



General Certificate of Education

Psychology 1181
Specification A

**Unit 2 (PSYA2) Biological Psychology,
Social Psychology and
Individual Differences**

Mark Scheme

2009 examination - June series

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PSYA2 Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences

SECTION A: BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Question 1

AO1 = 3 marks Knowledge of body's response to stress.

1 mark for each correct answer; noradrenaline, adrenal medulla, sympathetic nervous system. However, if more than three are ticked, zero marks.

Question 2

AO3 = 6 marks Understanding of research methods.

This question is assessing candidates understanding of the use of questionnaires, a common technique when investigating life events (eg SRRS, SES, etc). For both the advantage and disadvantage 1 mark for identification and a further 2 marks for elaboration. Candidates may refer to specific questionnaires or take a more generic approach. They can link it to actual research such as referring to a specific questionnaire (eg SRRS).

Advantage: If closed questions are used the quantitative data that is produced are generally fairly easy to analyse. This makes it possible to make comparisons, produce trends, etc. People may be happier to disclose detailed and personal information if they don't have to do so face to face.

Compared to an interview they are easy to use (1 mark). The researcher doesn't need any special training to hand out the questionnaires and information about how stress affects health can be gathered by any researcher fairly easily (2 further marks for elaboration).

Disadvantage: If the wording on the questionnaire is not clear, people may misunderstand a question (1 mark) and answer it in different ways (1 mark). This makes it more difficult to analyse their data (1 mark).

Researcher bias may affect the respondents (1 mark). The way in which the researcher gives the questionnaire, their gender, age or even their appearance might influence the respondent to give an answer that they think is expected of them (2 further marks for elaboration).

Question 3 a

AO2 = 1 mark Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of daily hassles.

These experiences are known as daily hassles (1 mark). Accept hassles.

Question 3 b

AO2 = 4 marks Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of daily hassles.

Research has shown that these daily hassles play an important role in our health. Unlike life changes, these daily hassles can have a greater impact. Paula is experiencing several hassles, such as losing things and having too much to do, and as the stress from these hassles

accumulates, so her health may deteriorate. Being unable to sleep is a sign of stress, which further reinforces the negative relationship between hassles and illness. A more biological explanation might focus on the fact that with continued stress the body's immune system is impaired.

1 mark for a basic statement of the relationship between stress/hassles and illness and a further 3 marks for elaboration of this idea (this could include theory and/or research evidence). The elaboration must be linked to Paula's situation.

Question 4

AO1 = 5 marks Knowledge and understanding of one or more physiological methods of stress management. The knowledge can be shown by selection of material.

AO2 = 5 marks Analysis and evaluation of one or more methods of stress management.

The physiological approaches most likely to be offered are drugs and biofeedback, although any other physiological method would be acceptable. For example, a case could be made for some of the relaxation and meditation techniques as they do involve physiology.

Drugs: benzodiazepines and beta-blockers are the usual drugs for stress management. The former act on reducing serotonin activity and brain arousal; the latter work on the sympathetic nervous system.

Biofeedback: patients are given information about their physiological activity, such as heart rate, blood pressure and are then helped to devise ways of bringing these under control.

The discussion can include issues such as dependency, side effects, effectiveness (and a comparison with other methods is acceptable here), cost etc. For example, biofeedback has been shown to be successful in treating some stress-related conditions (eg migraine, high blood pressure) but the results are no better than those of conventional relaxation training.

A more general evaluation of physiological methods can be made; they treat the symptoms of stress and not its causes.

Clearly there is a breadth-depth trade off here. Candidates who offer more than one are likely to do so in less detail than those who offer one method.

AO1 Knowledge and understanding	AO2 Analysis and evaluation
<p>5 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of one or more physiological methods of stress management. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.</p>	<p>5 marks Effective evaluation Effective use of material to address the question and provide informed commentary. Effective evaluation of research. Broad range of issues and/or evidence in reasonable depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. A coherent answer</p>
<p>4-3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant</p>	<p>4-3 marks Reasonable evaluation Material is not always used effectively but produces a reasonable commentary. Reasonable evaluation of research.</p>

<p>knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.</p>	<p>A range of issues and/or evidence in limited depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. A reasonably coherent answer.</p>
<p>2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.</p>	<p>2 marks Basic evaluation The use of material provides only a basic commentary. Basic evaluation of research. Superficial consideration of a restricted range of issues and/or evidence. Answer lacks some coherence.</p>
<p>1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.</p>	<p>1 mark Rudimentary evaluation The use of material provides only a rudimentary commentary. Evaluation of research is just discernible or absent. Answer is not coherent.</p>
<p>0 marks No creditworthy material.</p>	<p>0 marks No creditworthy material.</p>

SECTION B: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Question 5

AO1 = 4 marks Knowledge of locus of control.

Locus of control is how much a person believes that they have control over their own behaviour. This is usually measured along a scale with internal control at one end and external control at the other. Internal control refers to those people who see that they have a great deal of control over their own behaviour and will take responsibility for their actions. External control refers to those who believe that their behaviour is controlled by other forces such as luck or fate.

1 mark for a brief outline such as “how much control someone thinks they have”. Further 3 marks for elaboration, such as including reference to internal and external locus of control. Candidates may choose to illustrate their answer using other parts of the specification (eg stress).

There is a breadth/depth trade off here; candidates might focus on the ways of measuring locus of control, internal and external control etc (ie depth). Others may consider the measurement as well as looking at other areas of the specification (ie breadth). Clearly both strategies are acceptable and both are equally creditworthy.

Question 6

AO2 = 2 marks Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of social influence.

Compliance refers to behaviour that involves going along with the majority, even if privately their views are not accepted. He wants to fit in and be liked, so will change his behaviour to be like the others but does not change his beliefs.

1 mark for a brief outline explanation of compliance and a further mark for elaboration.

The marks for this question are for the explanation.

Question 7 a

AO3 = 2 marks Use and understanding of research methods.

The most likely method offered is an experiment (such as those carried out by Asch); however, other methods are also creditworthy (observations, role-plays). 1 mark for identification of the method and a further mark for elaboration; laboratory experiment (1 mark) where confederates deliberately gave the wrong answer to see if the naïve participant conformed (further mark for elaboration). Candidates could either refer to a research method in general, or they could describe the procedures of a particular study for 2 marks.

It is worth noting that sometimes a very brief or succinct answer can still be sufficient for 2 marks.

[If a response for 7(a) gains no marks, marks can be awarded for (b) and/or (c) if the limitation and way of overcoming it could apply to conformity research]

Question 7 b

AO3 = 2 marks Use and understanding of research methods.

The limitation will depend on the method given in (a). Lab experiments lack ecological validity (1 mark) this means that the findings cannot be generalised to the real world (further mark for elaboration).

It is worth noting that sometimes a very brief or succinct answer can still be sufficient for 2 marks.

Question 7 c

AO3 = 2 marks Use and understanding of research methods.

To overcome lack of ecological validity conduct the experiment in the real world (1 mark) by setting up a field experiment so people behave as they would do normally (1 further mark).

It is worth noting that sometimes a very brief or succinct answer can still be sufficient for 2 marks.

Question 8

AO1 = 6 marks Showing knowledge and understanding of explanations of why people obey.

AO2 = 6 marks Evaluation of explanations of why people obey.

There are several reasons why people obey. Research has suggested that we obey those with legitimate authority; we accept that they have the right to tell us what to do. The process of gradual commitment also causes people to obey, by the time they realise just what they are doing, it is almost too late to stop. Milgram proposed the agency theory to explain why we obey, in an agentic state we are much more likely to obey than if we are in an autonomous state. If people do not have to acknowledge the outcome of their actions they are more likely to obey.

Candidates could offer several explanations in less detail or one or two explanations but in much more detail.

The evaluation could consider how effective these explanations are, whether there is any empirical support, what conditions are necessary for the obedience to occur and what helps people to resist obedience.

Descriptions of Milgram's research can be credited depending on how it is *used*. For example, using his research to illustrate the effect of buffers or of gradual commitment.

AO1 Knowledge and understanding	AO2 Application of knowledge and understanding
6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of why people obey. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.	6 marks Effective evaluation Effective use of material to address the question and provide informed commentary. Effective evaluation of research. Broad range of issues and/or evidence in reasonable depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Clear expression of ideas, good range of specialist terms, few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
5-4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate explanation that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.	5-4 marks Reasonable evaluation Material is not always used effectively but produces a reasonable commentary. Reasonable evaluation of research. A range of issues and/or evidence in limited depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Reasonable expression of ideas, a range of specialist terms, some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3-2 marks Basic Basic explanation that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.	3-2 marks Basic evaluation The use of material provides only a basic commentary. Basic evaluation of research. Superficial consideration of a restricted range of issues and/or evidence. Expression of ideas lacks clarity, some specialist terms used, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling detract from clarity.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed explanation demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.	1 mark Rudimentary evaluation The use of material provides only a rudimentary commentary. Evaluation of research is just discernible or absent. Expression of ideas poor, few specialist terms used, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling often obscure the meaning.
0 marks No creditworthy material.	0 marks No creditworthy material.

SECTION C: INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Question 9 a

AO1 = 4 mark Knowledge of the behavioural approach to psychopathology.

The key features of the behavioural approach are that all behaviour is learned whether it is normal or abnormal. The emphasis of this approach is on the environment and it ignores the role of biology or of any internal thoughts or feelings. The learning can take one of three forms: classical conditioning, operant conditioning and social learning. Therapies are creditworthy.

Up to 2 marks for naming/identifying at least two features and a further 2 marks for elaboration.

For full marks there must be a link to psychopathology.

Question 9 b

AO2 = 2 marks Outline of a limitation of the behavioural approach.

A limitation of the behavioural approach is that much of the research was based on animal learning (1 mark) and so the approach might not be able to explain human learning in the same way (a further mark for elaboration).

Examiners can be little lenient as to just how far the limitation is linked to psychopathology as opposed to the behavioural approach itself.

Question 10 a

AO2 = 4 marks Application of knowledge and understanding of defining abnormality to an unfamiliar situation.

Possible criteria might include:

- Self-actualisation of one's potential
- Resistance to stress
- Personal autonomy
- Accurate perception of reality
- Adapting to the environment

Other appropriate criteria can also be credited.

For each criterion: 1 mark for identification and a further mark for elaboration.

Question 10 b

AO2 = 2 marks Outlining a weakness of this way of defining abnormality.

One weakness is the difficulty of meeting all criteria, very few people would be able to do so, and this suggests then that few people are psychologically healthy.

Another weakness is that these ideas are culture-bound, based on a Western ideal of mental health.

1 mark for weakness of the limitation and a further mark for elaboration.

Question 11 a

AO1 = 4 marks Outline of **two** techniques used in psychoanalysis.

Techniques could include, free association, dream interpretation, projective techniques. 1 mark for identification of each technique and further mark for elaboration of the technique.

Question 11 b

AO2 = 2 marks application of knowledge and understanding of psychoanalysis to an unfamiliar situation.

Candidates might offer one problem and then elaborate on it; or they might offer two but with little or no elaboration. Credit psychologically informed answers, showing understanding of psychoanalysis.

Sally would need to be told that this type of therapy is not a quick one and that it might take some time before she starts to gain insight. She should be warned that while undergoing psychoanalysis she might feel very vulnerable as her defences are slowly stripped away. She should be advised that this type of therapy only helps those who are articulate.

Question 11 c

AO2 = 2 marks Application of knowledge and understanding of cognitive behavioural therapy to an unfamiliar situation.

This type of therapy puts the control back into Sally's own hands. It can give her the necessary skills to manage her own problems and to find ways of coping with new situations. It will help Sally to develop a more positive outlook on life, which might be a more effective strategy in the long term.

1 mark for a basic statement of why CBT is suitable for Sally and a further mark for elaboration.

Question 12

AO1 = 4 marks Description of ECT.

ECT: this can be either unilateral ECT (electrode on one temple) or bilateral ECT (electrodes on both temples). Patient is given a short acting anaesthetic and muscle relaxant before the shock is administered. Oxygen is also administered. Small amount of current (about 0.6 amps) passed through the brain lasting for about half a second. The resulting seizure lasts for about a minute. ECT is usually given three times a week for up to 5 weeks.

1 mark for a brief outline such as "it is when an electric current is passed across the brain". Further 3 marks for elaboration, such as including some of the details given above.

Other ways of gaining full marks could include a description of effectiveness, the ethical issues involved, and appropriateness etc.