



General Certificate of Education

**Health and Social Care
8621/8623**

HC10 Psychological Perspectives

Report on the Examination

2008 examination – June series

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HC10 Psychological Perspectives Principal Moderator's Report

This unit produced mixed results. In some cases, whole centres produced high quality work whilst others fared less well, submitting reports with little psychological content. This could indicate a problem with the availability of subject specialists in certain centres.

The initial problem was that candidates had to choose an appropriate topic and then apply various psychological perspectives to explain it.

Often the choice of topic was not suited to the demands of the unit.

The topic should be one where a problem or behaviour can be discussed or indeed remedied by using knowledge or techniques embodied in a common theoretical perspective.

The more astute candidates chose topic areas where lots of research evidence or debate exists. Problems such as smoking, alcohol and drug abuse were common and well-handled choices, as were forms of abnormal behaviour such as phobias or OCD.

Less manageable topics were often presented in the form of a question. For example, 'why are men better at sport than women?'

Sometimes topics were too general like 'ill health' or 'eating problems'.

The perspective section was often muddled or ill informed.

Candidates presented material in a general or unfocused way almost as if taken straight from a textbook or class notes and not considered in the light of the topic they had selected.

Everyday examples were sparse or inappropriate. For example, if behaviourism is discussed it must be applied to the issue being examined.

Often all the suggested perspectives were outlined in the initial part of the report and then not followed through.

In comparison with previous years, there was an increase in the volume and pertinence of supporting research material.

Candidates displayed research skills and some discernment in the material reported. The stronger candidates included both quantitative and qualitative empirical evidence.

Many centres neglected to follow the specification and use sections and subsections. This unit should be presented in report format; it is not an extended essay.

Critical, intelligent, analysis of the application of a perspective to a topic is what elicits high marks.

Unfortunately, the implications of the results of a proffered study were not always discussed fully and few candidates came to conclusions that were scientifically justified.

The discussion section should have included criticisms of the evidence described earlier in the report.

A persistent problem is that without a comprehensive description of a study, it is very difficult to draw conclusions about the implications of the study in relation to the relevant perspective or indeed to even attempt to apply a critical evaluation in an effective or meaningful way. #

As noted in previous years, approximately half of the marks available are for Sections C and D of the report, yet most candidates devoted considerably less time to these sections than to Section B. Teachers should take note and rectify this imbalance.

Section E of the report should include a list of full references in the conventional form.

This section was often neglected and incomplete or inaccurate referencing was submitted.

Grade boundaries

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the AQA website at www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html .