all nursery kids together and equally separate them into four different groups as A, B, C, D. Group A could have the game of building with blocks, B in drawing pictures, C in playing hide and seek and D completing puzzles. During the kids engaging in the relevant activity Bibha and Dalvie could observe and record them.

The data gathered by Bibha and Dalvie in the observation is shown in Table 1.

	Types of play activity			
	Building with blocks	Drawing a picture	Playing hide and seek	Completing a puzzle
Total number of children who played together in each activity	8	5	10	6

Table 1



This response achieves 2 marks for: suggesting they would take the children (this is part of an overt observation) then children would be split into the different activities in which they were going to be observed (1) describing that Bibha and Dalvie would then observe them in the relevant activity and record the data (1) If the candidate had simply written about putting them into four different groups of activities, that would not be creditworthy. The response had to be related to overt observation.

- 3 Bibha and Dalvie carried out an overt observation at their local nursery to investigate which types of play were more successful at encouraging children to play together. They introduced the children to activities such as building with blocks, drawing pictures, playing hide and seek and completing puzzles.

(a) Describe how Bibha and Dalvie could have carried out their overt observation at the local nursery.

(2)

Bibha & Dalvia may sit with the children & encouraging in the same activities as the children when observing their behaviours. Bibha & Dalvia may ^{could have} have gather consent from the local nursery & from the parents of the participants. Hence, they are informed about the observation, giving transparency.

The data gathered by Bibha and Dalvie in the observation is shown in Table 1.

	Types of play activity			
	Building with blocks	Drawing a picture	Playing hide and seek	Completing a puzzle
Total number of children who played together in each activity	8	5	10	6

Table 1



This response achieves 2 marks: for suggesting that informed consent would be obtained from the parents of the local nursery (1) and for describing how they would be overtly observed in respect of the activities (1)

Question 3(b)

This was a mathematics question where candidates had to use data from a table and draw an appropriate bar chart.

1 mark for an appropriate title, which had to include the number of children, and play together in some format

1 mark for appropriate labelling of the axes

Y axis: number of children. If it only stated children it was not correctly labelled

X axis: labelling under the bars and the labels had to apply to the correct height of the bar – both had to be correct for the mark

1 mark for the correct plot in terms of number and being evenly distributed

Many candidates achieved 3 marks because they fulfilled all of the correct criteria.

With a bar chart, the plots must be spaced at regular intervals.

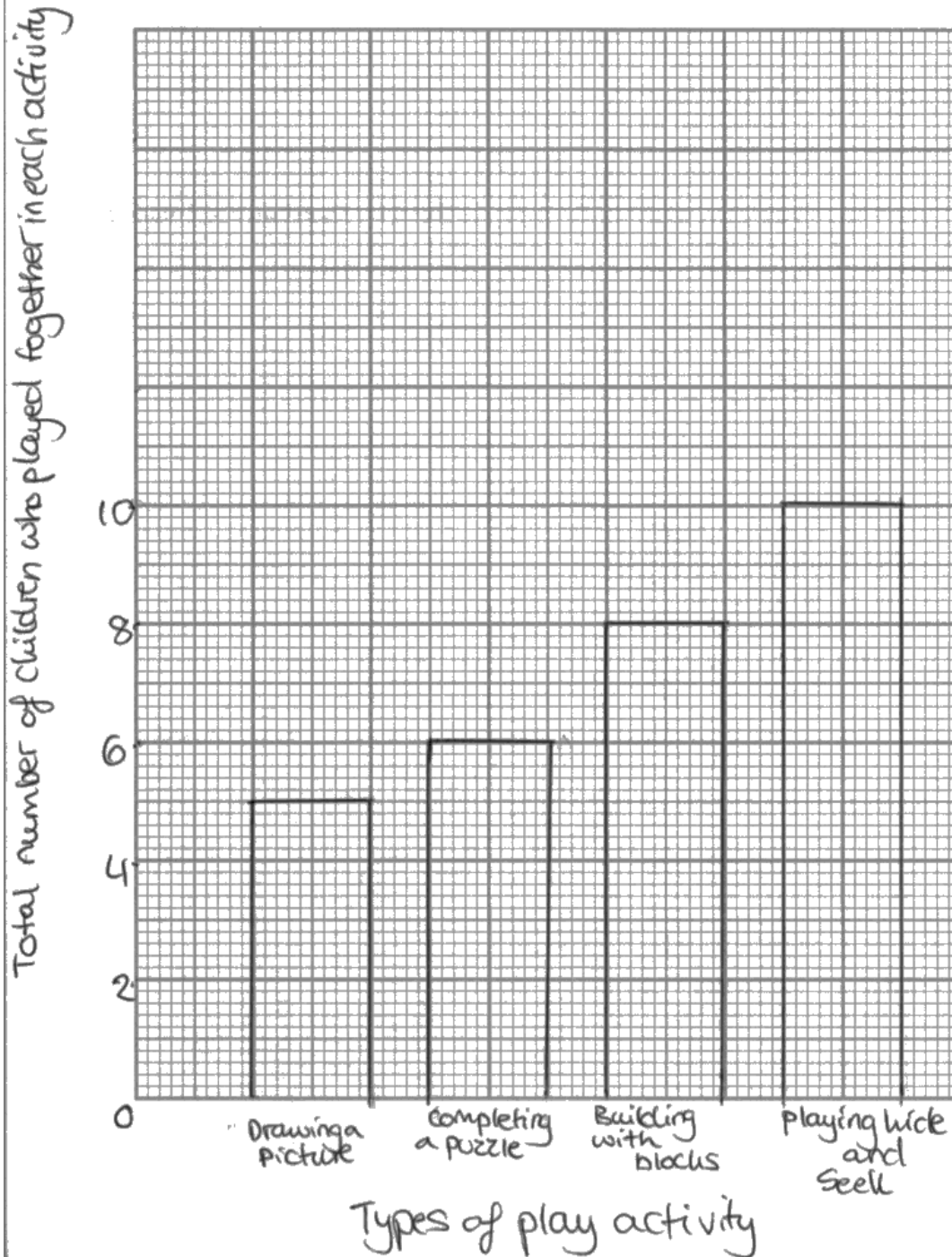
A number of candidates produced histograms because the plots were adjoining and these were not creditworthy.

(b) Draw a bar chart to illustrate the data given in Table 1.

(3)

Title

Bar chart of the number of children who played together in each activity.





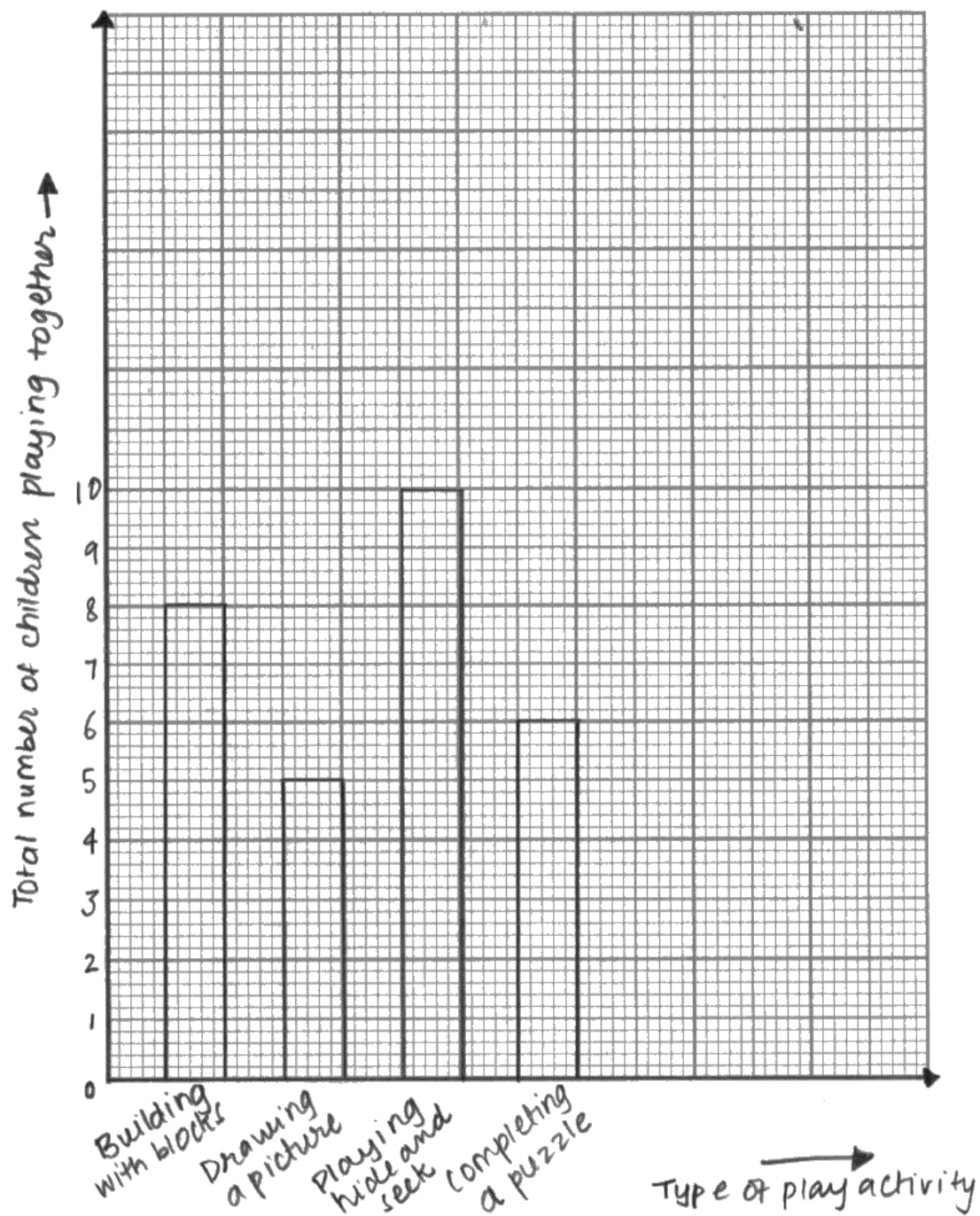
This response achieves 3 marks: Appropriate title which includes number of children and play activity (1) Appropriate labelling of axes (1) Accurate plots (1)

(b) Draw a bar chart to illustrate the data given in Table 1.

(3)

Title

~~Total~~ → A bar graph representing children who played together in different activities.





This response achieves 2 marks: The title is incorrect because it does not include the number correct axes (1) correct plots (1)

Question 3(c)

This was an AO2/AO3 question that required candidates to identify a weakness of using an overt observation in relation to the scenario.

Many candidates were able to suggest that the children knew they were being observed and did not behave naturally. The concept of researcher effects is evident in the description, so did not need to be explicitly named for one mark.

The most common responses for AO3 were that this did not necessarily represent the children's normal behaviour so was not ecologically valid, lacked application to the real world or was unrepresentative.

(c) Describe **one** weakness of Bibha and Dalvie using an overt observation to investigate which types of play encouraged playing together.

(2)

An overt observation means the researchers are involved in the study and thus interact with the children during play. This means that they may have shown researcher effects that caused the children to engage in activities like hide and seek more than drawing a picture. This can lead to invalid results about what types of play are encouraging play together. (Total for Question 3 = 7 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks: for suggesting it is subject to researcher effects in relation to the scenario (1) which leads to invalid results about what type of play encourages playing together, again in relation to the scenario (1)

Question 4

This was an eight-mark question that required candidates to evaluate Erikson's stages of psychosocial development.

Many candidates engaged well with the question. AO1 was accurate and thorough because the candidates had used a number of Erikson's stages and described in detail how the central conflicts could be resolved, leading to the basic virtues.

In AO3, the arguments were developed, citing both strengths and weakness, criticisms and limitations of the stages. Research studies were also used to support or refute Erikson's model. Alternative theories and explanations of psychosocial development were also used.

Some candidates provided a list-like form of the eight stages for the AO1 element of the essay, which limited the marks to the lower levels of the mark scheme. It was mostly accurate knowledge, because these had not been described. The AO3 was often superficial, with little explanation of development.

If a theory has multiple concepts and the question asks to evaluate the theory, it is beneficial for candidates to give an overview of the concepts for the AO1 element of the essay.

Then, concentrate on a smaller number, because this allows for the elements of accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding to be addressed.

AO3 needs to have competing arguments, which can be differences between alternative theories or research, in order to achieve Level 4.

4 Evaluate Erikson's stages of psychosocial development.

(8)

Erikson's 8 stages of psychosocial development states that throughout development people go through stages, each presenting a psychosocial crisis, that has to be completed in order to ~~begin~~ avoid consequences.

Successful completion of the stage leads to a healthy development of personality versus failure to complete a stage leads to negative and unhealthy traits of personality.

Each stage presents hope and will, which are the main desires of the self, and in order to achieve them, people have to pass through each of the stages.

Stage 5, for example, refers to Identity versus Role-Confusion and it is experienced by teenagers aged 12-18 years old. They start to fully engage in social interaction, make friends and seek their ^{future} personality, which is highly important ~~to~~ in order to get to the next stage "Intimacy versus ~~Intimacy~~ 'Isolation'".

Stark Taxler found that people aged 17-20 years old experience ~~an~~ more frequently role confusion than other ages due to the stage 5 "Identity versus Role confusion. Therefore, this theory is applicable to ~~the~~ development of human personality and puts emphasis on the role of Identity in sociopsychological development suggested by Erikson.

Additionally, Malone stated that people who do not complete successfully stage 7 "Generativity versus Stagnation" are more likely to experience depression at age 65-72 years old.

~~Which means~~ Which supports the idea of the importance of successful completion in each stage, and shows the consequences of negative completion or personality traits, which can be generalisable on people of different ages.

On the other hand, this theory is not detailed. Though it is more holistic than Freud's 5 stages of development as it puts emphasis on desires and needs of self, it does not explain how to complete each stage and what is required in order to achieve healthy personality traits, which means that internal validity is a weakness of the theory.

Nevertheless, Gilligan stated that Erikson's stages are androcentric and it puts too much emphasis on independence ~~and~~, which is more a male trait, rather than care and love, which are more suitable for women, making this theory less generalisable to women.

In conclusion, Erikson's 8 stages of development is a holistic model that studies the development of personality throughout the whole life, which makes it applicable to our society and valid for different cultures. However, it is too subjective and not enough detailed due to the weak explanation of the successful completion in each stage ~~and~~ as it is hard to ~~near~~ measure



This response achieves 8 marks: AO1 is thorough and accurate. The candidate has given a basic outline of the theory followed by a selection of the stages, which have been described in detail. AO3 is well-developed and demonstrates an awareness of competing arguments. The candidate has used studies to support and refute the theory. They have also used alternative theories, such as Freud, as a competing argument.

Question 5

This was an eight-mark essay that required candidates to assess whether the chosen contemporary study has furthered our understanding of developmental psychology.

A number of candidates did not attempt the question, for either Ashdown and Bernard (2012) or Ding et al (2012) and appeared to have no knowledge of the core contemporary study.

Many candidates demonstrated accurate knowledge and understanding of the aim, procedure, sample, results, and conclusion. They did not appear to have a thorough understanding of the study, limiting the marks achievable to the lower levels of the mark band.

For AO3, where the taxonomy of the question is assess, candidates need to analyse, interpret and evaluate information, ideas and evidence in order to make judgements and reach conclusions showing to what extent the chosen study had furthered our understanding of developmental psychology. The candidates appeared to have written 'evaluate' essays where the points raised were mostly strengths and weaknesses but only added 'furthered our understanding' at the end without making a judgement as to why.

Some candidates were able to explain and develop the evaluation points, explaining in what way the particular issues they had raised did, or did not, further our understanding in developmental psychology. This enabled the candidates to achieve Levels 3 and 4 of the levels-based mark scheme.

When the taxonomy of the essay is 'assess' for the AO3 element of the question, candidates need to make a judgement in respect of a term used in the question.

In this case, it was whether the contemporary study had furthered our understanding in developmental psychology. See the example below, where the candidate has a number of elements and a final applied judgement.

"Ding et al. only investigated children from China so their results are not generalisable to other countries. Cross-cultural research into attachment has shown that different cultures and countries have differences in the proportions of the various attachment styles, which may indicate culturally specific differences in parenting style. Without similar research in other countries, aside from China, we cannot tell if Ding et al's results apply universally, so we can't tell if this study necessarily helps further our understanding of developmental psychology in all cultures."

5 In developmental psychology, you will have learned about one of the following contemporary studies in detail:

- Ashdown and Bernard (2012)
- Ding et al. (2014)

Assess whether your contemporary study has furthered our understanding of developmental psychology.

(8)

Chosen Study:

Ding et al investigated the relationship between mother-child attachment and behavioural/cognitive development in children. The sample consisted of 160 mother-child dyads from middle income families in Shanghai. Upon the first visit the infants were 12-18 months old when the participants completed an attachment assessment by Strange Situation procedure. In the follow up study the children were 3, where they conducted the Strange situation procedure to evaluate the child's attachment type. They also use attachment Q set scores to classify the children into secure and insecure attachment groups. For further testing they used the BSID-II survey to identify the MOI and PDI index and also had the mothers complete a child behavioural checklist. They found that children with secure attachments had much better cognitive development than children with insecure attachment.

A weakness of Ding et al is that they used a poor, unrepresentative sample. For instance, all the participants were from middle income families in Shanghai and

all the children were first born, full term and healthy. This means that the findings can not be generalised to ~~the~~ people from different cultures / countries. The ~~the~~ findings also don't explain the effect of attachment on cognitive development in 2nd born, premature or disabled children. The study lacks population validity and has not furthered our understanding of developmental psychology as the findings are not generalisable to a large ~~the~~ majority.

A strength of Ding et al is that they used very good controls and a standardised procedure. The Strange Situation procedure is very standardised and replicable and the questionnaires like BSID-II and Attachment Q set ~~are~~ are standardised and easily available. This makes the study easy to replicate by other researchers who can carry ~~a~~ it out in different cultures and compare results to establish test-retest reliability. High replicability ~~also~~ gives us insight into how attachment affects ~~the~~ cognitive development in different cultures and can help further our understanding of developmental psychology.

(Total for Question 5 = 8 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 32 MARKS



This response achieves Level 4, 7 marks. AO1: top Level 4. It is thorough and accurate because it gives full details of the contemporary study, Ding et al AO3: bottom Level 4. Whilst the candidate attempts to explain 'why' it furthers our understanding in developmental psychology, it is very basic. It is only just a little more than adding the phrase at the end of the essay.

5 In developmental psychology, you will have learned about one of the following contemporary studies in detail:

- Ashdown and Bernard (2012)
- Ding et al. (2014)

Assess whether your contemporary study has furthered our understanding of developmental psychology.

(8)

Chosen Study:

^u ADI, ^u 105

Ashdown and Bernard (2012)

The aim of Ashdown and Bernard was to investigate whether mindfulness programs could improve different aspects of social and emotional well-being and competence. They also wanted to investigate if it could decrease problem behaviours and improve academic achievement. The study was conducted with 99 children in Melbourne who came from a school with low socio-economic status and only 2/3 of kids had English as a second language.

4 teachers were trained in administering the "You Can Do It" program to the grade 5s and 6s. ~~their~~ The students did 2 surveys, the ACER well-being survey and the social skills rating system. They completed this before and after they received the mindfulness program. The results indicated that through the use of breathing techniques and focusing on thoughts and feelings, social and emotional ~~well~~ well-being and competence increased overall while problem-behaviours decreased. They concluded that mindfulness programs administered to kids in schools can increase social and emotional development while decreasing problem behaviours demonstrated in schools.

However, one weakness of the study is that because it was only tested on children in Australia, the culture bias prevents any generalizing of the studies to other countries. This makes it more difficult to assess how the study has contributed understanding to developmental psychology.

A benefit of the study is that the mindfulness program and questionnaires are standardized procedures. This indicates that Ashdown and Bernard's study has high replicability and can be tested by other researchers with the same methodology. This means that more researchers can test the benefits of mindfulness programs which furthers our understanding of developmental psychology.

As teachers were trained in the administering of the program and they were observed by external researchers to see the process of learning over the 10 weeks, this increases the validity due to operationalized variables which means it is a valid study to further our understanding of development in children.

However, the children in the programs were from a low socio-economic status and in grades 5 and 6. This makes it more difficult to generalize the findings to other potential kids and their development, which decreases the benefits it has to further benefit of our understanding of developmental psychology.

(Total for Question 5 = 8 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 32 MARKS



This response achieves Level 3, 6 marks: AO1 is bottom Level 4 because the details of the study are accurate and thorough. AO3 is bottom Level 3 because there is a number of strengths and weaknesses, but no competing arguments and 'has furthered our understanding' has just been added at the end of each paragraph without reference to how or why.

Question 6

This was an AO2 question, where candidates had to describe how social learning from the media could be used to explain Hannah's criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Many candidates engaged well with this question, stating in each point a concept from social learning theory (SLT) and linking this with an illustration from the scenario to support the appropriate SLT terminology.

Some candidates gave generic answers, described social learning theory and reference to the media in general but without making reference to the scenario.

SECTION B

**Answer ALL questions from EITHER OPTION 1: CRIMINOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY
OR OPTION 2: HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY.**

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☐. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☐.

If you answer questions in Option 1, put a cross in the box ☒.

OPTION 1: CRIMINOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

- 6** Hannah spends several hours a day watching videos on a social media platform. She watches videos where people challenge each other to behave in criminal and anti-social ways. The videos do not show the people being punished for their behaviours. Hannah has recently been caught stealing from a shop and using offensive language towards the other customers.

Describe how social learning from the media may account for Hannah's criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Social learning theory (SLT) can influence Hannah's criminal and antisocial behavior (ASPD) as she could observe criminal behaviours on tv and news where people challenge each other to behave in anti-social ways, which could influence her to mimick their actions and replicate in real life and steal from a shop due to the vicarious reinforcements as they were not punished for their behaviours on a social media platform.

(Total for Question 6 = 2 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks for: the description of vicarious reinforcement, which had been linked to the scenario (1) leading her to perform criminal acts (taken from the scenario) due to replicating role models (1)

Question 7(a)

This question required candidates to explain one positive and one negative effect of using a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme in relation to a scenario. It was an AO2/AO3 question, so the identification of the positive and negative effect had to give a description of a positive and negative feature of CBT in relation to Levi's treatment programme.

The majority of candidates linked key positive features of CBT such as learning to recognise distortions in thinking, or problems of learned unhelpful behaviours to Levi's programme. In respect of the negative effect, the short programme window of six weeks was often cited. These achieved the AO2 mark.

For the AO3 mark candidates used supporting studies or an exemplification in the scenario to support their judgment.

Some candidates were able to identify the positive and negative effects, using elements from the scenario but did not justify these to achieve the AO3 marks.

- 7 Levi is a psychologist at a prison and wants to investigate whether Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) would be an effective treatment for offenders convicted of crimes such as assault. He arranged for the offenders to attend a six-week Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme.

He asked the offenders to complete a self-report questionnaire at the beginning of the therapy to rate their levels of aggression. Levi also asked them to complete the same self-report questionnaire at the end of the six-week period so that he could measure the effectiveness of the programme.

- (a) Explain **one** positive effect and **one** negative effect of Levi using a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme to treat the offenders.

(4)

Positive effect

The Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to have positive impact on reducing re-offending rate, as CBT provides programme that help the offenders to learn how to control their anger and how to appropriately respond to others if happened the same situation therefore they the offenders will not behave the same way once they released.

Negative effect

The cognitive behaviour therapy required the offenders to become committed and finish extra tasks such as keeping daily diaries. If the offenders are lacking of commitment, they may not learned the cognitive skills. Offenders who received CBT will still maintain their aggression and the treatment would not work on them.



This response achieves 4 marks: Positive Effect AO2 links the feature of controlling anger and linking this to the scenario (1) AO3 explains the benefits of this positive effect in providing strategies to deal with the anger when released (1) Negative Effect AO2 links the negative effect of time in respect of the programme linking it with the scenario (1) AO3 explains the negative consequence of dropping out from the programme (1)

Question 7(b)

This was a four-mark question that required candidates to describe two reasons why primary data was used rather than secondary data, in respect of an investigation detailed in the scenario.

Many candidates gave generic responses for this question. They described primary data and secondary data but did not make a comparison or make reference to the scenario.

Some candidates used elements from the scenario successfully, to gain one mark for suggesting a reason why Levi chose primary data. Example: Levi chose primary data so that he could ask questions specifically designed for his investigation to measure the effectiveness of the CBT programme. This example would not gain a second mark because there is no comparison with secondary data.

In a two-mark question that asks for a reason in respect of elements from a scenario, there must be at least one link to the scenario for the response to achieve the full two marks.

(b) Describe **two** reasons why Levi may have chosen to gather primary data rather than secondary data for his investigation.

(4)

- 1 Using ~~of~~ primary data means Levi can make the questionnaires, and structures the CBT sessions. This way, he can make sure to include questions in the questionnaire that accurately help him measure what he is looking for. These measures might not be available in secondary data.
- 2 Primary data means new, up to date data is being collected that is valid to the present day. Patterns and responses to treatments, including CBT, may change in individual people over time, so secondary data might be outdated and not helpful to measure treatment effectiveness in today's day.

(Total for Question 7 = 8 marks)

This response achieves 4 marks: Reason 1: the description in respect of primary data is in context and then this is compared with secondary data, which is not in context but achieves the full two marks. Reason 2: the description of primary data is not in context, but is correct. However, the comparison with secondary data is in context, so achieves the full two marks.

In a two-mark question that asks for a reason in respect of elements from a scenario, there must be at least one link to the scenario for the response to achieve the full 2 marks.

(b) Describe **two** reasons why Levi may have chosen to gather primary data rather than secondary data for his investigation.

(4)

- 1 Secondary data could be gathered ~~a~~ in the same prison which is a year or months old. Therefore this information ~~ba~~ may be outdated and therefore lacking in temporal validity whereas primary data provides fresh information.
- 2 Furthermore conducting his own research with operationalised variables allows to capture the data he wants. Specifically if a 6 week CBT program would be effective against ~~a~~ criminals charged with assault which ~~may not~~, so other ~~data~~ data may not have exactly what he wants to use. Therefore validity is high.

(Total for Question 7 = 8 marks)



This response achieves 4 marks: Reason 1: marking point in respect of secondary data is in context and a very brief and only just creditworthy comparison is made with primary data. Reason 2: marking point for the description of primary data (not named but evident from the description) is in context and again, there is another very brief comparison with secondary data.

Question 8(a)

Candidates were required to use the data from a data table to justify a conclusion.

The scenario outlined that there were two personality traits and the researcher had calculated the mean number of criminal acts perpetrated by the two different personality traits. To gain the full two marks candidates needed to make a comparison between the two personality types, psychopathic and low self-control, using data from the table.

Many candidates were able accurately to use the data to support a comparison between the two personality types.

Some candidates used the data from the different types of crime for one personality type and were able to achieve one mark for the comparison.

A number of candidates simply repeated the data from the table without making a justification, and achieved zero marks.

- 8 Atisha carried out an investigation into whether personality traits were linked with different criminal acts and anti-social behaviour.

Atisha conducted a meta-analysis of 200 articles about criminals, found in a well-established database. She found that there were two key personality traits mentioned in the articles, psychopathic traits, and low self-control. She calculated the mean number of criminal acts committed by the two different personality traits.

The results of the investigation are shown in **Table 2**.

	Mean number of acts committed by criminals with psychopathic traits	Mean number of acts committed by criminals with low self-control
Violent crime	25.5	14.2
Anti-social behaviour	12.8	21.7
Substance abuse	16.1	23.4

Table 2

- (a) Atisha concluded that criminals who are judged to have low self-control are more likely to engage in substance abuse than violent crime.

Justify Atisha's conclusion with reference to the data in **Table 2**.

(2)

Mean number of acts committed by criminals with low self-control is 23.4 in substance abuse, which is 7.3 higher than the mean number of acts committed by criminals with psychopathic traits. This means more low self-controlled criminals commit substance abuse compared to psychopathic traits ones, justifying Atisha's conclusion. ~~However,~~



This response achieves 2 marks for: using the data between psychopathic traits and low self-control (1) justifying the data (1)

- 8 Atisha carried out an investigation into whether personality traits were linked with different criminal acts and anti-social behaviour.

Atisha conducted a meta-analysis of 200 articles about criminals, found in a well-established database. She found that there were two key personality traits mentioned in the articles, psychopathic traits, and low self-control. She calculated the mean number of criminal acts committed by the two different personality traits.

The results of the investigation are shown in **Table 2**.

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Violent crime	25.5	14.2
Anti-social behaviour	12.8	21.7
Substance abuse	16.1	23.4

Table 2

- (a) Atisha concluded that criminals who are judged to have low self-control are more likely to engage in substance abuse than violent crime.

Justify Atisha's conclusion with reference to the data in **Table 2**.

(2)

The mean number of violent crimes committed by criminals with low self-control is 14.2, while the mean number of substance abuse cases is 23.4, which is significantly higher. Therefore, Atisha is right in her statement of substance abuse being more likely for low self-control criminals than violent crime.



This response achieves 1 mark: accurate data in respect of the different types of crime has been justified (1)

Question 8(b)

This was a two-mark question where candidates had to explain one improvement that could be made in terms of reliability in respect of the scenario.

The most common creditworthy point was for Atisha to have a second researcher do the meta-analysis to ensure she has not made any mistakes, for the AO2 mark.

For the AO3 mark this was then justified in terms of reliability, suggesting that it would improve inter-rater reliability, because they would compare the results for consistency between them.

Some candidates suggested including data from other articles/sources for the AO2 mark but they did not achieve the AO3 mark because they did not justify why this would make her study better.

(b) Explain **one** way that Atisha could improve her investigation in terms of reliability.

(2)

*She should get another peer / helper to
review her meta-analysis of the 200 studies in
order to increase inter-rater reliability and reduce human error*



This response achieves 2 marks: AO2 mark for stating using another researcher to look at the 200 articles (1) AO3 mark for improving inter-rater reliability because it negates human error (1)

With an improvement question there needs to be an improvement in respect of the existing methodology. Any other suggestion is changing the investigation.

A number of candidates suggested gathering primary data in place of using secondary data, but this is changing the procedure of the study and therefore is not creditworthy.

(b) Explain **one** way that Atisha could improve her investigation in terms of reliability.

(2)

She could get multiple raters/coders to look at the 200 articles, and have them identify the criminals showing these personality traits along with the crimes they committed to improve her inter-rater reliability.



This response achieves 1 mark: AO2: for suggesting the improvement of using multiple raters/coders (1) Inter-rater reliability is not justified, so there is no AO3 mark.

Question 8(c)

In this question, candidates were required to describe one ethical guideline that could be considered when using semi-structured interviews.

The majority of candidates achieved 1 mark for this question. The candidates identified an ethical guideline, but did not describe it, therefore the marks were given for the whole response where there was only one discernible description in respect of semi-structured interviews.

Where candidates did not achieve marks, they gave a description of an ethical guideline but this was not related to the interview method.

- (c) Atisha arranged to do a follow-up study at her local prison. She used a semi-structured interview to explore why the prisoners may have been involved in certain types of criminal behaviour.

Describe **one** ethical guideline that could be considered when using semi-structured interviews.

(2)

Protecting from psychological harm.
~~She can conduct a screening procedure. She has to~~
make sure ^{none} ~~done~~ of the questions asked in the
interview ^{will} ~~can~~ cause emotional triggers and ~~cause~~
psychological distress to participants. Some prisoners
may have a past they do not feel ^{emotionally} comfortable to
look back and speak about. ^{they may feel distressed} A screening process could
help to abide this guideline of
(Total for Question 8 = 6 marks)
protecting participants from psychological harm.



This response achieves 2 marks for: the description of psychological harm in relation to the interview method (1) a further description of different forms of psychological harm (1)

Question 9

This was an eight-mark essay question that required candidates to evaluate the effect of weapons focus on the reliability of eye-witness testimony.

The AO1 element of the essay required knowledge in the form of how weapons focus arises and what are the characteristic features and effects on eye-witnesses and testimony. This was the weaker part of the essay, because most candidates gave only one feature, often the focussing of the weapon itself, demonstrating mostly accurate knowledge and understanding.

AO3 was stronger than AO1 for most candidates because the findings from studies such as Loftus et al and Yuille and Cutshall were developed, with an understanding of competing arguments. This enabled the responses to achieve top Level 2, 4 marks.

Some candidates demonstrated accurate and thorough knowledge of weapons focus, together with a well-developed knowledge of studies and competing arguments and were able to achieve Level 4.

Candidates appear to be very well-prepared with evidence in the form of supporting studies that can be used to address the AO3 requirement of the question.

However, this detailed evidence is often at the expense of the knowledge and understanding of a particular concept or theory.

To meet the requirements of both AO1 and AO3 in the higher levels, equal attention needs to be given both to knowledge and understanding and well-developed and logical evaluations.

9 Evaluate the effect of weapons focus on the reliability of eye-witness testimony.

~~Loftus and Palmer (1987), Loftus and Ebenhart, Pickel (1989), (8)~~
~~Pickel (2006), Wagstaff (2003), Fowlett (2013), Alibisi (2002), Christenson (1992)~~
Weapon Focus refers to one of the factors that can affect the accuracy, and thus the reliability of eyewitness testimony. If a weapon is present, it's likely that our focus of attention will be on the weapon as it acts as an immediate threat to us. When we perceive something as an immediate threat or traumatic stimuli for us, we tend to focus on that source rather than anything going on around us. Christenson (1992) suggests that when we receive a stimuli that induces anxiety, fear or trauma in us, we tend to focus on the stimuli, rather than the peripheral details of the situation. This view is supported by Loftus and Palmer's (1987) study, where ~~customers~~ participants were shown customers walking in with either a sharp, weapon-like object (syringe) or a normal checkbook, those who were shown the syringe condition were significantly less likely to identify the subject in an identity parade vs. those who participated in the checkbook condition. This shows that the presence of anything that elicits threat - such as a weapon - can alter the focus and thus reduce the memory eyewitnesses have of the ~~perpetrator~~ criminal. Furthermore, the Easterbrook hypothesis discusses the processes of attention narrowing, which takes place when we are in situations that cause anxiety or stress. Crimes where ~~with~~ weapons are involved can be one such situation. This can also be supported by Pickel (1989)

where participants showed poorest recall of the man that held either the chicken (raw) or the weapon. Though this study had a condition where the man was also holding scissors, this was not deemed unusual by participants as the study was based in a hair salon scenario, and scissors are common there. This shows, not only that a weapon can alter the recall of an event, but also that the unusualness of the situation may also play a part in affecting how reliable an eyewitness' testimony is. If something is unusual, it may catch our attention more than usual and thus make witnesses to crime ignorant to any other details. The presence of a weapon may also raise our cortisol levels as it is a highly stress inducing situation. Cortisol can lead to memory impairments, but it can also enhance selective attention as proposed by al' Absi et al (2002). This may mean that the stress can either enhance selective attention towards the weapon, negatively affecting recall, or it can raise selective attention towards the perpetrator. However, studies like Pickel and Loftus and Palmer's are often only experimental and have low ecological validity. Real-life based studies like Wagstaff et al (2003) show that participants don't show weapon focus effect and often have detailed recall. Yullie and Cutshall (1986) also support this as employees involved in this robbery recalled the event with high detail and didn't have impairments. But, this may be because they were closest to the crime, so the proximity to the criminal may have over taken any negative impacts on recall of weapon focus.

(Total for Question 9 = 8 marks)



This response achieves Level 4, 8 marks: AO1 has many characteristic features of weapons focus, attention, attention narrowing and cortisol both as a negative and positive effect on the reliability of eye-witness testimony. AO3 is well developed with the use of the findings of multiple studies, which have also been applied. Yuille and Cutshall offers a competing argument, so top Level 4 for this response.

Question 10

This was an eight-mark essay question that required candidates to assess whether using a psychological (case) formulation can help us understand the offending behaviour of an individual.

Many candidates demonstrated accurate knowledge and understanding of the processes and teams involved in a psychological case formulation. Key factors such as predisposing experiences, precipitating factors were outlined and explained for the AO1 element of the essay.

In respect of the AO3 requirement, candidates often used an evaluative format to address the question, giving findings from studies and examples of why psychological case formulation may be flawed. The facts were accurate in many cases, but did not address the question of how it helped us to understand the offending behaviour of individuals. This restricted the candidates to the lower levels of the mark band.

Some candidates did address the question of how it helped us to understand the offending behaviour of an individual, choosing examples from the cited studies or concepts that could or could not be applied to offenders. This enabled them to achieve the higher levels of the mark band.

The taxonomy of the essay questions dictates information that is required to reach in particular the AO3 element of a question.

In this particular essay, the candidate has not merely tacked on 'so this helps us understand the offending behaviour of an individual'. Neither have they provided a 'strengths and weaknesses' approach, which is required for an 'evaluate' essay.

With an 'assess' essay, answers need to be developed to link evaluation points back to the question, where a judgement will need to be made. Candidates should assess how a particular point they have made addresses the question.

10 Assess whether using a psychological (case) formulation can help us understand the offending behaviour of an individual.

McKnight (1984)
Mindinas (2013)
Kylonen (2006)

(8)

Psychological case formulation is the process of creating a detail case history of an offender with details about the motivation of offender, the way they deal with responding to traumatic events, their past history in terms of childhood relationships and attachment bonds. Usually, the case can be a way for the offender to understand their behaviour as well, and it can benefit them in terms of how to alter their behaviour. Usually, case formulations can also help give recommendations for treatments that the offender should pursue, like CBT. Normally, in a case formulation, a multidisciplinary team is involved, like parole or probation officers, mental health experts, psychologists and etc. These people need to be highly trained in case formulation as any gaps in their understanding of behaviour can cause treatments to be ineffective and the case would fail to explain behaviours. This is often very time consuming and it can lead to delays in creating the plan, which can impede the process of understanding the offender and providing apt treatments. Mindinas et al (2013) found that even with training, officers didn't feel like they could be confident in their formulations. This could mean that they may not appropriately be able to understand the offender, and their motivations. Moreover, the case formulations, at the end of the day, are

summaries that are created by the psychologist. This means that they get to choose which information to include and exclude in their formulations. As a result, the case formulations may not suitably explain the behaviour of the offender. In fact, it creates a bias in the understanding as psychologists may choose to include information that fits their preconceived ideas about why an offender acts criminally. However, some formulations are successful as studies like McKnight et al. (1984) show that case formulations have predictive validity as they're able to recommend the apt treatments and explain behaviour after treatment. This shows that if a formulation is valid and free from bias, it can inform us of the root cause ~~behind~~ behind criminal behaviour and thus find out how to treat it. Moving on, psychological case formulations often place high emphasis on past trauma, childhood relationships and etc. However, this information is as good as the informant that gives it. Since it's retrospective data, it may not be remembered accurately and thus leads to invalid claims and conclusions being made about the offender's behaviour. This can reduce the accuracy of the case formulation and move psychologists away from understanding why a criminal offends. However, even if a case is well informed and formulated, studies like Huyken (2006) show that a well informed case is not always useful for understanding the behaviour of criminals.

(Total for Question 10 = 8 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B OPTION 1 = 32 MARKS



This response achieves Level 4, 8 marks: AO1 is accurate and thorough because there is a clear understanding of the processes and the teams involved in a psychological case formulation. AO3 is well-developed and a particular strength of this essay is how the candidate addresses the issue of helping us to understand offending behaviour. Judgements in this respect are woven into every paragraph and they demonstrate logical chains of reasoning. It is balanced and a number of competing arguments have been put forward.

Question 11

This was an AO2 question where candidates had to describe how cortisol could account for Hannah's high levels of stress.

Many candidates engaged well with this question, stating in each point how cortisol, as a part of the physiology of stress, was linked to high stress levels, using an illustration from the scenario.

Some candidates gave generic answers, describing the role of cortisol in stress levels in general but without making reference to the scenario.

SECTION B

If you answer the questions in Option 2, put a cross in the box ☒.

OPTION 2: HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

- 11** Hannah watches videos on a social media platform. She shares the videos several times a day with her friends. Hannah gets very upset if they do not acknowledge that they have seen them. She has experienced chest pains when her friends do not react positively or like the videos she has shared. Hannah has recently been diagnosed with high levels of stress.

Describe how cortisol may account for Hannah's high levels of stress.

Cortisol is the hormone that is released in times of stress. It causes glucose production, maintaining a high heart rate, as well as decreases immunity. Hannah's friends ignoring her videos could cause her stress, since Hannah's friends are constantly ignoring her videos, this means she is constantly stressed, causing the constant release of cortisol, leading to decreased immunity and chest pains and high levels of stress.

(Total for Question 11 = 2 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks. Marks are given for: the description how cortisol is released, which had been linked to the scenario (1) cortisol causing chest pain, due to stress when the friends ignore her videos (1)

Question 12(a)

This question required candidates to explain one positive and one negative effect of using a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme in relation to a scenario. It was an AO2/AO3 question, so the identification of the positive and negative effect had to give a description of a positive and negative feature of CBT, in relation to Levi's treatment programme.

The majority of candidates linked key positive features of CBT such as learning to recognise distortions in thinking, or problems of learned unhelpful behaviours to Levi's programme.

In respect of the negative effect, the short programme window of 6 weeks was often cited. This achieved the AO2 mark.

For the AO3 mark, candidates used supporting studies or an exemplification in the scenario to support their judgment. Some candidates were able to identify the positive and negative effects, using elements from the scenario but did not justify these to achieve the AO3 marks.

12 Levi is a doctor at a health clinic and wants to investigate whether Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) would be an effective treatment for anxiety disorders such as generalised anxiety disorder. He arranged for his patients to attend a six-week Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme.

He asked his patients to complete a self-report questionnaire at the beginning of the therapy to rate their levels of anxiety. Levi also asked them to complete the same self-report questionnaire at the end of the six-week period so that he could measure the effectiveness of the programme.

(a) Explain **one** positive effect and **one** negative effect of Levi using a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) programme to treat anxiety disorders.

(4)

Positive effect

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy targets maladaptive thinking and focuses on tackling the cause of anxiety. Therefore, Levi's patients will have longer lasting effects of reduced anxiety as the CBT will provide them with strategies to deal with their anxiety.

Negative effect

A negative effect of CBT is that it often takes a while to experience the benefits of the therapy, such as reduced anxiety. Thus, Levi's patients may drop out of the therapy as they may feel it takes too long compared to other treatments like drug therapies – SSRIs and SNRIs.



This response achieves 4 marks: Positive Effect AO2 links the feature of maladaptive thinking and targeting the cause of anxiety from the scenario (1) AO3 explains the benefits of this positive effect in providing strategies to deal with the anxiety (1) Negative Effect AO2 links the negative effect of time in respect of anxiety from the scenario (1) AO3 explains the negative consequence of dropping out from the programme (1)

Question 12(b)

This was a four-mark question that required candidates to describe two reasons why primary data was used rather than secondary data in respect of an investigation detailed in the scenario.

Many candidates gave generic responses for this question. They described primary data and secondary data but did not make a comparison or make reference to the scenario.

Some candidates used elements from the scenario successfully, to gain one mark for suggesting a reason why Levi chose primary data. Example: Levi chose primary data so that he could ask questions specifically designed for his investigation, to measure the effectiveness of the CBT programme. This example would not gain a second mark because there is no comparison with secondary data.

(b) Describe **two** reasons why Levi may have chosen to gather primary data rather than secondary data for his investigation.

(4)

- 1 Primary data would allow Levi to directly test his aim of whether CBT is effective in treating anxiety, whereas secondary data may not have fit his aim directly. This increases the validity of his results on the effectiveness of CBT on anxiety as his results are more accurate.
- 2 Primary data ensures that Levi uses a more standardised procedure when testing the effectiveness of CBT on anxiety, as secondary data may not use the same methods to collect data for Levi's study. This would increase the reliability of his investigation as other researchers can replicate it.

(Total for Question 12 = 8 marks)



This achieves 4 marks: Reason 1: the description in respect of primary data is in context and then this is compared with secondary data, which is not in context but achieves the full two marks. Reason 2: the description of primary data is in context, however the comparison with secondary data is not in context, but it still achieves the full two marks.



In a two-mark question that asks for a reason in respect of elements from a scenario, there must be at least one link to the scenario for the response to achieve the full 2 marks.

Question 13(a)

The scenario outlined that there were two personality traits and the researcher had calculated the mean number of episodes of anxiety experienced by the two different personality traits. To gain the full two marks candidates needed to make a comparison between the two personality types, high sense of control and introverted personality, using data from the table.

Many candidates were able to use the data accurately to support a comparison between the two personality types.

Some candidates used the data from the different types of types of social situations for one personality type and were able to achieve one mark for the comparison.

A number of candidates simply repeated the data from the table without making a justification and achieved no marks.

- 13 Atisha carried out an investigation into whether personality traits were linked with stress.

Atisha conducted a meta-analysis of 200 articles about stress in social situations, found in a well-established database. She found that there were two key personality traits mentioned in the articles, high sense of control and introverted personality. She calculated the mean number of episodes of anxiety experienced by the two different personality traits.

The results of the investigation are shown in **Table 3**.

	Mean number of episodes of anxiety in those with high sense of control	Mean number of episodes of anxiety in those with an introverted personality
Attending a party	25.5	14.2
Going to work or school	12.8	21.7
Starting conversations	16.1	23.4

Table 3

- (a) Atisha concluded that people with an introverted personality are more likely to experience an episode of anxiety when starting conversations than from attending a party.

Justify Atisha's conclusion with reference to the data in **Table 3**.

(2)

Atisha's conclusion is strongly supported by the outcome of her investigation. In comparison to those with high sense of control, those with introverted personality attending the party has a record of 11.3 times less anxiety episodes from attending a party but starting a conversation caused an anxiety episode 7.3 times more.



This response achieves 2 marks for: using the data between high sense of control and introverted personality (1) justifying the data (1)

- 13 Atisha carried out an investigation into whether personality traits were linked with stress.

Atisha conducted a meta-analysis of 200 articles about stress in social situations, found in a well-established database. She found that there were two key personality traits mentioned in the articles, high sense of control and introverted personality. She calculated the mean number of episodes of anxiety experienced by the two different personality traits.

The results of the investigation are shown in **Table 3**.

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Starting conversations	16.1	23.4

Table 3

- (a) Atisha concluded that people with an introverted personality are more likely to experience an episode of anxiety when starting conversations than from attending a party.

Justify Atisha's conclusion with reference to the data in **Table 3**.

(2)

Atisha's conclusion that people with an introverted personality are more likely to experience an episode of anxiety when starting conversations than from attending parties is justifiable as her results show the highest level in introverted personality is of starting conversations which is 23.4 and the lowest is of attending a party which is 14.2 showing significant difference in the levels of anxiety



This achieves 1 mark: accurate data in respect of the different social situations has been justified.

Question 13(b)

This was a two-mark question where candidates had to explain one improvement that could be made in terms of reliability in respect of the scenario.

The most common creditworthy response was for Atisha to have a second researcher do the meta-analysis to ensure that she has not made any mistakes, for the AO2 mark. For the AO3 mark this was then justified in terms of reliability, suggesting that it would improve inter-rater reliability because they would compare the results for consistency between them.

Some candidates suggested including data from other articles/sources for the AO2 mark but they did not achieve the AO3 mark because they did not justify why this would make her study better.

(b) Explain **one** way that Atisha could improve her investigation in terms of reliability.

(2)

Atisha could ask other researchers to conduct meta-analysis' of the same database. They can compare their results and establish inter-rater reliability.



This response achieves 2 marks. AO2: for stating to use another researcher, in context because it references meta-analysis (1) AO3: for comparing results to achieve inter-rater reliability (1)

With an improvement question the improvement needs to be in respect of the existing methodology because any other suggestion is changing the investigation.

A number of candidates suggested gathering primary data in place of using secondary data, but this is changing the procedure of the study and is not creditworthy.

(b) Explain **one** way that Atisha could improve her investigation in terms of reliability.

(2)

Atisha could gather ^{articles} data from ~~a~~ different databases as it might not be the same or personally biased. Gathering data through different data bases may increase ~~validity~~ and ~~reliability~~ generalisability of her findings leading to higher reliability for the wider population.



This achieves 1 mark: AO2 mark for suggesting the improvement of gathering articles from different databases (1)

Question 13(c)

In this question, candidates were required to describe one ethical guideline that could be considered when using semi-structured interviews.

The majority of candidates achieved 1 mark for this question. The candidates identified an ethical guideline but did not describe it, therefore the marks were given for the whole response where there was only one discernible description in respect of semi-structured interviews.

Where candidates did not achieve marks, they gave a description of an ethical guideline but this was not related to the interview method.

- (c) Atisha arranged to do a follow-up study at her local health clinic. She used a semi-structured interview to explore why the patients may have found certain social situations difficult.

Describe one ethical guideline that could be considered when using semi-structured interviews.

(2)

As when implementing the semi-structured interview, Atisha should pay attention to participants' privacy and personal information. As some participants may worry about others knowing their issue in social situations, if their friends or family members know, they may feel embarrassed or stressed, which is a psychological harm for participants.

Total for Question 13 = 6 marks)



This response achieves 2 marks. Marks are given for the: description of psychological harm in relation to the interview method (1) further description of different forms of psychological harm (1)

- (c) Atisha arranged to do a follow-up study at her local health clinic. She used a semi-structured interview to explore why the patients may have found certain social situations difficult.

Describe **one** ethical guideline that could be considered when using semi-structured interviews.

(2)
~~that the~~ Atisha should make certain that she doesn't use leading questions or stress-inducing questions that could cause the participants harm.

(Total for Question 13 = 6 marks)



This achieves 1 mark: Whilst the candidate has not named an ethical guideline, this is protection from psychological harm and has been related to the interview method. There is no further descriptive point for the second mark.

Question 14

The AO1 element of the essay required knowledge of "serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors" (SNRIs) and how they work, blocking the re-absorption of the neurotransmitter's serotonin and norepinephrine. Most candidates demonstrated accurate knowledge of this process and the timescales involved in which the SNRIs become effective.

AO3 was also well-applied by most candidates: generally, there were coherent chains of reasoning, expressed through knowledge of the potential side-effects of the drugs and the effect this may have on the treatments for the patients. There was also an understanding of competing arguments by comparing the use of SNRIs with treatments such as counselling, and other drug therapies such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).

Some candidates had a good knowledge of the process of the SNRIs but were unable to develop it further. This was necessary in order to achieve the AO3 marks for suggesting how this related to successful or unsuccessful treatment for anxiety.

14 Evaluate the use of serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs) as a treatment for anxiety.

(8)

SNRIs treat anxiety by blocking both serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake channels. This increases the levels of these neurotransmitters in the brain.

Normally, SNRIs are prescribed at the lowest dose ~~possible~~ thought necessary to treat anxiety.

The initial effects of SNRIs are negative as they increase anxiety. However, the results are seen after 7-10 days of treatment.

Due to the fact that SNRIs block the reuptake of serotonin and norepinephrine there are more side effects. The side effects include sexual dysfunction.

Liebowitz et al (2015) found during a 14-week double blind trial, that the group taking SNRIs showed a 9.7 points decrease on the Liebowitz scale for anxiety. This was the difference between the SNRI group and the control group. This suggests that SNRIs are effective at treating anxiety.

However, SNRIs are only short-term, and treat the symptoms of anxiety rather than the cause.

of anxiety. Therefore, SNRIs are not as effective because once a patient stops taking them the anxiety is likely to return.

Also, there are alternatives to the use of SNRIs. SSRIs, are also a drug therapy known for treating anxiety. Rickels et al (2013) found that ~~SSR~~ SSRIs were effective at reducing the anxiety scores.

Also, cognitive behavioural therapy, is effective as it targets maladaptive thinking and ~~also~~ targets the cause of anxiety. ~~He~~ Adragis et al (2014) found CBT along with ACT were effective therapies for generalised anxiety disorder.

SNRIs cause many side-effects which may cause the patient to drop out of treatment. This suggests that SNRIs are not the best treatment for anxiety.



This response achieves Level 4, 8 marks: AO1 has many features of the processes of SNRIs which are accurate and thorough. AO3 is well-developed, with the use of the findings of multiple studies, which have been applied. There are also competing arguments with the use of alternative therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

Question 15

This was an eight-mark essay question that required candidates to assess brain regions as an explanation for stress.

Many candidates demonstrated accurate knowledge and understanding of the main areas of the brain involved in the management of stress. Key regions such as the role of the hypothalamus and prefrontal cortex were outlined and explained, for the AO1 element of the essay.

In respect of the AO3 requirement, candidates often used an evaluative format to address the question, giving findings from studies and examples of why the brain regions worked in a certain manner. The facts were accurate in many cases but did not address the question of how it explained stress.

Some candidates did address the question of how it helped explain stress. They suggested how the functions worked to bring about the stress response and gave alternative suggestions to brain regions.

- Brain structures and functioning can be used to explain stress such as the dysfunction of certain areas of the brain.
- The amygdala is involved in the regulation of emotions such as fear or anger and may be overstimulated when faced with a stressor, resulting in emotions associated with stress such as fear.
- The hypothalamus is part of the HPA axis and works to release cortisol when the body encounters a stressor, resulting in stress.
- The hippocampus is involved in memory and when flooded with cortisol, ~~cannot~~ perceives more stimuli as dangerous and stressful.
- The prefrontal cortex is involved in decision-making and when the brain encounters a stressor, can decide to activate the fight or flight response.
- Brain scans and neuroimaging can be used to measure brain dysfunctions and damage.
- Brain regions do not account for psychological effects as an explanation for stress, focusing only on physiological factors, so could be reductionist.

- Wust (2004) found structural and functional brain changes in those with PTSD, such as the amygdala, the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus, demonstrating the effect of brain regions on stress.
- Brain regions can be easily identified and measured objectively using brain scanning techniques such as CAT scans.
- Sripada (2009) found that the amygdala was involved in stress, using neuroimaging techniques.
- Brain regions ignores psychological factors of stress as Keller (2012) found that those who thought stress was harmful were 43% more likely to die from stress.
- Brain regions is a physiological explanation of stress meaning it allows researchers to identify causes of stress.
- Brain regions as an explanation of stress can be used to develop treatments for stress to increase activity in certain areas of the brain or suppress other areas, therefore can be applied to real life.

(Total for Question 15 = 8 marks)

TOTAL FOR SECTION B OPTION 2 = 32 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 64 MARKS



This response achieves Level 4, 8 marks: AO1 is accurate and thorough because there is a clear understanding of the different functions of various brain regions associated with stress. AO3 is well-developed and a particular strength of this essay is how the candidate addresses and uses supporting evidence to make judgements as to how the findings explain stress. There is also a critique of the methods used to measure stress, which provides competing arguments as to why they may not explain stress.

Paper Summary

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

- With the smaller tariff 'describe' questions, full descriptions should be given for each marking point. An identification mark is not awarded unless it has been described
- Suggesting an alternative methodology for an improvement question is changing the actual investigation, rather than improving it, so it is not creditworthy
- Make a judgement to achieve the AO3 marks for questions that require a decision to be made, for example give a positive and negative effect
- If a question asks for one reason rather than another, as in Q07(b) in respect of primary and secondary data, a comparison must be made
- Candidates should revisit the named studies in each section

Grade boundaries

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

