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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

PSYCHOLOGY

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Paper 9698/01

Core Studies 1

General comments

Examination performance can be improved if candidates follow a number of simple rules.

- Do not spend too much time on **Section A** and then 'run out of time' for **Section B**. Candidates often spend too much time on early questions worth 2 or 4 marks and have little time for **Questions 16 or 17**.
- Read all questions carefully before beginning to write. **Question 5** was often misread as non-aggression rather than non-imitative aggression for example. **Questions 16 and 17** see candidates begin answers, cross them out and start again, which wastes time. Some candidates provide good answers to parts **(a)** and **(b)** for example, but then struggle as they realise their chosen study is a little more complex than anticipated when answering parts **(c)** and **(d)**.
- Answer the question as it is asked. For essays, part **(c)** frequently results in advantages or disadvantages being written about rather than both, and part **(d)** provides a suggestion but then no consideration of how the suggestion may affect the results.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

For part **(a)**, candidates had to focus on experiment 2 of the Loftus and Palmer study. In response to the question 'Did you see any broken glass?' sixteen participants reported that they saw broken glass, when broken glass did not actually exist. In response to part **(a)** most candidates correctly reported that glass was seen and in response to part **(b)** most candidates correctly reported that this was due to the 'leading question' or use of the word 'smashed'.

Question 2

A significant number of candidates confused the 'cube image' presented on the examination paper with another variation, that of the two-pronged trident. In the latter study participants are asked to look at the illusion and then to draw it. For the former, the image of concern in this question, participants are asked not to draw, but actually to construct what they perceive. This confusion led to some candidates scoring no marks and others scoring maximum marks.

Question 3

This question required candidates to give two pieces of evidence why Washoe did not learn language. There is always confusion here as to exactly what Washoe achieved. To try to clarify, it is generally believed that Washoe did have arbitrariness and semanticity. However, Washoe did have difficulty with displacement, spontaneous usage, turn-taking and structure dependence. Washoe is alive today and she can be viewed on the internet via a 'chimp-cam'!

Question 4

This question on Piaget caused few problems for able candidates. To confirm correct answers to parts **(a)** and **(b)**: there are a number of challenges to Piaget; Samuel and Bryant found children as young as five years of age could conserve; Samuel and Bryant found that asking one question did not confuse the children. A number of Samuel and Bryant's findings support Piaget: that the older the child the fewer errors were made; that conservation of volume is more difficult than conservation of number or mass.

Question 5

A significant number of candidates answered this question incorrectly and the main reason was a failure to read the question, particularly part **(b)**. This question asked for an example of non-imitative aggression, which means *aggression* that was not imitated, rather than *non-aggression*. For part **(a)** there were four 'response categories' for imitative physical aggression (e.g. sits on bobo and punches in the nose) and several for imitative verbal aggression (e.g. sock him). For part **(b)** any act of aggression from the study, whether physical or verbal, was sufficient (e.g. aggressive gun play or mallet aggression).

Question 6

For this question many candidates seemed to want to describe the procedure of the study rather than answer the question specifically. For future reference it is worth candidates knowing how data is gathered, and the nature of it, for all twenty studies. In the study by Hodges and Tizard data was gathered in several ways. They interviewed the adolescent, interviewed the mother, gave the adolescent a self-report questionnaire and a Rutter 'B', and they gave a questionnaire to the adolescent's teacher. Any two from this list would achieve marks.

Question 7

This question required candidates to think about the Freud study in more general terms and in considering the scientific value of the work candidates were able to provide many interesting and informed answers. Most answers focused on the possible bias by Freud and Hans' father; others looked at the inability to generalise from one participant. Those who had read the Freud core study itself considered the reasons why Freud himself believed his work had no scientific value.

Question 8

A question concerning ethical issues can appear for any of the twenty studies and this time it was for Schachter and Singer focusing on deception. Most candidates were able to give two deceptions but a number drifted into consent, harm and right to withdraw which were not relevant in this instance. Deceptions included: the nature of the study as it was not a vitamin supplement called suproxin; misinformation and incorrect information given to participants about their injection; the use of a stooge/confederate.

Question 9

Most candidates were able to provide two of the sleep relationships that were investigated by Dement and Kleitman as required in this question. Most common was the simple relationship between REM sleep and dreaming but also quoted were the relationships between length of REM and dream duration estimation and specific eye movements and imagery of the dream.

Question 10

Candidates usually perform well on Milgram questions and this was no exception with most candidates scoring maximum marks. For part **(a)**, reasons given for continuing included the pressure of the situation (University, laboratory, paid to participate) or pressure from experimenter (scientist, appearance, authority figure, prods). For part **(b)** the main reason given for not continuing included the moral conflict of not wanting to kill someone.

Question 11

Candidates also usually perform well on Haney et. al. prison simulation questions and again this was no exception, although a few candidates did not focus on the induction procedure as the question asked. Some answers focused on the arrest aspect that involved use of the police, it was done at their home, the handcuffing and searching, and being driven off in the police car. In addition to this aspect candidates could also have looked at features of the induction procedure after the prisoners arrived at the mock prison.

Question 12

In the study on subway Samaritans by Piliavin et. al., for part **(a)** two independent variables that were manipulated were firstly the type of victim (either drunk or ill) and the race of the victim (either white or black). Most participants answered this question part correctly. For part **(b)**, which caused a few candidates some problem, one measure of behaviour (the dependent variable) was the speed of helping or the frequency of responding or the race of the helper.

Question 13

Part **(a)** asked for one key feature of ethnocentrism. According to Tajfel the one key feature would be the negative attitudes and behaviour towards the outgroup (outgroup discrimination) and the positive attitudes and behaviour towards the ingroup (ingroup favouritism). Part **(b)** asked candidates to state the minimum conditions for creating ethnocentrism and those having read the Tajfel core study would understand that he believed the minimum conditions were the categorisation of people into two or more groups – on the basis of anything.

Question 14

It is interesting that yet again a number of candidates confuse the Hrabka and Grant study and that of Baron-Cohen et. al. Both use dolls, but then the similarity ends. Hrabka and Grant were not trying to measure autism but racial preference and racial identification. For part **(b)** measurement of preference and identification was by use of dolls and the asking of questions about them.

Question 15

In the study by Rosenhan there were several reasons why an incorrect diagnosis was made. Firstly, if people telephone a hospital for an appointment and report symptoms they are likely to be ill. A second reason is that if Psychiatrists, like other medical personnel, are in doubt about a diagnosis, they should assume the person is ill (and make a type 2 error). The worst action is to conclude that an ill person is healthy and send them away (a type 1 error). Another reason why an incorrect diagnosis was made is that Psychiatrists cannot distinguish sane from insane.

Section B**Question 16**

In part **(a)** by far the most popular choice was the Dement and Kleitman study, with Sperry appearing hardly at all. This is not surprising as it is rather more easy to imagine having your sleep recorded than being a murderer or having your brain split into two! Responses to the Dement study ranged from clear descriptions of all the equipment used (which often scored maximum marks) to those who merely stated that a 'dreaming machine was used'. Those choosing the Raine et. al. study often believed that three types of scan were used when actually only a PET scan was used. Those choosing Sperry rarely provided adequate answers. On the positive side, most candidates did focus on the use of the equipment (as the question required) rather than merely describing the procedure. Part **(b)** simply asked for an outline of the main findings, and most candidates were able to do this successfully. What distinguished the good from the very good answer was the range of findings and the detail included. Often part **(c)** caused most problems for candidates as the requirement was to consider both the advantages and disadvantages of using the particular equipment. The mark scheme matches the question and so the optimal strategy was to provide two arguments for and two arguments against. Candidates are reminded that the question did request that the chosen study be used as an example to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages. In part **(d)** many candidates made reasonable suggestions for ways in which data could be gathered without the use of equipment, but those choosing the Dement and Kleitman study were much better placed and suggested simple things, such as conducting the study in the participant's own bed. Those choosing the Sperry or Raine et. al. study found this part more difficult with nothing obvious to suggest. Candidates are reminded to think about all four question parts in relation to their chosen study before they begin writing.

Question 17

Part **(a)** required candidates to address how a psychometric test was used in their chosen study. Whilst a good number of candidates were able to do this successfully, many made a number of false assumptions. For example, the Sally-Anne test used in the Baron-Cohen study is not a psychometric test. In that study the only psychometric measure is the intelligence tests that were given to the children. This was to determine one of the important aspects of the study, namely whether theory of mind is related to intelligence. Those candidates who chose to describe the procedure overall did not score many marks. Those choosing the Thigpen and Cleckley study also suffered a similar fate with many aspects such as hypnosis not being psychometric tests. On the other hand, those choosing the Gould study had few problems as the intelligence tests devised are psychometric. Part **(b)** produced some good answers, with most candidates being able to outline the main findings of their chosen study. For example, those choosing the Gould study were able to describe the three 'facts' that were concluded from the testing as well as providing a range of relevant comments about the weaknesses of the testing procedures. Those choosing the other two studies competed equally here. Part **(c)** required a consideration of both the advantages and disadvantages of using psychometric tests. Whilst a small number of candidates knew what a psychometric test is, and provided excellent answers, many candidates do not, which was also evident from their part **(a)** answers. Even if a favourite study appears in the list, candidates are advised not to attempt a question if they do not know the meaning of the issue on which the question is based. Part **(d)** caused one or two problems for some candidates, but most were able to make appropriate suggestions of how data may be gathered differently. As with **Question 16** it was insufficient to answer only half the part **(d)** question. The other half of the question 'and say what effect this would have on the results of the study' carried 5 marks and so to ignore it was costly.

Paper 9698/02

Core Studies 2

General comments

Overall the paper was answered well with very few candidates making rubric errors. The overall performance of candidates was very good although some Centres had clearly not covered all parts of the course. The paper requires candidates to read the questions carefully and some failed to do this therefore failing to give the specific answer required. The essay questions were answered well in the main with most candidates referring to all four of the studies listed. Parts **(b)** and **(c)** of the essays provided good differentiation in the marks as better candidates were able to discuss a range of problems or strengths and weaknesses and were also able to sustain an argument using a variety of points in part **(c)**. Overall a very pleasing performance by most candidates demonstrating good understanding and knowledge of the Core Studies as well as methodological issues.

Comments on specific questions**Section A****Question 1**

- (a)** Generally answered well. Some candidates confused nature and nurture whilst better answers explained what nature and nurture meant and connected that to human behaviour.
- (b)** Many candidates gained half marks on this part as they gave one difficulty of using cross-cultural studies but failed to give an example from the Deregowski study. Most common examples given referred to language barriers.

Question 2

- (a)** Mostly answered well, many candidates knew the exact IQ of the average white and black person.
- (b)** Most candidates were able to describe one way in which the IQ tests were influenced by ethnocentric bias. Better answers gave an example from the study.

Question 3

Many candidates gave only one way in which the Sally-Anne test was not true to everyday life, 'use of dolls' being the most common. Some candidates were unable to think of a second way.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates confused reliability with validity. Those who understood the term gave very good answers mainly referring to consistency of findings.
- (b) Candidates found this a difficult question but the better answers referred to aspects of the standardised procedure that enhanced reliability.

Question 5

- (a) Very well answered, candidates had a good understanding of the study by Hrabá and Grant and many gave the actual questions used.
- (b) Answered well by most candidates who referred to the change in racial pride between the two studies and the influence of changes in society's attitudes through civil rights movements.

Section B**Question 6**

This was the most popular choice of essay question. In part (a), a systematic approach was the best. Focusing on each study and pointing out the ethical flaws worked well with many gaining full marks. In part (b) good candidates were able to discuss the problems of trying to be ethical including the problem of demand characteristics when informed consent is gained. However some candidates merely discussed features of unethical research missing the point of the question. Part (c) was answered well. The best answers gave a balanced argument in response to the question of whether breaking ethical guidelines can ever be justified.

Question 7

Many candidates showed a good understanding of the core studies but not of reductionism i.e. the concept of reducing explanations of methods of studying behaviour to a more simplistic level. Parts (b) and (c) of this question were not generally answered well with candidates often struggling to give relevant strengths and weaknesses in relation to reductionism. Candidates often gave general strengths and weaknesses of the studies, failing to answer the question. This would suggest that the concept of reductionism needs more precise coverage.

Question 8

Candidates showed a good understanding of the core studies and good answers gave specific uses for the findings from each study. Weaker answers merely described the findings. Part (b) required problems of conducting useful research. Better answers related the problem to the issue of usefulness whilst weaker answers just gave general problems of conducting research. Part (c) was generally answered well but some candidates repeated their answer from part (a) rather than giving a wider discussion on the usefulness of different areas of psychology. In order to obtain high marks on the essay questions candidates must read the questions carefully and relate their answers to the specific question asked rather than giving general answers.

<p>Paper 9698/03 Specialist Choices</p>

General comments

If a candidate is to be successful in this examination then two main actions need to be taken. Firstly, this paper requires candidates to quote specific knowledge from psychological studies. Significant numbers of candidates do nothing more than relate common-sense information that is often only vaguely psychologically informed. This means that marks fail to be gained because candidates do not show Examiners that they have studied psychology. As was explained in the 2003 report, the most explicit way to demonstrate that psychology has been studied is to quote the name of the psychologist(s) who conducted a piece of research. In fact a look at the question paper for this year (and for the last few sittings) reveals that questions frequently ask "Describe one study..." or "Describe two studies..." which should be answered quoting a piece of appropriate psychological research, along with the name and date of the person doing the research. Adherence to this information would improve performance significantly.

Secondly, candidates tend not to answer *Section B* parts **(b)** adequately. This part always begins "Evaluate...". This should not be taken as an opportunity to simply add more detail to the part **(a)** answer as some candidates assume. The term evaluate requires a discussion, a debate, a consideration of advantages and disadvantages, or strengths and weaknesses, to comment on the information that has been presented in part **(a)**. This question part carries 10 marks, more than any other part, and so in many respects this should be given priority over questions which only carry a few marks. For example, the whole of a *Section A* carries 11 marks in its entirety. Again, attention to this aspect will improve performance significantly.

Comments on specific questions***Psychology and education****Section A***Question 1**

- (a)** Most candidates gained 2 marks for explaining what was meant by the term 'individual differences in educational performance'.
- (b)** As with part **(a)**, most candidates were able to describe a cultural difference. Unlike some questions which require the description of a specific study or specific piece of evidence, this question merely wanted description of any difference, whether empirical or anecdotal.
- (c)** This required two explanations for differences in educational performance and many candidates chose to describe either a 'learning environment' explanation or a male/female 'brain wiring' difference. Both these explanations were entirely appropriate.

Question 2

This question focused specifically on the behaviourist approach to education. Most candidates were able to provide a good explanation of the term in response to part **(a)**. For part **(b)** two applications to education were required. This meant that those describing the original Pavlov or Skinner studies did not score many marks as these studies were not applied to education. On the other hand there were many impressive answers that answered the question specifically. For part **(c)** appropriate alternatives were often quoted, particularly by those candidates considering a cognitivist or humanistic approach.

*Section B***Question 3**

This question concerned motivation in educational performance. For part **(a)** candidates described a range of theories but often failed to relate them to education. For example, candidates describe Maslow's hierarchy of human needs but failed to say how it may relate to education – when this is the education option! Such answers could just have easily been in response to a question on motivation in the organisations option. Part **(b)** often had disappointing evaluation (as outlined in the general comments above). Part **(c)** provided a range of interesting answers – and many candidates described strategies used by their teachers, including the one who gave fruit as a reward each time a piece of work was completed.

Question 4

This question on disruptive behaviour was very popular and some excellent answers were observed in part **(a)** by candidates who described disruptive behaviours identified by psychologists. There were those who seemed to have studied no psychology at all whom could go no further than anecdote. In part **(b)** evaluation was reasonable for some, but very poor for others. For part **(c)** candidates could suggest any corrective style that would modify the behaviour outlined in the source. Candidates providing preventative strategies did not score marks.

Psychology and environment*Section A***Question 5**

A question on scenic environment has not been set before. For part **(a)**, scenic environment is an individual perception and preference for scenes/images whether real or in a picture. Part **(b)** asked for one study and most popular were those either by Berlyne or by Kaplan and Kaplan. Part **(c)** broadened the question to consider the wider area of environmental cognition asking for errors when drawing cognitive (sketch) maps. Any two, from the lists provided in the recommended texts, would have been sufficient.

Question 6

This is another area that has not been a *Section A* question since the revision of the examination paper in 2001. For part **(a)** whereas density refers to physical conditions, crowding refers to an individual's perception of restrictedness. For part **(b)** one study looking at the effects of crowding on health was required. Most candidates chose to describe the study of Calhoun and as the situation the rats were in did indeed affect their health, credit was given. For part **(c)** the two main ways of reducing the effects of crowding are to increase cognitive control or to apply a coping strategy.

*Section B***Question 7**

This question on architecture and behaviour allowed candidates some freedom to provide examples from a wide range of sources. The architecture of the classroom could have been used for example, as an alternative to the traditional architecture and vandalism theme. Most candidates did choose the crime theme, often quoting the Pruitt-Igoe buildings as a 'what not to do'. Pruitt-Igoe also featured prominently in answers to part **(c)** which asked about ways in which architectural features could be used to reduce crime.

Question 8

For this question candidates could write entirely about personal space, entirely about territory or provide an answer based on a combination of the two. A number of candidates assumed they could answer this question using their common-sense understanding, and this produced answers at the bottom end of the mark range (see general comments). Yet others produced excellent answers demonstrating their understanding of psychological theories and evidence. Part **(c)** concerned the defence of territory in a public place, with most candidates suggesting the use of a territorial marker such as a bag or coat.

Psychology and health*Section A***Question 9**

Whereas acute pain is relatively short-term, chronic pain is much more long-term. Most candidates understood this distinction and so successfully scored the two marks available for part **(a)**. For Part **(b)** pain can be controlled in a number of ways, ranging from taking a pill to more sophisticated psychological strategies to 'alternative' strategies such as acupuncture. Part **(c)** asked for one way of measuring pain in adults and a wide range of possibilities were observed, including: self report/interview methods; rating scales; pain questionnaires; behavioural assessment and psychophysiological measures.

Question 10

This is an area most candidates have still not mastered. Health and safety is the maintaining of a healthy existence through safe practices at work and in the home. In part **(b)** candidates were asked for two causes of accidents. This led significant numbers to quote their own stories "the cause of my brother's accident" which was acceptable provided that the cause of the accident as defined by psychologists, to show psychology had been studied, was added. In most cases this important psychological component was absent. On a general level accidents can be attributed to theory A or theory B. More specifically there could be an illusion of invulnerability or some risk homeostasis or a transient state. For details see texts on list of recommended reading.

*Section B***Question 11**

The area of substance abuse allows candidates to write a general, all-encompassing answer, alternatively it is perfectly legitimate to focus one substance such as smoking or drinking or food or the abuse of any substance. Most candidates focus on smoking and this area is dealt with most thoroughly in all the recommended text books. While a number of candidates continuously refer to psychological evidence, and receive due credit, there are those who assume that because they smoke they can write about their own experiences. As already emphasised, this is a psychology examination and candidates must demonstrate that they have studied psychology; the most direct way to show this is to quote psychological evidence. Typically question part **(c)**'s for this question will focus either on preventing people from starting to abuse (or use) a substance, or it will focus on getting those who abuse (or use) a substance to quit. In this instance the latter question format was chosen.

Question 12

This was a standard 'health promotion' question. There are two main ways in which health can be promoted: by fear arousal or by providing information. Health has been promoted in a number of different places such as schools, worksites and communities. Marks for this question were allocated according to the range and detail of evidence provided. Part **(c)** asked candidates to focus specifically on a community-based programme and rather than do this in relation to a health aspect of their choice, the focus was on eating healthier foods.

Psychology and abnormality*Section A***Question 13**

The term 'abnormality' was appropriately explained by most candidates. Parts **(b)** and **(c)** were linked and candidates had a free choice as to which abnormality they chose to answer on. Two causes of an abnormality required for part **(c)** also was unproblematic and the choice of abnormality could be different from that chosen for part **(b)**.

Question 14

The term post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was explained well by most candidates. Many chose to extend PTSD further into parts **(b)** and **(c)** which was perfectly legitimate. Others chose to answer **(b)** and **(c)** separately (the question asked for two symptoms of a trauma response of your choice) and looked at stress, amnesia or fugue, which were also legitimate.

*Section B***Question 15**

This general essay question on cultural, societal and individual differences in abnormality was popular as it allowed candidates to write about quite a wide range of aspects. Whilst there were many impressive answers which quoted psychological knowledge and had clear organisation, there were those candidates who took it as an opportunity to include anything and everything about abnormality; such answers typically lacking focus. Part **(c)** asked for treatments and perhaps not surprisingly this again resulted in answers at the extremes of the mark range.

Question 16

This syllabus area has not appeared as a full essay question before and many candidates predicted this as some excellent answers were written. The main focus of attention was Alzheimers disease and Picks disease, both of which involve organic degeneration of the brain. Answers were differentiated by the detail and understanding shown in answers. Part **(c)** was rather speculative, for currently there is no known cure for either of these two diseases.

Psychology and organisations*Section A***Question 17**

Part **(a)** required an explanation of the term 'interpersonal communication system' and most candidates were able to do this successfully. Part **(b)** required a description of a communication channel and although some candidates chose to describe the 'Leavitt networks' others legitimately outlined the use of email, telephone or other means of communication. Part **(c)** was more challenging in asking for an advantage and disadvantage of a communication channel but most candidates were able to provide answers applicable to communications within organisations.

Question 18

For part **(a)** an excellent definition of motivation to work is provided by Riggio, who says it is 'the force that energises, directs and sustains behaviour'. Part **(b)** asked for brief descriptions of two theories of motivation to work and most candidates were unable to do this: many wrote far more than was needed for just six marks. Time management is crucial when transferring from a *Section B* question to a *Section A*. Part **(c)** caused few problems for most candidates although again it is important to emphasise the psychological evidence underlying suggestions that are made.

*Section B***Question 19**

This essay question appeared in June 2003 so in effect was set two years in a row. This is legitimate and indicates that any question from the syllabus can appear on any paper. Human resource management is the all-encompassing term for performance appraisal, reward systems and personnel selection, and as usual candidates had the choice to focus on one or more of these aspects. Part **(c)** required suggestions for ways in which good employee performance could be rewarded and as with **Question 19**, marks are awarded for quoting the psychological evidence on which the required suggestion is based.

Question 20

To add to the comment about question setting made above, it may also be noted that this question on the quality of working life appeared in November 2003 and so has been set back-to-back. Questions on QWL are generally all-encompassing in that they can include aspects of motivation, work conditions, communications, in fact the overall quality of working life is determined by many of the factors that appear on this psychology and organisations syllabus. Many answers reflected this approach and were often impressive in their eclecticism. Many others were not and often were merely anecdotes of the restricted experience of the individual candidate.