

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/11

Core Studies 1

General comments

Section A saw many candidates write superb answers which impressed with their detail and depth of understanding. For others, to improve candidates should write more detail to achieve full marks. Without a doubt many candidates know the correct answer but they write a brief answer that will score one mark but not the second available mark. Simply, candidates should demonstrate their psychological knowledge rather than speed through answers hoping to finish the examination early. As has been written here before, what is not required is a very detailed answer. Instead it is sufficient to show a little understanding; to show that the candidate knows more than a superficial knowledge. A candidate will often write "it is unethical" (and will score 1 mark, because whatever it is might be) but by writing "it is unethical because..." and completing the sentence would score both marks. There are many examples in this paper to illustrate the lack of elaboration such as **Question 13** on doll choice, where candidates wrote "they used dolls" without elaboration for part (a) and "could use people" without elaboration for part (b). **Question 1** is another example of this.

In relation to **Section B**, there were candidates who could describe the procedure of their chosen study, could present a range of findings and often add aspects of data to support their answer. Many candidates could answer question part (c) with advantages, disadvantages and examples to illustrate each point made. Answers like these scored very high and often maximum marks. Where candidates can improve is to focus more on question part (d). The first part of this question requires consideration of an alternative method or way of gathering data and in most cases this causes few problems for candidates. However, candidates can improve their answer if they consider the effect the change has on the *results*. Many candidates consider the *implication* the change would have for the method, such as making it more ecologically valid, but that is not a consideration of the actual *result*.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question asked: What generalisation can be made about the learning or inheritance of picture perception (from the Deregowski study)? Many candidates wrote "it is learned" which is correct and scored one mark, but a little elaboration is needed for the full two marks to be awarded. Question part (b) asked candidates to suggest one problem with making any generalisation. This produced a range of interesting answers and again most candidates went for the "it does not apply to everyone" brief answer without elaboration.

Question 2

Question part (a) asked candidates to describe two pieces of equipment needed by Baron-Cohen et al to conduct their study on autism. Some candidates correctly mentioned "Sally and Anne" whilst others, also correctly, opted to mention dolls, a marble, a basket and a box. Question part (b) asked candidates to suggest how it was known that the children understood the procedure. The correct answer was that there were three control questions, the naming, memory and reality questions and answering these questions correctly ensured that the children understood the procedure.



Question 3

Part **(a)** asked candidates to name and describe two of the signs Gardner and Gardner claimed that Washoe had learned by the 22nd month of their study. There were thirty-four such signs candidates could choose from. Nearly all candidates could identify one or two signs correctly, such as 'come-gimme' and some went on to describe the sign. For 'come-gimme' the sign is a beckoning motion, with wrist or knuckles as pivot.

Question 4

Candidates can show understanding in many different ways and rather than ask for a detailed description, a simple diagram of the procedure would show understanding just as well as a description. Samuel and Bryant conducted the study on the conservation with containers of liquid in the pre-transformation, the transformation and the post-transformation positions. Candidates had to draw a labelled diagram to show this procedure. Some diagrams were brief and did not show all three stages, whereas others were detailed and had clear labels. Such answers scored full marks.

Question 5

Part **(a)** asked candidates to suggest one advantage of using interviews in the study by Hodges and Tizard. The majority of candidates suggested that more detail could be gathered and that the participants could explain answers rather than merely ticking a box.

Part **(b)** asked for a suggestion as to why the adolescents gave different answers compared with mothers' answers. There could be several reasons for this. For example, the adolescent may be giving socially desirable answers (or telling the truth) and the mother may be doing the same (or telling the truth). Also acceptable was that the adolescent may know what they actually do, or define things differently from mother.

Question 6

For question part **(a)** the reason why Freud's study of little Hans was a longitudinal study was because it went on over a period of time (at least two years) and this study could not have been done in any other way. Most candidates answered this question part correctly and some added the point that qualitative data is collected. For part **(b)** the question wanted one disadvantage of any *other* longitudinal study. Most candidates mentioned attrition, where participants are likely to drop out of the study as time passes, and to extend the answer, the most commonly quoted example of this was the Hodges and Tizard study.

Question 7

Question part **(a)** wanted one advantage of using a stooge in the study by Schachter and Singer. The simple answer, correctly stated by most candidates, is that a stooge keeps a participant naïve about the nature of the study (e.g. effects of adrenaline) and suggests to a participant how he or she may behave. Question part **(b)** wanted one problem with the use of a stooge in psychological research. The simple answer to this question part is that the use of a stooge is unethical as it is deception. This is because the participant thinks the stooge is another participant when the stooge has a specific brief and is working for the experimenter.

Question 8

The study by Dement and Kleitman involved the reporting of dreams and part **(a)** asked why were some of the reports not counted. Candidates generally answered this question well, many showing knowledge of the actual study by using the same or similar words to Dement and Kleitman. As stated in the study itself, dreams were not counted "... if they had dreamed without recall of content, or vague, fragmentary impressions of content, were considered negative". Question part **(b)** asked why the participants were never informed on awakening whether or not their eyes had been moving. This was because, if this had been done, the participants may have reported a false dream or no dream because of demand characteristics. Most candidates answered this question part correctly.



Question 9

This question focused on the use of the case study method to investigate split brain patients by Sperry. Part (a) wanted one advantage of the case study method. Many candidates commented on the richness and detail of the data gathered and others went further by adding that rare or unique behaviour can be studied in detail. Part (b) wanted one disadvantage of the case study method and many candidates stated incorrectly without elaboration that “it can not be generalised”. Crucially the study found that the findings can be generalised to those with a split brain but cannot be generalised to those who do not have a split brain.

Question 10

Question part (a) asked how a field experiment is *similar* to a laboratory experiment. Some candidates provided a vague answer, whereas many others could identify one or more features. The similarity is that they are both experiments and so have an independent variable, a dependent variable and there is an attempt to control variables. Question part (b) asked how a field experiment is *different* from a laboratory experiment. The crucial difference here is that one is done in a laboratory and the other is done in the field. Whilst many candidates stated this obvious difference, the answer required a comment on how they are different. The main difference is that in a field study, such as in the Piliavin et al field experiment, the participants do not know they are being studied whereas in a laboratory they do.

Question 11

This question part (a) required candidates to describe the sample of participants in experiment two of the study by Tajfel. Any two features were required, so stating that the participants were boys, in three groups of 16 (48 in total), aged 14-15 years, from a state or comprehensive school in Bristol, UK, that they were all in the same house form, that they all knew each other well were all acceptable answers. Importantly the number of participants in experiment two, as above, was different from the number in experiment one. Part (b) asked for an advantage of using a restricted sample of participants. Many candidates gave a correct answer by stating that such a sample can be used as a pilot study before researching further; that it allows generalisation from the group studied (the sample) to similar samples.

Question 12

All studies in psychology raise ethical issues. This question can be asked of any study and in this case the requirement was to outline two ethical issues in the study by Gould (intelligence testing). Importantly, ethical guidelines can be followed and they can be broken and either of these is acceptable. For this study confidentiality was maintained because no recruit was named. However, whilst recruits gave consent to be tested, they did not consent to be tested unfairly.

Question 13

For part (a) candidates were required to give one way in which the study by Hraba and Grant on doll choice was not ecologically valid. Many candidates wrote “they used dolls” and with no elaboration this type of answer scored one mark. If there is one question requirement for two marks then there must be more than a partial answer to score full marks. This point also applied to part (b) where candidates often wrote “use real people”.

Question 14

Question part (a) required candidates to give one advantage of participant observation used in the study by Rosenhan. Participant observation is where the aim is to gain a close and intimate familiarity with a given group of individuals (in this case the psychiatrists, nurses, etc. in the institutions) and their practices through an involvement with them in their natural environment. The participants do not know they are being observed, assuming the ‘participant’ is one of them. Part (b) wanted an example of a behaviour that the nurses attributed to the pseudo-patients’ insanity. Correct answers included note taking, oral acquisitive behaviour and ignoring requests for information.



Question 15

The study by Thigpen and Cleckley on multiple personality disorder involved psychometric tests. Part **(a)** wanted candidates to identify one psychometric test used in this study and to say what was found using this test. Acceptable answers included the IQ test (the Wechsler-Bellevue Intelligence Scale) where it was found that Eve White scored 110 and Eve Black 104 on the Wechsler memory test (Eve Black scored the same as her IQ; Eve White scored far above her IQ). The Rorschach, Drawings of Human Figures and EEG are not psychometric tests. Part **(b)** required one advantage of any psychometric test. The main advantage is that they are standardised tests, are said to be reliable and valid and this makes them objective/scientific and allows comparisons/generalisations to be made with others on a standardised scale.

Section B

Question 16

The concern of **Question 16** was whether participants are physically or psychologically harmed in psychological research.

- (a)** This question part required a description of the procedure of the chosen study. Many candidates provided excellent descriptions, often providing much more detail than was required for the marks and time available. Other candidates opted to describe the procedure briefly sometimes in no more detail than a **Section A**, two mark answer.
- (b)** This required a description of how the chosen study may have caused harm and as for part **(a)**, answers covered the whole range of available marks. Notably, harm can be psychological as well as physical, and even embarrassment can be considered to be psychological harm.
- (c)** This question part required a discussion of the arguments for and against causing harm to participants. Some candidates stated that the ends justify the means, which is correct, but this statement does require some elaboration and an example to receive full credit. Another advantage is that it may be done to simulate a realistic situation. Arguments against are that something may go seriously wrong and harm would discourage future participation in psychological research.
- (d)** This required consideration of a way in which the study could be conducted so it caused less (or no) harm. Suggestions were interesting and varied. For the Milgram study it was often suggested that participants be told there was no electric shock. To improve, candidates needed to consider how this would change the results.

Question 17

This question was on psychological research conducted in a laboratory with the studies of Loftus, Schachter and Raine being available for selection. For **Question 16** or **Question 17** candidates have ample choice as they have six studies to choose from, and it is important to choose carefully which answers to write about. Many candidates wrote very good parts **(a)** and **(b)** but struggled with parts **(c)** and **(d)**. It is worth ensuring that an answer can be provided for all question parts before beginning to answer.

- (a)** Question part **(a)** required a description of the procedure of the chosen study and most candidates did this for their chosen study accurately and in detail.
- (b)** This question part was straightforward for most candidates and required consideration of how being in a laboratory helped to control variables.
- (c)** This required a discussion of the arguments for and against using a laboratory to conduct research. Some candidates stated that the use of a laboratory allows control over extraneous variables, that it means that participants consent to research and so participants may behave in ways the experimenter would wish for. Against this is the viewpoint that demand characteristics are more likely and that the study will be low in ecological validity.
- (d)** This part looked for a way of gathering data outside the laboratory. Many candidates suggested doing a field experiment and answers could be improved by giving more detail on what this would actually include. As usual answers would be better if the second half of the question were addressed much more precisely.



PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/12

Core Studies 1

General comments

Section A saw many candidates write superb answers which impressed with their detail and depth of understanding. For others, to improve, candidates should write more detail to achieve full marks. Without a doubt many candidates know the correct answer but they write a brief answer that will score one mark but not the second available mark. Simply, candidates should demonstrate their psychological knowledge rather than speed through answers hoping to finish the examination early. As has been written here before, what is not required is a very detailed answer. Instead it is sufficient to show a little understanding; to show that the candidate knows more than a superficial knowledge. A candidate will often write "it is unethical" (and will score 1 mark, because whatever it is might be) but by writing "it is unethical because..." and completing the sentence would score both marks. There are many examples in this paper to illustrate lack of elaboration such as **Question 3** on autism, where candidates wrote "age and autism are not related" without going on to say why this may be. **Questions 1** and **4** also illustrate where detail could be added.

In relation to **Section B**, there were candidates who could describe the procedure of their chosen study, could present a range of findings and often add aspects of data to support their answer. Many candidates could answer question part (c) with advantages, disadvantages and examples to illustrate each point made. Answers like these scored very high and often maximum marks. Where candidates can improve is to focus more on question part (d). The first part of this question requires consideration of an alternative method or way of gathering data and in most cases this causes few problems for candidates. However, candidates can improve their answer if they consider the effect the change has on the *results*. Many candidates consider the *implication* the change would have for the method, such as making it more ecologically valid, but that is not a consideration of the actual *result*.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

This question required candidates to suggest two reasons why Loftus and Palmer used a laboratory experiment rather than a field experiment. Most candidates were able to give one reason, for example that being in a laboratory increased control, but often answers did not elaborate beyond this to say *what* could be controlled. Had candidates added simply that all participants were able to see the same film clip for example, then full marks could have been achieved.

Question 2

Question part (a) asked for one problem the participants in the Deregowski study may have had when looking at the pictures. Most answers correctly stated that many of the participants had never seen a picture before and so they did not know what it was. For part (b), which asked for one problem the researchers may have had when recording the results, the most common (and correct) answer was that the researchers probably spoke a different language from the participants and so may not have fully understood what the participants were saying.



Question 3

This question concerned the Baron-Cohen et al study of autism. Part **(a)** asked what was concluded about autism and development/age and part **(b)** asked what was concluded about autism and intelligence. For both parts many candidates wrote simply that "they conclude that there is no relationship" and in many cases there was no elaboration beyond this. The correct answer for part **(a)** was that there is no relationship between autism and age because young autistic children had theory of mind when older autistic children did not. The correct answer for part **(b)** is that there is no relationship between autism and intelligence because children of low intelligence had theory of mind whereas children of higher intelligence did not. A small number of candidates impressed when they gave the ages or intelligence levels of the children involved.

Question 4

This question asked about two ethical issues in the study on Washoe by Gardner and Gardner. Candidates could either write about ethical guidelines for animals or they could use ethical guidelines for humans and apply these to Washoe. Many candidates provided a guideline and then gave an example. Some candidates merely stated that "Washoe did not give consent and was not given the right to withdraw" without elaboration and others just gave an example without relating it to any ethical guideline. Putting both parts together would result in a maximum mark being awarded.

Question 5

Question part **(a)** asked about Freud gathering qualitative data when studying little Hans. The appropriate answer provided by the majority of candidates was that the father observed little Hans and recorded conversations over a period of at least two years and reported the findings to Freud. Question part **(b)** asked candidates to suggest one strength of qualitative data and most candidates wrote correctly that it can give in-depth and insightful data that are rich in detail and that can help us understand *why* people behave in a particular way.

Question 6

From the study by Schachter and Singer on emotion, candidates were asked in part **(a)** to briefly describe how quantitative data were gathered. Two answers could receive credit here: (1) via observations where there were four categories for euphoria and six for anger; (2) self reports (of mood and physical condition) where irritated, angry or annoyed for example were rated on a five point scale. Question part **(b)** asked for a disadvantage of quantitative methods and most candidates wrote correctly that it does not give us in-depth and insightful data that are rich in detail and that can help us understand why people behave in a particular way.

Question 7

From the study by Dement and Kleitman on sleep and dreaming, question part **(a)** asked candidates to suggest two ways in which the study was true to real life and two ways in which the study was *not* true to real life. Part **(a)** caused problems for most candidates who looked for a much more complex answer than was being asked. Some candidates wrote about the relationship between REM and NREM rather than simply saying that it is true to real life because the participants reported to the sleep laboratory at their normal bed time. Part **(b)** caused no problems at all and most candidates scored full marks by suggesting that most people are not woken up by a doorbell or do not go to sleep with EEG electrodes attached to their head.

Question 8

Part **(a)** asked candidates to describe the equipment needed to conduct one of the experiments in the study by Sperry. Surprisingly some candidates suggested that one piece of equipment he needed was a scalpel to split the brain in half. To clarify, Sperry, the psychologist rather than surgeon, studied the participants after their operation to see what effect it had on them. Items of equipment he used included: a screen, table, projector and various objects as well as many other items. Question part **(b)** asked why the same equipment was used for each participant. The main reason for this was to standardise the procedure to control extraneous variables so Sperry could compare each participant to see what each could and could not do.



Question 9

Part **(a)** asked what a confounding variable is. Many candidates knew this and provided a clear and unambiguous answer, whilst others were vague about what it was. A variable is said to be confounded when it is not clear whether the result is due to the independent variable or whether it is due to some extraneous variable. Question part **(b)** asked for one reason why Raine et al did not believe their study was confounded. In their article Raine et al list five reasons why they had this belief and the mark scheme, or the original article, can be consulted for full details.

Question 10

Based on the study by Milgram, question part **(a)** asked why we should conduct studies which are unethical. Many candidates gave detailed and appropriate answers. For example some suggested that deception is necessary to keep the participants naïve about the true nature of the study. Other candidates suggested that 'the ends justify the means' and so studies like that by Milgram are worth being unethical for the knowledge gained. Question part **(b)** asked candidates to suggest one way in which the study was ethical. It was ethical because as the participants did not give their names, confidentiality was maintained. Also participants were debriefed, and many said they were pleased to have taken part, so this is also ethical.

Question 11

From the study by Haney et al, question part **(a)** asked candidates to describe the sample of participants. Most candidates described a wide range of features, including their age and that they were candidates. Details of how the sample was gathered, such as describing the newspaper advert and selection procedure was also given credit. Some candidates did not answer the question set and incorrectly described the uniform and some candidates incorrectly described the induction procedure. Question part **(b)** asked for one advantage of using a restricted sample of participants. One advantage is that such a sample can be used as a pilot study to see what happens before studying other groups such as non-candidates, women, people in other countries, or larger numbers.

Question 12

The subway Samaritan study by Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin used a stooge. Part **(a)** asked: 'What is a stooge for?' Two appropriate answers, although others would be accepted, were that a stooge keeps a participant naïve about the nature of the study and that a stooge may act as a stimulus or may suggest to a participant how he or she may behave. Question part **(b)** asked for one problem with the use of a stooge in psychological research. The simple answer is that it is unethical, and candidates writing only this scored one mark. Those adding a reason for it being unethical, for example that it involves deception and why it does, scored the second available mark.

Question 13

Based on the Tajfel study, candidates were asked in part **(a)** to explain what is meant by the term 'social norm'. Tajfel defines this as an individual's expectation of how others expect him to behave and his expectation of how others will behave in any given social situation. In question part **(b)** candidates were asked how prejudice differs from discrimination. The correct answer is that prejudice is a negative or biased thought (1 mark) and that discrimination is an action or behaviour (1 further mark) and any deviation from this did not attract any marks.

Question 14

Part **(a)** asked: according to Rosenhan what distinguishes the sane from the insane? Candidates were often creative in suggesting what they thought distinguished sane from insane, but this was not what the question asked. According to Rosenhan the crucial feature is the existence of symptoms and if a person is in possession of certain symptoms then that person can be 'scientifically' categorised as being mentally ill. The reason why nearly all the pseudo-patients were diagnosed with schizophrenia is that they reported hearing voices which is a major symptom of schizophrenia. Question part **(b)** asked how Rosenhan tested whether psychiatrists could distinguish the sane from the insane. This question part was answered correctly by most candidates who accurately told the story of pseudo-patients contacting the hospital, and details following on from that.



Question 15

Question part **(a)** required candidates to describe one advantage of using the self report method to gather data in the study by Thigpen and Cleckley. An appropriate advantage is that participants are given the opportunity to express a range of feelings and to explain their behaviour. Another is that it may be the only way to access people's attitudes and emotions i.e. non-observable phenomena. Question part **(b)** asked for one problem with self report data in this study. Candidates often gave an appropriate advantage but often did not gain the second available mark for stating how the disadvantage related to this particular study as the question required.

Section B

Question 16

This question concerned snapshot studies and the studies available for selection included those by Hrabá and Grant (doll choice), Baron-Cohen, Leslie and Frith (autism) and Gould (intelligence testing).

- (a)** This part wanted an outline of the main findings of the chosen study. Some candidates interpret 'main findings' as 'brief summary' whereas other candidates wrote a very detailed description that included every aspect and often actual numbers were provided. Such answers often received full marks.
- (b)** This required a description of the procedure of the chosen study, with a mention of why this was a snapshot study. Many candidates provided excellent descriptions, often providing much more detail than was required for the marks and time available. Other candidates opted to describe the procedure briefly sometimes in no more detail than a **Section A**, two mark answer.
- (c)** This required a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of using snapshot studies. Many candidates for advantages often wrote simply "it is quick and easy" but often struggled to add any elaboration. For disadvantages, usually discussion revolved around the view that snapshot studies do not allow behaviour change to be seen over a period of time.
- (d)** This question required consideration of how a longitudinal study could be used rather than a snapshot. Some answers were simply "do the snapshot study over time" but other answers described in detail how the development of participants could be tracked over time, and those choosing the Gould study made particularly good use of this point.

Question 17

This question concerned studies on children and the studies available for selection included Bandura, Ross and Ross (aggression), Hodges and Tizard (social relationships) and Samuel and Bryant (conservation). Question part **(a)** asked candidates to outline the procedure of their chosen study. For **Question 16** or **Question 17** candidates have ample choice as they have six studies to choose from, and it is important to choose carefully which answers to write about. Many candidates wrote very good answers to parts **(a)** and **(b)** but struggled with parts **(c)** and **(d)**. It is worth ensuring that an answer can be provided for all question parts before beginning to answer.

- (a)** This part required a description of the procedure of the chosen study and most candidates did this for their chosen study accurately and in detail.
- (b)** This part wanted a description of what the chosen study tells us about children. Some candidates merely described the results of their chosen study and did not modify their answer to address the question. Other candidates could do this easily and wrote full and often very impressive answers.
- (c)** Candidates were required to give advantages and disadvantages of studying children. Most commonly candidates wrote about changes in development that can be recorded over time; that we can determine how children think and so how best to educate them, and that we can gain an understanding of how children behave in studies. The most commonly quoted disadvantages were that children cannot communicate their thoughts and feelings clearly and that they may become confused and may misinterpret what is required. Some candidates appropriately wrote about issues of consent and children.



- (d) This part wanted candidates to suggest one other way of gathering data and crucially to go on to say what effect, if any, this would have on the results. The first half was generally done well, but often the second half of the question was not considered. As question part (d)s appear on every examination paper it would be logical for candidates to think about this well in advance of the examination.



PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/13

Core Studies 1

General comments

Section A saw many candidates write superb answers which impressed with their detail and depth of understanding. For others, to improve, candidates should write more detail to achieve full marks. Without a doubt many candidates know the correct answer but they write a brief answer that will score one mark but not the second available mark. Simply, candidates should demonstrate their psychological knowledge rather than speed through answers hoping to finish the examination early. As has been written here before, what is not required is a very detailed answer. Instead it is sufficient to show a little understanding; to show that the candidate knows more than a superficial knowledge. A candidate will often write "it is unethical" (and will score 1 mark, because whatever it is might be) but by writing "it is unethical because..." and completing the sentence would score both marks. There are many examples in this paper to illustrate where elaboration could be added such as **Question 1** which required an example from the Loftus study or **Question 5 (b)**.

In relation to **Section B**, there were candidates who could describe the procedure of their chosen study, could present a range of findings and often add aspects of data to support their answer. Many candidates could answer question part **(c)** with advantages, disadvantages and examples to illustrate each point made. Answers like these scored very high and often maximum marks. Where candidates can improve is to focus more on question part **(d)**. The first part of this question requires consideration of an alternative method or way of gathering data and in most cases this causes few problems for candidates. However, candidates can improve their answer if they consider the effect the change has on the *results*. Many candidates consider the *implication* the change would have for the method, such as making it more ecologically valid, but that is not a consideration of the actual *results*.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Question part **(a)** asked, in relation to the Loftus and Palmer study: 'What is an independent groups design?' Most candidates were able to answer this question in a clear and straightforward way. For example, the answer "an independent groups design is where different participants are used in each condition" was sufficient for full marks. Question part **(b)** invited candidates to suggest one advantage of using an independent groups design *in this study*. This answer required two parts: to suggest the advantage and to relate it to this specific study. Whilst candidates could often provide an advantage they did not go on to relate it to the Loftus and Palmer study.

Question 2

Question part **(a)** asked: 'What is a review of studies?' Most candidates answered correctly that a review provides a synthesis of research on a topic at that moment in time, or put another way, it is an analysis of several different studies carried out by other people from which the reviewer may formulate their own conclusions, as did Derogowski. Part **(b)** wanted one advantage and one disadvantage of a review. As each of these components carried only one mark a single statement was sufficient. Possible advantages were that a review can be done in a library and it can review many works, drawing overall conclusions, making generalisations. Disadvantages include: as no experiments performed there is no 'first hand evidence', and also that any review may include biases, misinterpretations, and lead to false generalisations.



Question 3

Question part **(a)** required candidates to identify one psychometric test used in the Baron-Cohen study and say to whom it was given. Whilst many candidates correctly referred to the test for mental age (or an IQ test), some candidates referred to the Sally-Anne test which is not psychometric and some candidates even referred to the 'eyes test' which is not part of the current syllabus. Most candidates mentioned that the test was given to all three groups of children, namely the autistic, Down's Syndrome and the non-autistic/non-Down's Syndrome children, although some candidates only mentioned the autistic children. Question part **(b)** asked for one advantage of any psychometric test and most candidates provided an appropriate answer.

Question 4

The important aspect of this question was the latter half requiring a consideration of *this* study, meaning that an example had to be given from the Gardner and Gardner study on Washoe rather than just the advantage and disadvantage of the case study method. Many candidates addressed the former part of the question (advantage and disadvantage) with ease, but only those reading the question fully addressed the latter part too.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to name one of the four hypotheses proposed by Bandura in his study of aggression for part **(a)**. A number of candidates wrote answers worth a single mark, for example by stating that the aim was to see whether aggression is learned. For part **(b)**, relating the conclusion to the hypothesis, most candidates scored one mark by writing "the results supported the hypothesis" and some went on to add further detail by giving an example or impressively quoting some of the results.

Question 6

Question part **(a)** wanted to know the difference between the 'ex-institutional' and the 'comparison' children in the Hodges and Tizard study. Whilst many candidates provided excellent answers scoring full marks, some candidates misread the question and provided results showing differences between the groups of children. The perfect answer was simply that the ex-institutional children had been in an institution (in care) for at least two years, whereas the comparison or control group of children had not. Question part **(b)** asked similarly for the difference between the adopted and the restored children. The most direct answer, which would score full marks, was that the 'adopted' children were adopted whereas the 'restored' children returned to their biological parent.

Question 7

This question wanted two generalisations about the cycle of sleep for all people that could be made from the study by Dement and Kleitman. There were some fascinating answers written in response to this question which showed that many candidates knew a great deal more about sleep and dreaming than is provided in the core study by Dement and Kleitman. If a generalisation directly from the study was given, with elaboration, then it would receive full marks. Equally because the question asks about generalisations about sleep then any appropriate answer would receive credit. For example, many candidates wrote about the stages of sleep and many about how NREM happens earlier and REM later in the sleep cycle.

Question 8

This question required candidates to sketch a brain marking the left and right hemispheres, the visual fields and the route of the visual pathways. Examiners can test understanding of studies in many ways and rather than waste time with complicated explanations it is simpler to draw a diagram of what is going on. Many candidates scored maximum marks and provided clear, accurate and often detailed diagrams where understanding was clearly evident. Some candidates provided brief outlines showing only hemispheres and eyes and were unable to show the visual fields or pathways to the brain.

Question 9

This question looked at the study by Raine, Buchsbaum and LaCasse on brain scans which has five conclusions 'this study does and does not indicate'. A description of two conclusions from the study was required. These conclusions are listed in full in the mark scheme and also in the original study. Some candidates described two of these conclusions in detail, whilst others provided less detail. Some candidates would benefit from looking more closely at the study itself.



Question 10

To explain bystander behaviour, Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin propose a cost-benefit model of response to emergencies. Part **(a)** wanted two benefits of helping any victim and part **(b)** wanted two possible costs of helping any victim. Most candidates were able to score maximum marks with ease. It was reassuring to read that the first answer by most candidates was the self satisfaction from knowing they had helped, with possible reward from the victim appearing much less frequently. For part **(b)** many candidates suggested that they might be late for school or work, or that they might be harmed if the victim was drunk.

Question 11

Part **(a)** wanted candidates to identify two studies which used students as participants. This question part provided some fascinating responses. The question is what defines a student. The simple answer is how the author of the core study defines their participants. However, because 'people in education' are described in different terms in different countries, Examiners also credited studies using children. This means that whilst the studies by Loftus, Schachter, Haney, which used university students were most accurate, the studies by Samuel, Tajfel, and Hrabá were also credit worthy. Milgram did not use students. Part **(b)** wanted one disadvantage of using students as participants. There are several possible answers including: they participate because they are told to; they may not have an option; they may try to please the experimenter more than a non-candidate; and that as they are students and may be more intelligent than average.

Question 12

This question required candidates to suggest four reasons why the recruits in the review of army intelligence by Gould may not have performed to their true ability. Most candidates provided a comprehensive list which included that the recruits could not read, could not write, could not use or have never used a pencil, were given the wrong test, could not answer questions due to cultural bias, or answer questions that did not relate to 'real life intelligence'.

Question 13

From the study by Hrabá and Grant on doll choice, question part **(a)** required candidates to describe how Hrabá and Grant used the self report method to gather data. The simple answer, provided by nearly all candidates was that children were presented with four dolls and asked a series of questions. Part **(b)** asked for one problem with self report data *in this study*. As usual some candidates gave a general problem without relating it to this study and so were unable to access all the available marks.

Question 14

From the study by Rosenhan (sane in insane places) part **(a)** asked who the pseudopatients were and part **(b)** asked who the participants were. Most candidates were able to answer question part **(a)** correctly by stating that the pseudopatients were volunteers, or stooges, who faked mental illness. Some candidates gave more precise detail, commenting that there was a painter, a housewife and some psychologists. For question part **(b)** most candidates gave a correct answer by writing that the doctors and nurses were the participants. Some candidates thought that the pseudopatients were also the participants, but the pseudopatients were not studied and no data were collected on them.

Question 15

Question part **(a)** wanted an outline of one of the anecdotes provided by Eve. Candidates could describe a number of anecdotes in response to this question. The two most common are the story where Eve Black went shopping and Eve White claimed to have no memory of it at all. A second common anecdote is where Eve White started to write a letter, but apparently Eve Black finished the letter and posted it. Any other correct anecdote received credit. Marks were allocated according to the amount of detail provided and the accuracy of the detail provided. Nearly all candidates provided a correct answer to part **(b)**, knowing that an anecdote is a story which may be totally true, partially or entirely made up.



Section B

Question 16

The concern of **Question 16** was whether participants are deceived in psychological research. The studies by Milgram, Tajfel and Schachter were available for consideration.

- (a) This question part required a description of the procedure of the chosen study. Many candidates provided excellent descriptions, often providing much more detail than was required for the marks and time available. Other candidates opted to describe the procedure briefly sometimes in no more detail than a **Section A**, two mark answer.
- (b) Candidates were required to describe how patients were deceived in their chosen study and some very good answers were seen to this part question.
- (c) This required a discussion of the arguments for and against deceiving participants. Some candidates stated that the ends justify the means, which is correct, but this statement does require some elaboration and an example to receive full credit. Another advantage is that it may be done to simulate a realistic situation. Arguments against are that it is unethical and so this may discourage anyone from participating in a psychological study ever again.
- (d) This part required consideration of a way in which the study could be conducted without deception. For the Milgram study it was often suggested that participants be told there was no electric shock and so were not deceived. Candidates often did not go on to earn marks by looking at how this would change the results.

Question 17

This question concerned studies conducted in everyday environments.

- (a) This part wanted an outline of the main findings of the chosen study. Some candidates interpret 'main findings' as 'write very little' whereas other candidates write a very detailed description that includes every aspect and often data is quoted in full. Such answers often receive full marks.
- (b) The question part wanted a description of the features of the everyday environment that was used in the chosen study. Some candidates merely described the procedure of their chosen study and did not modify their answer to address the question, the focus of which was on the everyday environment such as where the study was conducted. Other candidates could do this easily and wrote full and often very impressive answers.
- (c) This required advantages and disadvantages of conducting studies in everyday environments. The most common strength quoted was that behaviour is natural as the participants do not know they are being studied. The most commonly quoted disadvantage is that it is much more difficult to control all variables and that this may reduce the reliability of the study.
- (d) Candidate were required to suggest one other way of gathering data for the chosen study and crucially to go on to say what effect, if any, this would have on the results. The first half of the question was generally done well, but often the second half of the question was not considered. As question part (d)s appear on every examination paper it would be logical for candidates to think about this well in advance of the examination.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/21

Core Studies 2

General comments

As in previous years, the marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the entire range of the mark spectrum. Some candidates provided excellent answers which showed that they were very well prepared and a few could extend their answers beyond the core studies themselves.

Many candidates managed their time well spending an appropriate amount of time on each section. There were fewer candidates spending too much time on **part (a)** of the **Section B** essay which left more time for **parts (b)** and **(c)** enabling them to achieve higher marks overall. Candidates should aim to spend half an hour on **Section A** and an hour on **Section B** as this is worth more marks.

Compared to previous sessions, the number of candidates attempting all three essays had decreased significantly. When this did happen the candidate was awarded the mark for the best of the three questions (**Question 6**, **Question 7** or **Question 8**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly because they did not spend enough time answering **Section B**.

Most candidates were well prepared for the content required in the exam. Many candidates included evidence in **part (c)** of the **Section C** essay and were able to score good marks. To improve, candidates need this evidence to achieve further than the 3-4 mark band. **Question 7** and **Question 8** were the most popular questions with very few candidates choosing **Question 6**.

Individual Questions

Section A

Question 1

This question was worth four marks and candidates were awarded two marks for each problem identified and explained. Some did answer this question well and achieved full marks. Candidates discussed how the study had a small sample and what might be special about Washoe (e.g. high IQ) that might lead to problems with generalisability. To improve, candidates need to be aware that the Gardners never intended to generalise the study to how children/humans learn language. In addition to this, candidates should explain what the problem is with generalisability rather than just identifying the problem.

Question 2

- (a) Many candidates achieved full marks on this question by describing one of the tests used in the study. In order to improve, candidates should describe the test rather than just identify. In addition, candidates should be aware that hypnosis and talking to Eve are not tests.
- (b) Many candidates were able to identify the ethical issue with the test described in **part (a)** and some did explain this well. A few candidates gave inappropriate ethical issues or gave very brief answers that only achieved one mark.



Question 3

This question was worth four marks and candidates needed to outline two features of the study that lacked ecological validity. Each feature could be awarded up to two marks. The majority of candidates did very well on this question and most achieved three to four marks. Candidates could clearly link their answer to the study and ecological validity. To improve, candidates should state how the sleeping arrangements are different in everyday life.

Question 4

- (a) Many candidates gave a clear definition of ethnocentrism. Some candidates did use Gould as an example to clarify their answers although this was not necessary to achieve full marks. Some candidates needed to learn terminology in order to achieve better marks for this question.
- (b) There were many very clear and well explained answers to this question that achieved full marks. Candidates provided a wide variety of responses which was pleasing to see. Many candidates focused on the Immigration Restriction Act and also the ethnocentric nature of the IQ tests themselves. In order to improve, candidates must give an answer that is linked to the Gould study to achieve full marks.

Question 5

- (a) Some candidates achieved full marks for this question by stating the results of the Haba and Grant study and clearly comparing this to the results in the Clark and Clark study. In order to improve, candidates must give a specific result (e.g. choice of black doll by the black participants) and compare this to the Clark and Clark result.
- (b) Many candidates gave a conclusion to the study and were able to achieve one mark. In order to improve, candidates need to give a specific application to achieve full marks for this question.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) Candidates had a good knowledge of the core studies and were able to describe a situational explanation for each study. This was more easily achieved for Zimbardo, Milgram and Piliavin. In order to improve, candidates should focus their description on the situational explanation from each study rather than giving long descriptions of what happened in each study.
- (b) Some good answers were seen where the candidates focused on problems with studying situational explanations. Many candidates focused on ethical issues as well as ecological validity and generalisability. In order to improve, candidates must focus on the problems with studying situational explanations specifically rather than just general problems with the studies. This meant at times there were many repetitions of points and candidates achieved fewer marks overall as each separate problem can only receive a maximum of three marks.
- (c) There were a few insightful answers that referred back to usefulness and some did bring in evidence to back up their points. In order to achieve the top band marks candidates must extend their discussion beyond the core studies. In order to improve, candidates must include evidence to achieve higher than the 3 to 4 mark band.

Question 7

- (a) There were some very good answers to this part. Some candidates achieved full marks in this question and were able to describe what each study tells us about development. In order to improve, candidates need to focus their answers on the developmental processes shown in each study rather than giving long descriptions of the procedures of the studies. This did not achieve any marks and left the candidates with less time for the **part (b)** and **part (c)** questions.
- (b) Many candidates did keep their answers focused on the problems with conducting studies that investigate development. Many candidates raised the issues of communication problems, ethical issues and lack of concentration of children. In addition to this, these problems were often linked



back to evidence which was pleasing to see. In order to improve, candidates need to make sure each point refers back to development rather than just doing this at the start of their response.

- (c) There were a few very good responses that did really consider the issue of truly understanding the behaviour of children with reference to the studies. In order to improve, candidates need to plan out their answers to ensure their points refer to the question asked of them. As with previous exams, candidates need to bring in evidence to achieve higher than the 3 to 4 mark band.

Question 8

- (a) Some candidates did focus on why the study was a snapshot study. There were a few very creative and insightful answers that justified the use of the snapshot method in each study. Many did refer to the length of the studies. In order to improve, candidates need to go beyond describing the procedure and findings of the studies. These answers did achieve one or two marks but most of what the candidate wrote achieved no marks and similar to previous questions left less time for the candidate to answer the **part (b)** and **part (c)** questions.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates focused their response on the problems with conducting snapshot studies. A handful of candidates were able to come up with four problems and these were sometimes clearly linked to evidence. The vast majority of candidates could describe two to three problems. In order to improve, candidates should avoid repeating the same problems as this does not achieve any more marks and time could be better spent on other questions. In addition, candidates must use evidence to back up their points.
- (c) There were some good answers to **part (c)** by many candidates who seemed well prepared. In order to improve, candidates should extend beyond the points made in the **part (b)** of their essay and consider the strengths and weaknesses of the longitudinal method. Similar to other the other **part (c)** answers in this exam, evidence was sometimes missing resulting in the mark being limited to 3 or 4 marks.



PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/22
Core Studies 2

General comments

As in previous years, the marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the entire range of the mark spectrum. Some candidates provided excellent answers which showed that they were very well prepared and a few could extend their answers beyond the core studies themselves.

Many candidates managed their time well spending an appropriate amount of time on each section. There were fewer candidates spending too much time on **part (a)** of the **Section B** essay which left more time for **parts (b)** and **(c)** enabling them to achieve higher marks overall. Candidates should aim to spend half an hour on **Section A** and an hour on **Section B** as this is worth more marks.

Compared to previous sessions, the number of candidates attempting all three essays had decreased significantly. When this did happen the candidate was awarded the mark for the best of the three questions (**Question 6**, **Question 7** or **Question 8**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly because they did not spend enough time answering **Section B**.

Most candidates were well prepared for the content required in the exam. Many candidates included evidence in **part (c)** of the **Section C** essay and were able to score good marks. To improve, candidates need this evidence to achieve further than the 3-4 mark band. **Question 6** was the most popular choice of question followed by **Question 8**. **Question 7** was the least popular of the essay questions.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This question was very well answered by candidates as most were able to identify accurately two questions asked in the Hradek and Grant study and achieve full marks. Candidates should be aware of the differences between the names of studies as a few described the questions asked in the Baron-Cohen study.
- (b) Some candidates were able to outline clearly how asking these questions lacked ecological validity and achieved full marks. The majority of candidates achieved one mark by giving a very brief or unclear outline. To improve, candidates should aim to explain their answer in more depth, for example by explaining how these questions are unrealistic in terms of the everyday experiences of children this age.

Question 2

- (a) Many candidates did well on this question. The variety of controls used in the Raine study (e.g. matched pairs, PET scanner, continuous performance task) were identified by candidates. Many could outline this control in a bit of detail to gain the full marks. A brief explanation of why this is a control could help candidates to achieve more marks for this question.
- (b) In terms of explaining the effect this control had on validity, the minority of candidates could do this well with some eloquent answers. In order to improve candidates need to have an understanding of validity and be sure to relate this to the Raine study.



Question 3

- (a) This question was well answered by candidates who were able to outline something about the situation in the prison that caused the behaviours of either the prisoners or the guards. Some candidates made explicit reference to pathology of power which was pleasing to see. In order to improve candidates must address both sides of the question. They need to state what the situational explanation is as well as making specific reference to the effect this had on the participants' behaviour in the study.
- (b) A small number of candidates were able to give an individual explanation of behaviour in the study by referring to the individual differences in the behaviour of the guards and/or prisoners. Candidates need to learn the difference between individual explanations and situational explanations as many candidates offered a second situational explanation as their answer to this part of the question.

Question 4

- (a) It was encouraging to see that many candidates clearly understood quantitative data and were able to describe how it was collected in the study. Most candidates tended to focus on the number of errors to good effect and many also noted the differing conditions. Candidates should be aware that Samuel and Bryant counted the number of errors made and not the number of correct responses.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates referred to quantitative data lacking in detail and some did explain this with reference to the Samuel and Bryant study. Candidates need to be aware that a general evaluation of the study will not achieve marks unless it specifically refers to a problem with quantitative data.

Question 5

- (a) Many candidates could describe a technique used by Sperry with quite a bit of detail which was encouraging to see. Candidates need to be aware of the term 'technique' as some candidates described the cutting of the corpus callosum or the difference in functioning between the two hemispheres as the technique.
- (b) Many candidates gave a clear explanation of the difficulty in making generalisations from the study and were awarded full marks. Candidates clearly understood the term 'generalise' and made reference to the sample and how split-brain patients may have been affected by epilepsy. In order to improve, candidates need to expand their answers slightly to achieve full marks. This could be by explaining what is unique about Sperry's group of participants.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) There were some excellent responses from the majority of candidates. Candidates had a good knowledge of the core studies and were able to describe the environment in each study. In order to improve, candidates should focus their description on the environment used in each study rather than giving long descriptions of the procedures.
- (b) There were many good answers where the candidates described problems with studying everyday life. Many candidates focused on ethical issues as well as ecological validity and difficulty with the control of variables. In order to improve, candidates must focus on the problems with studying everyday life specifically rather than just general problems with the studies.
- (c) A mixture of responses was seen here. The vast majority of candidates were able to go through the ethical guidelines and explain how they were either broken or met in each study. Some candidates were able to offer counterarguments and discussed whether it is possible to create an ethical environment. A few candidates appeared to have misread the question and gave a general evaluation of the studies which achieved few marks. Candidates should be aware that they are creating an argument in response to this question and both sides of the debate should be presented using evidence to back up their points. In order to achieve the top band marks candidates must



extend their discussion beyond the core studies. In order to improve, candidates must include evidence to achieve higher than the 3 to 4 mark band.

Question 7

- (a) There were some very good answers. Some candidates achieved full marks in this question and were able to describe what each study tells us about cognitive processes. In order to improve, candidates need to focus their answers on the cognitive processes shown in each study rather than giving long descriptions of the procedures of the studies. This did not achieve any marks and left the candidates with less time for the **part (b)** and **part (c)** questions.
- (b) Many candidates did keep their answers focused on the problems with conducting studies that investigate cognitive processes. Many candidates raised the issues of validity, difficulty in investigating thoughts and the ethics of investigating mental processes. In addition to this, these problems were often linked back to evidence which was pleasing to see. In order to improve, candidates need to make sure each point refers back to cognitive processes throughout their answer rather than just doing this at the start of their response.
- (c) There were some very good responses that did really consider the issue of having a true understanding of the human mind. This was often argued well with evidence backing up both sides of this debate. Some students were not familiar with the black box analogy but were still able to give a discussion of the problems faced in truly understanding the human mind.

Question 8

- (a) The vast majority of candidates gave clear and often very detailed descriptions of how the qualitative data was collected as well as the data itself. In order to improve, candidates should be aware that they do not need to describe quantitative data in this question and received no marks for doing this in their response. There was less overwriting for this question with most candidates focusing on the part of the study requested.
- (b) The majority of candidates focused their response on the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative data. Candidates were well prepared for this type of question and could link their discussion to the evidence listed in **part (a)** as well as other core studies in the syllabus. In order to improve, a few candidates should avoid repeating the same problems as this does not achieve any more marks and time could be better spent on other questions. In addition, candidates must use evidence to back up their points.
- (c) There were some good answers to this part by many candidates who seemed well prepared. In order to improve, candidates should extend beyond the points made in **part (b)** of their essay and consider the strengths and weaknesses of the quantitative data. They should aim to refer back to how this data explains human behaviour to get higher marks. Similar to other the other **part (c)** answers in this examination, evidence was sometimes missing resulting in the mark being limited to 3 or 4 marks.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/23

Core Studies 2

General comments

As in previous years, the marks achieved by candidates sitting this examination covered the entire range of the mark spectrum. Some candidates provided excellent answers which showed that they were very well prepared and a few could extend their answers beyond the core studies themselves.

Many candidates managed their time well spending an appropriate amount of time on each section. There were fewer candidates spending too much time on **part (a)** of the **Section B** essay which left more time for **parts (b)** and **(c)** enabling them to achieve higher marks overall. Candidates should aim to spend half an hour on **Section A** and an hour on **Section B** as this is worth more marks.

Compared to previous sessions, the number of candidates attempting all three essays had decreased significantly. When this did happen the candidate was awarded the mark for the best of the three questions (**Question 6**, **Question 7** or **Question 8**). These candidates usually achieved very poorly because they did not spend enough time answering **Section B**.

Most candidates were well prepared for the content required in the exam. Many candidates included evidence in **part (c)** of the **Section C** essay and were able to score good marks. To improve, candidates need this evidence to achieve further than the 3-4 mark band. **Question 7** and **Question 8** were the most popular questions with very few candidates choosing **Question 6**.

Individual Questions

Section A

Question 1

This question wanted the candidates to give specific explanations and two marks were achieved for the similarity and two marks for the difference between Milgram's study and everyday life. The majority of candidates did very well on this question and gave very specific examples. Many focused on the application to Nazi Germany and also the fact that we do not give electric shocks in everyday life. In order to improve their answers, candidates needed to include specific examples rather than general statements.

Question 2

- (a) The vast majority of candidates achieved full marks for this question by specifically explaining that this group were given injections of adrenalin and told the wrong side effects. Many candidates described the side effects clearly. In order to improve, candidates need to learn the differences between the four conditions in the study.
- (b) Many candidates gave a clear description of an ethical guideline that was **met** in the study. For the candidates who failed to score marks, many could have improved their answers by reading the question carefully as quite a few wrote about how a guideline was broken rather than how it was met.



Question 3

- (a) Many candidates could describe how the study supported the nurture argument. Most focused on the nurturing of Hans by his parents. Many described the horse falling over as the cause of his phobia. Some candidates gave brief answers and achieved one mark. Most did not confuse nature and nurture for this part of the question.
- (b) A variety of responses were given to this question. Some candidates outlined how the study supported nature with the idea that Freud believed the Oedipus complex is a developmental stage that all boys pass through around the age of 4-5 years. To improve, candidates needed to focus on the study rather than all of the stages of development. Candidates also needed to be clear on the difference between the nature explanation and the nurture explanation as some gave a similar response to the **part (a)** of their answer.

Question 4

- (a) The vast majority of candidates achieved full marks for this question by describing at least two features of the sample. Many wrote about four or five features. To improve, candidates needed to read the question carefully as a few gave descriptions of the procedure of the study which achieved no marks.
- (b) There were many good responses to this question. The vast majority of candidates achieved at least one mark as they were able to describe the problem with sample size or ethnocentrism. In order to improve, candidates needed to give a more detailed response.

Question 5

- (a) Many candidates gave concise and clear responses and achieved full marks by describing how the groups discriminated against each other in the matrix task. A few candidates did achieve marks by discussing the ethnocentric nature of the study in terms of the sample used. A number of candidates believed the study was done in America and could improve by knowing the study was done in Bristol, England.
- (b) There were some very interesting responses to this question and a variety of approaches were taken to explain the difficulty in avoiding ethnocentrism. The vast majority of candidates achieved at least one mark by discussing how samples are often ethnocentric. Some gave very insightful responses with discussions focusing on the ethnocentric viewpoint of the researcher. Many gave examples from Gould to back up their argument. To improve, candidates needed to use psychological terminology for the exam as some did not know what ethnocentrism meant and this meant they were unable to score marks for both parts of the question.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) Candidates had a good knowledge of the core studies and were able to describe what each study tells us about individual differences. In order to improve, candidates should have focused their description on individual differences rather than giving long descriptions of what happened in each study. Although this often gave full marks for **part (a)** it left less time for **parts (b)** and **(c)** of the essay.
- (b) There were some good answers to this part where the candidates focused on problems with studying individual differences. Many candidates focused on ethical issues as well as ecological validity and generalisability. In order to improve candidates must focus on the problems with studying individual differences specifically rather than just discussing general problems with the studies. At times there were many repetitions of points and candidates achieved fewer marks overall as each separate problem can only receive a maximum of three marks.
- (c) There were a few insightful answers and some did bring in evidence to back up their points. In order to achieve the top band marks candidates must extend their discussion beyond the core studies. In order to improve, candidates must include evidence to achieve higher than the 3 to 4 mark band.



Question 7

- (a) Candidates often achieved full marks in this question and were able to describe how each study was useful. Many did give quite detailed answers about the specific uses for each study. Many mentioned the reduction in TV violence for Bandura and the usefulness in court cases for Loftus and Palmer. Some candidates were less clear on the use of Raine and Gardner and Gardner but gave general conclusions of the studies which achieved one or two marks per study.
- (b) Many candidates kept their answers focused on the problems with conducting useful studies. In order to improve, candidates need to make sure each point refers back to usefulness rather than just doing this at the start of their response. Most candidates attempted to describe problems with examples from the studies.
- (c) There were a few very creative answers that extended beyond the core studies and achieved the high band. Such a variety of responses was impressive and many candidates mentioned more than just the four studies listed. As with previous exams, candidates needed to bring in evidence to achieve higher than the 3 to 4 mark band.

Question 8

- (a) Most candidates focused on the quantitative data collected in each of the studies. Very few candidates wrote about parts of the studies that had nothing to do with quantitative data. In order to improve, candidates should give specific examples of some of the quantitative data collected.
- (b) The vast majority of candidates focused their response on the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative data. Very few candidates gave incorrect strengths and weaknesses. Many gave clear evidence to back up their discussion and often included studies not listed in **part (a)** of this essay. In order to improve, candidates must use evidence to back up their points.
- (c) There were some very well prepared answers to this question. In order to improve candidates should extend beyond the points made in **part (b)** of their essay and consider the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative data. Similarly to other the other **part (c)** answers in this exam, evidence was sometimes missing resulting in the mark being limited to 3 or 4 marks.



PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/31
Specialist Choices

General comments

There are those Centres who prepare their candidates extremely well and whose candidates write superb answers and they are to be congratulated on their efforts. As usual there are those Centres and candidates who are less prepared for this examination and this report aims to provide guidance to help such Centres and candidates improve. The following three points will help improve the quality of answers.

1. Candidates must base their answers on published psychological knowledge. A number of candidates think that this specialist choices paper allows them to write about their own real-life experiences. This is a false assumption. Whilst psychology is about people and their experience, the purpose of an examination is for candidates to show what they have learned and the best way to do this is to quote psychological knowledge. If there is no psychological knowledge evident then no marks will be awarded.
2. Application of a few basic rules will improve candidates' examination technique.
 - (a) Some candidates attempt every question, hoping that a few marks will be scored for each answer. This strategy will always fail, because depth and detail are needed from just four answers.
 - (b) Candidates need to understand what the terms 'describe' and 'evaluate' mean. Description involves writing about psychological knowledge, describing what has been learned. Evaluating means commenting both positively and negatively on the knowledge described. Evaluation is not merely describing in more detail what has already been described.
 - (c) Candidates should try to balance their answers according to question type and mark allocation. There are 'short answer' questions in **Section A** worth 2, 3 and 3+3 marks and there are **Section B** essay questions worth 8, 10 and 6 marks. Clearly twice as much time should be spent on a 24 mark section than an 11 mark section. If **Section B** answers are as brief as **Section A** answers then full marks are unlikely to be achieved.
3. Many candidates need to learn how to evaluate. It is worth candidates and teachers becoming familiar with the requirements of the mark scheme, regarding the evaluation section. For example, the mere addition of an appropriate comparison or contrast in an answer will score two marks for cross referencing. In fact the perfect evaluative answer is all about presenting a number of psychological issues, presenting evidence to support the issues from what has been described in question part (a) and cross referencing each.

Comments on specific questions

PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Question 1

For question part (a) candidates had to explain what is meant by the term 'learned helplessness' in education. Typically this describes those with a pessimistic explanatory style, which sees negative events as permanent ("it will never change"), personal ("it's my fault"), and pervasive ("I can't do anything correctly"). Most candidates scored one mark because they assumed it is what a candidate cannot do, rather than an attitude towards anything new. For part (b) candidates had to describe one example of learned helplessness. Whilst some answers to this question were superb because the understanding of learned helplessness was evident, other candidates provided confused answers that could have had more clarity.



Question part **(c)** asked for two ways in which motivation in a classroom can be improved. The most common response was the use of positive reinforcement, for example praise for good work, to provide students with achievable goals that require effort, or for teachers to present information in an interesting and stimulating way.

Question 2

This question on 'layout of educational environments' is a common one, so it was not surprising to see most candidates scoring maximum marks for question part **(a)**. Part **(b)** required candidates to describe a study showing the effects of physical features on performance. Some candidates could refer to a relevant topic area, but the best answers described an appropriate study. That by Pepler (1972) on air conditioning in classrooms was the study most commonly quoted. For part **(c)**, the question required candidates to focus on improving learning conditions in classrooms and many candidates simply extended what they had written about in part **(a)**. This is legitimate but answers must be related to the requirements of the mark scheme in order to score full marks.

Question 3

For part **(a)** most candidates described a range of ways in which educational performance could be assessed. However, a significant number of answers consisted of anecdotes of what happens in a particular school/college and many failed to include relevant psychological evidence. Whilst some answers were legitimate, such as assessment by essay writing, other aspects were not. Better answers considered the purpose of A level examinations. Some answers looked appropriately at IQ testing. Question part **(b)** often had disappointing evaluation because it is difficult to evaluate anecdotal comment rather than quoted psychological evidence. Question part **(c)** required candidates to consider how the educational performance of a child with special needs could be assessed. Many candidates provided interesting answers, but often did not consider that IQ tests may be inappropriate and that more specific, specialised tests would be needed.

Question 4

Part **(a)** required candidates to describe what psychologists have found out about individual differences in educational performance. Many candidates described gender differences and often related these to science versus non-science subjects. Some part **(b)** answers were excellent but others were less good because answers were often not organised into issues. For part **(c)**, candidates had to consider what they, as a school teacher would do to address poorly performing children. Some candidates suggested segregation whilst others suggested enrichment which can be done within a normal classroom and can involve extra-curricular activity and individualised learning programmes.

PSYCHOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Question 5

Question part **(a)** asked candidates to explain what is meant by the term 'crowd behaviour'. Typically this is people in physical proximity to a common situation or stimulus. Part **(b)** asked for a description of two ways in which crowds can behave in emergency situations. Most candidates could distinguish between 'panicky' and 'non-panicky' but only the better answers went on to write about Le Bon and his contagion model or the alternative 'we-ness' model suggesting that people take the view 'we are all in it together', help each other and do not panic. Part **(c)** asked for one way in which problems may be prevented in emergency situations and some candidates here referred to the work of Loftus on evacuation messages or Sugiman and Mitsumi with 'follow me, follow directions' options.

Question 6

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PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/32
Specialist Choices

General comments

There are those Centres who prepare their candidates extremely well and whose candidates write superb answers and they are to be congratulated on their efforts. As usual there are those Centres and candidates who are less prepared for this examination and this report aims to provide guidance to help such Centres and candidates improve. The following three points will help improve the quality of answers.

1. Candidates must base their answers on published psychological knowledge. A number of candidates think that this specialist choices paper allows them to write about their own real-life experiences. This is a false assumption. Whilst psychology is about people and their experience, the purpose of an examination is for candidates to show what they have learned and the best way to do this is to quote psychological knowledge. If there is no psychological knowledge evident then no marks will be awarded.
2. Application of a few basic rules will improve candidates' examination technique.
 - (a) Some candidates attempt every question, hoping that a few marks will be scored for each answer. This strategy will always fail, because depth and detail are needed from just four answers.
 - (b) Candidates need to understand what the terms 'describe' and 'evaluate' mean. Description involves writing about psychological knowledge, describing what has been learned. Evaluating means commenting both positively and negatively on the knowledge described. Evaluation is not merely describing in more detail what has already been described.
 - (c) Candidates should try to balance their answers according to question type and mark allocation. There are 'short answer' questions in **Section A** worth 2, 3 and 3+3 marks and there are **Section B** essay questions worth 8, 10 and 6 marks. Clearly twice as much time should be spent on a 24 mark section than an 11 mark section. If **Section B** answers are as brief as **Section A** answers then full marks are unlikely to be achieved.
3. Many candidates need to learn how to evaluate. It is worth candidates and teachers becoming familiar with the requirements of the mark scheme, regarding the evaluation section. For example, the mere addition of an appropriate comparison or contrast in an answer will score two marks for cross referencing. In fact the perfect evaluative answer is all about presenting a number of psychological issues, presenting evidence to support the issues from what has been described in question part (a) and cross referencing each.

Comments on specific questions

PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION

Question 1

For question part (a) candidates had to explain what is meant by the term 'learned helplessness' in education. Typically this describes those with a pessimistic explanatory style, which sees negative events as permanent ("it will never change"), personal ("it's my fault"), and pervasive ("I can't do anything correctly"). Most candidates scored one mark because they assumed it is what a candidate cannot do, rather than an attitude towards anything new. For part (b) candidates had to describe one example of learned helplessness. Whilst some answers to this question were superb because the understanding of learned helplessness was evident, other candidates provided confused answers that could have had more clarity.



Question part **(c)** asked for two ways in which motivation in a classroom can be improved. The most common response was the use of positive reinforcement, for example praise for good work, to provide students with achievable goals that require effort, or for teachers to present information in an interesting and stimulating way.

Question 2

This question on 'layout of educational environments' is a common one, so it was not surprising to see most candidates scoring maximum marks for question part **(a)**. Part **(b)** required candidates to describe a study showing the effects of physical features on performance. Some candidates could refer to a relevant topic area, but the best answers described an appropriate study. That by Pepler (1972) on air conditioning in classrooms was the study most commonly quoted. For part **(c)**, the question required candidates to focus on improving learning conditions in classrooms and many candidates simply extended what they had written about in part **(a)**. This is legitimate but answers must be related to the requirements of the mark scheme in order to score full marks.

Question 3

For part **(a)** most candidates described a range of ways in which educational performance could be assessed. However, a significant number of answers consisted of anecdotes of what happens in a particular school/college and many failed to include relevant psychological evidence. Whilst some answers were legitimate, such as assessment by essay writing, other aspects were not. Better answers considered the purpose of A level examinations. Some answers looked appropriately at IQ testing. Question part **(b)** often had disappointing evaluation because it is difficult to evaluate anecdotal comment rather than quoted psychological evidence. Question part **(c)** required candidates to consider how the educational performance of a child with special needs could be assessed. Many candidates provided interesting answers, but often did not consider that IQ tests may be inappropriate and that more specific, specialised tests would be needed.

Question 4

Part **(a)** required candidates to describe what psychologists have found out about individual differences in educational performance. Many candidates described gender differences and often related these to science versus non-science subjects. Some part **(b)** answers were excellent but others were less good because answers were often not organised into issues. For part **(c)**, candidates had to consider what they, as a school teacher would do to address poorly performing children. Some candidates suggested segregation whilst others suggested enrichment which can be done within a normal classroom and can involve extra-curricular activity and individualised learning programmes.

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