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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

This paper performed as usual with quite a wide spread of marks across the whole range. Typically some candidates scored very high marks whilst others were disappointingly low. The paper contained some questions that could be done by most candidates with little difficulty whilst other questions were more testing and were successfully answered by only a few. As usual a number of candidates were let down by their poor examination technique. The most common problem was the imbalance in time allocated to questions. It is worth stating that **Section A** questions carry 60 marks and **Section B** questions 40 marks, yet candidates seemingly spend much more time on **Section A**. Whilst such candidates do score high marks for **Section A**, it is countered by a relatively low mark for **Section B**. A good 'rule of thumb' is to spend at least thirty minutes on **Section B**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question required candidates to relate what they knew about methodological terminology to a core study. Specifically candidates were required to identify the independent variable in part **(a)** and the dependent variable in part **(b)**. In relation to the Loftus and Palmer study, in Experiment 1, the independent variable was the verb used. The dependent variable was the mean estimation of speed measured in miles per hour (mph). Whilst most candidates answered the question correctly, some confused IV and DV and a few did not know the terms at all.

Question 2

This question focused on the perception review by Deregowski which included a number of different types of study. Part **(a)** asked for a description of one piece of anecdotal evidence whilst part **(b)** asked for a piece of empirical evidence. Candidates who were aware of this distinction scored high marks but others were not and did not score high marks. Anecdotal evidence includes the reports by Robert Laws (drawing of dog/ox), Mrs Fraser (profile of head) and 'other reports' which is the story of the audience fleeing when presented with a picture of an elephant on a screen. Empirical evidence comes from the work of Hudson and includes the man/antelope/elephant picture, the two-pronged trident study and the construct a cube study.

Question 3

This question concerned the Baron-Cohen et. al. study on autism. Three groups were included: autistic children, Down Syndrome children and non-autistic/non-Down Syndrome children. The reason for their inclusion was to determine that (as required by part **(a)**) theory of mind is not related to intelligence and (as required by part **(b)**) that theory of mind is not related to development. Whilst some candidates understood this distinction, many did not, often stating that they were no more than control groups. They were control groups and so this comment by itself received one mark.

Question 4

This question on the 'project Washoe' study required candidates to outline a way in which Washoe was said to have learned a new sign. Gardner and Gardner themselves believed that the sign must be shown at least once per day for fifteen consecutive days; that it was appropriate and spontaneous; that it was reported by three different observers.

Question 5

In part (a) candidates were asked to describe the procedure used to determine conservation for one type of material. Three types of material were used, which were: liquid (conservation of volume) plasticine or playdoh (conservation of mass) and counters (for number). Answers differed in relation to accuracy and quality of description. Some candidates drew brief diagrams which helped clarify their descriptions. Answers to part (b) divided candidates into two groups: those who did not know the answer and did not even guess compared to those who scored maximum marks by stating that participants found conservation of number the easiest, mass in the middle and conservation of volume the most difficult.

Question 6

Any question on the Hodges and Tizard study confuses many candidates who do not appear to understand that there are two different studies taking place at the same time. The first compares ex-institutional children with a control group and the second looks at the ex-institutionals more closely by comparing ex-institutionals who were adopted with ex-institutionals who were restored to their biological parents. Questions often focus on these different aspects and the question this time clearly looked at ex-institutionals and the control group. Simply, candidates who could make the above distinction scored well and those who could not scored no marks.

Question 7

Part (a) linked two core studies together: the idea outlined in the Loftus and Palmer study that leading questions influence our judgements, and the case study of little Hans by Freud. For part (a) better answers were able to explain what was meant by the term 'leading question' whereas weaker answers merely identified the term. Part (b) asked about the source material provided, and candidates had to outline the Oedipus complex, emphasising the relationship between Hans, his mother and his father.

Question 8

This question asked for the four groups in the Schachter and Singer study on emotion. Candidates who wrote "epi-inf, epi-mis, epi-ign and control" scored a maximum 4 marks out of 4 as did those who expanded on this list. Candidates who provided less detail, such as "misinformed" without the 'epi' scored fewer marks.

Question 9

In their study on sleep and dreaming, Dement and Kleitman used an electroencephalogram (EEG) to measure REM/NREM, the electrodes of which were placed near the eyes. They did not use any other equipment (such as an electro-oculogram) as many candidates believed. For part (b) any two differences between REM and NREM were required. These include: REM has low voltage, fast EEG and NREM does not, or less technically, in REM the eyes move and another possible answer is that REM frequently involves dreaming.

Question 10

This question asked candidates to draw! Although is not the norm it legitimately tests whether a candidate understands a particular piece of information or study. In this instance candidates were asked to draw a diagram of the hemispheres and the route of the visual pathways. Most candidates were able to draw the two hemispheres but there is much confusion about visual fields and eyes and what information is processed where.

Question 11

Part **(a)** on the Raine et. al. study has been asked before and nearly all candidates could give two reasons for insanity as claimed by the NGRI's (not guilty for reasons of insanity). Part **(b)**, asking about the task participants were asked to do immediately before the scan, proved to be a little more difficult. Participants in the study were asked to do a continuous performance task (CPT) thirty seconds before the injection and then thirty-two minutes later they were transferred to the scanner.

Question 12

This question, requiring a brief description of the uniform for the guards, caused no problems for most candidates, except for those who thought the guards wore the prisoner uniform! Part **(b)** was also answered successfully by most candidates.

Question 13

For this question on 'subway Samaritans' many candidates wrote what they assumed to be the behaviour of a drunk person rather than what was actually done in the study itself. For example the drunk 'victim' did not shout or swear or intimidate other passengers. For part **(b)** most candidates gave correct answers. The most common answers were that the ill victim was helped more than the drunk victim and that the drunk victim was more likely to be helped by someone of the same race.

Question 14

This question asked for two ethical issues related to the Rosenhan study. Issues should be standard BPS/APA guidelines (British Psychological Society/American Psychological Association). In the Rosenhan study confidentiality was maintained, but the participants were deceived (pseudo-patients faking illness to gain admission) and neither did they give consent for this study to take place. Importantly the participants are the doctors and nurses and not the pseudo-patients. The first pseudo-patient was Rosenhan himself and therefore the other pseudo-patients knew what was likely to happen to them and what they had to do.

Question 15

Thigpen and Cleckley were convinced Eve was suffering from multiple personality disorder. The question wanted two pieces of evidence that led them to their conclusion. Most popular were: the ambiguous letter received; various behaviours for which Eve White had no memory and the sudden change in personality when Eve Black appeared.

Section B**Question 16**

This question focused on laboratory experiments and the chosen studies could include Milgram, Bandura, Ross and Ross or Tajfel. Most candidates chose the Milgram study. Part **(a)** asked for a description of procedure, and most candidates were able to provide good, accurate detail, most scoring good marks. Part **(b)** asked about the controls that were applied, and again, most candidates were able to provide a reasonably wide-ranging list of appropriate features. Part **(c)** asked about the advantages and disadvantages of laboratory experiments and most candidates were able to provide two advantages and two disadvantages. The most common advantages were:

- having controls means that the independent variable is more likely to cause the dependent variable
- being in a laboratory added to the 'scientific' nature of the study.

The most common disadvantages were:

- participants know they are in a laboratory and so they are more likely to respond to demand characteristics
- that a laboratory is not a real-life setting.

Part **(d)** tends to be done last and as candidates 'run out of time' it tends to be done briefly. It still carries the same 10 marks as do other question parts and candidates should be mindful of this.

Question 17

This question looked at individual differences and cultural diversity and the chosen studies could include Deregowski, Gould or Hraba and Grant. Part **(a)** asked for a description of the procedure of the chosen study and most candidates were able to provide appropriate, accurate detail, most scoring good marks. Those selecting the Hraba and Grant study tended to quote the eight questions word for word assuming this would be sufficient for an entire procedure. Part **(b)** asked what their chosen study tells us about individual differences and again, most candidates were able to provide a reasonably wide-ranging list of appropriate features. Part **(c)** asked about the advantages and problems of studying diverse groups of people and the following comments were common:

- it allows us to discover that not all people are the same
- that it may help us learn what is inherited and what is learned
- that a sample may be too small or from just one culture
- that the language researchers speak may cause problems in itself.

In part **(d)** most candidates made reasonable suggestions for alternative ways in which data could be gathered. On the one hand the more able candidates often provided more detailed explanations of how their suggestions would work, and on the other, there were those who could not develop their suggestion beyond a few sentences or so. Not all candidates went on to consider the effect their suggestion would have on the results, as the question asked.

Paper 9698/02

Core Studies 2

General comments

Overall the paper differentiated well with a full range of achievement by candidates. Many candidates were well prepared for this examination. **Question 6** was very popular and was answered well whilst **Question 7** proved more difficult for candidates owing to the fact that the focus on measurement was not acknowledged by some who just described the studies in part **(a)** with no reference to measurement. **Question 8** on the cognitive approach was less popular but was answered well by those who chose it. 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)**. The quality of communication was good with particularly good use of terminology by some candidates. Very few candidates made rubric errors.

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

- (a)** Some candidates merely stated the independent variables e.g. drunk/ill victim without actually referring to controls used in the study; partial marks were awarded in this case. Good answers referred to controls such as getting back on to the same train to avoid the same passengers or the standardised aspects of the procedure.
- (b)** Good answers were given here although some candidates failed to link their comments to social psychology.

Question 2

- (a)** The majority of candidates correctly described the PET scan whilst some candidates referred to MRI and other scanning techniques that were not used. This highlights the need for teachers to distinguish between background information and actual information in the study.
- (b)** There were many good answers to this question including the usefulness in terms of court cases whilst others also referred to the need for caution in what brain differences can tell us.

Question 3

Good answers referred to the use of observation and/or the use of self-report rating scales to measure emotion. Poor answers merely described the procedure of the study by Schachter and Singer.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates referred to the use of the IQ tests for military placement whilst weaker answers were unsure why the tests were done or merely stated 'to measure intelligence' with no further clarification.
- (b) This question elicited some good answers showing a good understanding of social control with reference to, for example, immigration laws and the restriction of entry into America.

Question 5

- (a) There was some confusion here as some candidates did not understand that the behaviour of pseudopatients asked for was that observed by hospital staff, not the behaviour they had exhibited before being admitted to hospital.

Section B**Question 6**

This question was very popular.

- (a) This part was answered well by most who could describe what each study tells us about behaviour and experience. Weaker answers merely described the procedure or findings without drawing any conclusions.
- (b) This was misinterpreted by some candidates who discussed the problems of field experiments rather than the problems of applying findings from laboratory studies to everyday life. Good answers referred to points such as demand characteristics, low ecological validity and reductionism.
- (c) This produced some good responses the best of which considered a range of points including the need in some studies for control and the use of equipment. The best answers provide a balanced argument with evidence from the studies and everyday life to support arguments.

Question 7

The focus of this question was on measurement in each of the studies.

- (a) Good answers described how the behaviour in each study was measured including reference to observation, self-reports and psychological testing. Weaker answers merely described the procedure without actually specifying how behaviour was measured. Good candidates are able to answer the question specifically and succinctly.
- (b) This was answered well by some who referred to problems including demand characteristics, ethics and social desirability using examples from the studies to support points made.
- (c) This produced a mixed response with some candidates merely repeating their answer from (b), whilst others were able to give an argument as to whether it is possible to measure variables in a valid way.

Question 8

- (a) This part of the question was answered well by most candidates who were able to identify what each study tells us about EWT, perception, autism and language respectively. Weaker answers just described the studies without drawing any conclusions.
- (b) Good answers to this part included problems such as validity of measurement, demand characteristics, ecological validity, ethnocentrism etc. and were able to link each problem to an example from one of the studies.
- (c) This provided the opportunity for candidates to discuss the importance of other approaches to 'understand people' and whilst some candidates recognised this opportunity and scored well, others provided only short statements without expanding their ideas or using examples from the studies or wider examples from everyday life.

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

In order to be successful in this specialist choices examination, candidates need to demonstrate that they have followed the syllabus, have studied some psychology and understood how relevant terms and concepts can be applied. Many candidates do exactly this and they are very successful. However, many candidates appear to be sitting the examination with little preparation, perhaps with the assumption that psychology is all common-sense after all. These candidates are not successful.

In order to be successful candidates must have some understanding of two essential components:

- They must study knowledge that is relevant to their two chosen options and the best sources of information are the recommended texts as outlined in the syllabus.
- They must apply that knowledge to the requirements of the mark scheme, which specifies exactly what marks are awarded for. Consultation of mark schemes is even more important because they include extensive indicative content. Indicative content is the information that Examiners are expecting candidates to include in their examination answers and is generally taken directly from the recommended texts. Reference to mark schemes from a number of examination sessions can be extremely useful to both teachers and candidates, as can the report to Centres.

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

Assessment of educational performance is usually done in schools through some form of standardised assessment and nearly all candidates answered this question successfully. For question part **(b)** many candidates focused on how their work was assessed via essays and examinations, whilst others looked at the more formal assessment by IQ testing. In part **(c)** the question asked for two implications of assessment and categorisation and candidates were free to provide any two appropriate comments. Most typically were comments about self esteem and labelling.

Question 2

Disruptive behaviour in general is that which does not conform to the classroom norm leading a teacher to stop activity to attend to the cause of disruption. Part **(b)** asked for one cause of disruptive behaviour and in response to this, candidates provided a wide range of answers, most of which were appropriate but some were not. Part **(c)** asked for two ways in which disruptive behaviour may be corrected. Note that suggestions on how disruptive behaviour could be prevented were not credited. Most popular were answers involving some form of behaviour modification technique using the principles of operant conditioning.

Section B**Question 3**

Special needs can include giftedness and specific learning and behavioural disabilities, and in this question candidates could focus on either or both. As with many **Section B** answers part (a) was answered in most detail and often part (b) was lacking in evaluation. Answers to part (c) were generally disappointing with many candidates simply stating what they would expect teachers to do in common-sense terms rather than basing their answers on psychological theory and evidence.

Question 4

This question concerned motivation in educational performance. For part (a) candidates described a range of theories but often failed to relate them to education. Candidates still have the need to describe Maslow but are unable to relate it to the question. Better answers looked at motivation through the use of different perspectives (the behaviourist and humanist for example). Part (b) often had disappointing evaluation but those adopting the perspectives approach fared better than most. Part (c) focused specifically on learned helplessness and this provided a range of interesting answers. Perhaps the best way to reduce learned helplessness is to use some form of re-attribution training.

*Psychology and Environment***Section A****Question 5**

Part (a) asked for an explanation of the term personal space and most candidates referred to the invisible bubble or boundary that surrounds us. Part (b) required two studies which have invaded personal space and whereas some candidates were surprisingly unable to provide any, many others were able to select from a wide range, most commonly quoted were the Middlemist urinal study and the Sommer library or mental institution studies. Part (c) was often poorly answered, despite these studies failing to gain consent, not giving any right to withdraw or possibly causing psychological harm.

Question 6

As usual part (a) required an explanation of a psychological term and, in this case, it was environmental cognition. This is the way we acquire, store, organise and recall information about distances and arrangements of the great outdoors (Gifford, 1997). Part (b) asked for any study done on environmental cognition giving candidates the flexibility to choose from so many possibilities. Despite this answers were poor, many responses suggesting this area had not been studied very well. Part (c) continued the trend of poor answers and candidates often guessed, failing to base their answers on psychological evidence.

Section B**Question 7**

Some unusual answers were observed in response to this question. A number of candidates appeared to have studied climate and weather for geography and decided to use it in their psychology examination. This was not a good strategy because this is a psychology exam and candidates must have studied some psychology! For those including psychologically-based studies on the effects of climate and weather aspects such as social behaviour (aggression and/or helping), health and performance were considered. Part (c) looked at the effects of climate and weather on health and most typically seasonal affective disorder, was chosen, the main treatment for which is light therapy.

Question 8

Despite the fact that collective behaviour and crowding are different syllabus areas, many candidates still write incorrectly about crowding rather than collective behaviour. Those writing about crowding often score very few and frequently no marks at all. Collective behaviour concerns a number of people gathered together for a variety of purposes and in most cases it is a relatively pleasant experience. The area of collective behaviour is fascinating and relevant material includes the work of Le Bon on mob psychology and Zimbardo on deindividuation, where each person is nameless, faceless and anonymous, and has diminished fear of retribution. Part (c) distinguished between candidates who understood something about human behaviour and those who do not, as suggestions ranged from those which are actually employed by authorities to those which will simply not work in any circumstance.

*Psychology and Health***Section A****Question 9**

Substance use becomes abuse when there is an inability to stop; there are heightened problems in social and/or occupational functioning and there is pathological use for at least a month. Part **(b)** asked for one reason why a substance is abused. Reasons are numerous and most candidates were able to provide a legitimate answer. Part **(c)** asked about quitting substance abuse. Some candidates commented vaguely on social support whilst others referred to behavioural techniques such as the use of aversion therapy.

Question 10

Most candidates still struggle with this area. The term accident refers to an unexpected event without apparent cause, which would have been sufficient to answer part **(a)**. Part **(b)** asked for one psychological cause of accidents. These include the illusion of invulnerability, the application of motion stereotypes or people working shifts have a low-point between 2 and 5 o'clock in the morning, as well as many others. Part **(c)** looked at the prevention of accidents, and again candidates need to be more psychological than the "need to be more careful" anecdotal comment.

Section B**Question 11**

This was a general question which gave candidates the opportunity to write about their favourite aspects of the area of pain. In part **(a)** some focused on types (chronic and acute), others on theories (such as pattern theory and gate control theory), some on measures (self reports, MPQ and UAB) and many on managing pain. Some provided wide-ranging answers including something of each of the above aspects. Evaluation in part **(b)** saw marks awarded across the whole range. Part **(c)** looked at managing pain and here candidates had the flexibility to reduce any type of pain.

Question 12

Essay questions such as this allow candidates the freedom to write about whatever aspect of the area they choose, and this was the case for this question on stress. Better answers were those from candidates who organised their answers and included some form of definition, a mention of the possible causes of stress (including physiological components), and a description of measures of stress and, for some candidates, a mention of how stress can be managed. Evaluation in part **(b)** was mixed and poorer answers merely re-wrote what was in part **(a)**. Part **(c)** required candidates to write about how stress can be measured and generally this can be done physiologically (through blood pressure or urine sample) or psychologically (using a questionnaire or self report).

*Psychology and Abnormality***Section A****Question 13**

This question required an explanation of terms as do all **Section A** part **(a)** questions. Defining terms for this area, cultural, societal and individual differences is difficult, and so the mark scheme took this into account. Part **(b)** asked for one cultural and one gender difference and here quite a wide range of answers were provided. Interestingly a significant number of candidates crossed out one of their part **(b)** answers and re-wrote an alternative – one to which they could provide an answer in part **(c)**. It is worth reminding all candidates to read all question parts and to plan what to include before starting to write.

Question 14

For part **(a)**, this is where a person has a need to behave in a way which is considered to be abnormal by the society in which they live. For part **(b)** a description of two types of abnormal need were required. One type of abnormal need is pyromania, the compulsion to set fires and another is kleptomania, the need to steal, even when the person can afford the object(s) they have stolen. Pathological gambling is another legitimate inclusion as would be explosive disorder, the need to be aggressive toward property or people. For part **(c)** a treatment for any one of these was required and most typically treatment involves a cognitive-behavioural technique.

Section B**Question 15**

Candidates produced some excellent answers in response to this question. Most provided appropriate explanations of models. A model of abnormality has a set of assumptions concerning the cause and treatment of various types of mental illness. There are three main models (the medical, psychoanalytic and behavioural), although there are a number of minor models too. For the medical model (the focus of attention for most candidates) the main cause of any mental illness is a chemical imbalance which is treatable by rebalancing using drugs. The behavioural model assumes that any abnormality is learned and so they assume the most suitable treatment is some form of 'unlearning' or desensitising. The psychoanalytic model has its origins in the work of Freud and his followers. Part (c) caught out some candidates because they did not relate their suggested treatment to a model as the question required.

Question 16

The focus of this question was on abnormal adult development and typically this involves organic degeneration of the brain. The most common types are Alzheimer's disease and Pick's disease. Answers in part (a) described both of these and more with good detail and understanding. Part (b) proved difficult for some candidates with many merely re-wording what had been said in part (a). Part (c) answers were wide ranging and not surprisingly so as there is no specific treatment for organic degeneration.

*Psychology and Organisations***Section A****Question 17**

Part (a) asked for an explanation of what is meant by the term 'group behaviour in organisations'. It is where two or more individuals are engaged in a social interaction in order to achieve some goal. Part (b) also asked for an explanation but this time about team roles. The most popular theory of such is that of Belbin (1981) who outlines eight key team roles. Part (c) asked about team building and here Tuckman's four stages of forming, storming, norming and performing is most common. Very few candidates answered this question and the quality of answers was disappointing.

Question 18

This was more popular than **Question 17** and concerned QWL (quality of working life) which (for part (a)) involves all aspects of life at work, particularly the feelings and attitudes about one's job. Part (b) asked for a description of two causes of work stress. Many candidates appeared to forget either that this was the Psychology and Organisations or that their answers had to be psychologically informed. Answers to part (c) followed this trend and were also disappointing. There is more to job satisfaction and working life than money!

Section B**Question 19**

Selecting people for work is perhaps the most important role of any manager as the people employed can 'make or break' the organisation. It is not just a matter of a friendly chat as many candidates believe; there is much psychological evidence underlying complex procedures. On the other hand, there were some excellent answers too, written by candidates who have studied relevant theories and procedures. For informed candidates, evaluation was generally detailed and appropriate. Part (c) also distinguished between those who could refer to actual screening/psychometric tests and those who simply guessed.

Question 20

A question on organisational work conditions always attracts those weaker candidates who think they understand what an 'organisational work condition' is, but who then struggle to include appropriate information in their answers. The recommended text by Riggio (1990) divides work conditions into physical conditions such as illumination, temperature, noise, motion, pollution and aesthetic factors such as music and colour; and psychological conditions such as privacy or crowding, status/anonymity and importance/unimportance. Vibration, body movement and posture (e.g. seating or lifting) can also be added. Notably the word temporal relates to time and in organisations this refers to working hours or shift work. Candidates who did not understand this struggled to gain marks for this part.