

Teacher Resource Bank

GCE Psychology A

Candidate Exemplar Work:

- PSYA1
- PSYA2



CANDIDATE EXEMPLAR WORK – ADDITIONAL SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1 PSYA1 Memory question (Cognitive Psychology)

1(a) Moderate answer given by Gwen

1 Four of the following statements are descriptions of different components of the Working Memory Model.

- A** Stores acoustically coded items for a short period
- B** Stores and deals with what items look like and the physical relationship between them
- C** Encodes data in terms of its meaning
- D** Acts as a form of attention and controls slave systems
- E** Silently repeats words that are heard or seen

(a) In the table below, write down which description, **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** or **E**, matches each component part of the model. (4 marks)

Table to show components of working memory model

Components of working memory model	Descriptions of components
Phonological store	E
Visuo-spatial sketch pad	B
Articulatory process	A
Central executive	D

Examiner's comments: Gwen has correctly identified and placed in the table the description of both the Central Executive and the Visuo-Spatial Sketchpad, but seems to have got the Phonological Store and the Articulatory Process confused with each other. There is a degree of similarity with these two components, so perhaps Gwen needed to have a little more in-depth knowledge of the model.

Marks: 2/4

- (b) Identify and explain **one** weakness of the working memory model. (4 marks)

A weakness of the model is that we are not really sure what the central executive does.

Examiner's comments This is quite a common type of answer: Gwen supplies a correct answer in that this is a weakness of the WMM, but unfortunately, there is no explanatory elaboration at all and so Gwen scores very poorly here. She should have gone on to explain why it is that the Central Executive is not fully understood.

Marks: 1/4

- 2 Explain **one** way in which anxiety can affect the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. (4 marks)

The weapons effect researched by Loftus showed how anxiety can affect memory recall. There were two conditions and a discussion was heard. Some participants saw a man come out with oily hands holding a pen, while other participants saw a man come out with bloody hands holding a knife.

Examiner's comments Gwen correctly identifies the weapons effect as a way in which anxiety can affect recall by eyewitnesses. She also provides some accurate description of the procedure used in Loftus's investigation: unfortunately, this description adds nothing to our understanding of how anxiety negatively affects memory. To gain the other marks available, Gwen could have used the findings and/or conclusions of the research to explain how anxiety plays a part in decreasing the accuracy of recall.

Marks: 1/4

- 3 One strategy often used by students to try to improve their memory ability is to repeat information that they wish to learn over and over again. In order to investigate this, an experimenter gave a group of participants a list of unconnected words with the instruction that they were to repeat the list over and over verbally. A second group of participants were given the same list of words, but were only allowed to read them once. Ten minutes later each group was asked to recall the list. The number of words recalled by the two groups was compared.

- (a) Give a directional hypothesis for this study. (2 marks)

There will be a difference between participants asked to repeat the list and how many words they remember and participants asked to read the list and how many words they remember.

Examiner's comments Gwen shows that she understands that a hypothesis is a prediction to be tested and she also shows that there is a need to identify the two conditions, in this case whether the list is to be repeated or not. Gwen also correctly identifies the DV as a measurement of how many words are remembered. So it is indeed unfortunate, given her degree of displayed knowledge in this area, that she scores nothing as this is a non-directional hypothesis and so does not do what the question asks.

Marks: 0/2

- (b) Explain why it is important that the same list of words was used with both groups of participants. (2 marks)

It is important that the same list of words is used as this means it is standardised.

Examiner's comments There is enough of an answer here to gain some credit. Gwen has shown she has some understanding of the idea of standardisation. However, what she has not delivered is further explanation to elaborate upon this point. She would need to explain what is meant by standardisation in this instance.

Marks: 1/2

- (c) (i) State what the independent variable is in this study. (1 mark)

The IV, the thing that changes between the two conditions and is manipulated by the researcher, is whether the list is to be repeated or not.

Examiner's comments At first it seems as if Gwen has gone off on the wrong tack as she describes what an IV is rather than identify it in this case. However, right at the end she correctly identifies the IV and thus gets the mark, though she has wasted valuable time by providing unnecessary information.

Marks: 1/1

- (c) (ii) State what the dependent variable would be in this study. (1 mark)

A DV is always a type of measurement and gets its name as we're trying to see if it's dependent upon the IV. In this case it's the number of words that are recalled.

Examiner's comments At times it seems as if Gwen is not sure what the questions being asked require in the way of an answer. Her tactic therefore is to include everything she knows about something, which is quite a common student response in exams. She does include the correct answer to the question, but again the inclusion of irrelevant material wastes time.

Marks: 1/1

- (d) A volunteer sample was used in this study.
Outline **one** weakness of this type of sampling for this study. (2 marks)

A volunteer sample is where participants select themselves, but it can provide a biased sample.

Examiner's comments: Explaining what a volunteer sample is gains no credit; but the idea of it providing a biased sample does. Gwen would have needed to go on and explain why volunteer samples can be biased to gain the second mark available.

Marks: 1/2

(e) The findings from this investigation are shown in the table below.

Table to show mean number of words remembered by participants using repetition and participants not using repetition

	Mean number of words recalled
Participants using repetition	13.6
Participants not using repetition	8.4

Explain **one** conclusion that can be drawn from these findings. (4 marks)

It can be concluded that because we cannot be sure what the group who only read the list once actually did in the ten minutes before recall that it might have impaired performance.

Examiner's comments: Gwen identifies a relevant conclusion which is based on the methodology of the study and she also outlines the mechanics of the point she is making, albeit in a way that is not that informative.

Marks: 2/4

4 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory. (12 marks)

Atkinson and Shiffrin designed the multi-store model of memory. They said that sensory stimuli entered the sensory memory first and was held for a very brief period, about 0.3 of a second. After that it is coded and enters short-term memory and is stored for a short time. It may be lost due to displacement here. Later on it is transferred to long-term memory where it can be lost due to decay.

Its strength is that it has research support, for instance studies of brain damaged patients show that some people lose short-term memory, whilst others lose their long-term memory.

A limitation is that the Multi-store model doesn't show the difference between visual and audio memory. It's also challenged by the levels of processing model.

Examiner's comments: Gwen's outline is accurate and relevant, but lacks detail. Perhaps she could have discussed the processes involved in transfer of material and/or some of the details of the separate stores, such as how information is coded. Gwen makes a few evaluative points based on strengths and weaknesses, but none of them are very clearly elaborated or form an effective commentary. For instance, she could have gone on and explained in what way the level of processing approach challenges the model and maybe provided some evidence in support of this point.

Marks: 4/6 + 3/6 = 7/12

OVERALL MARK: 17/36

1 PSYA1 Memory question (Cognitive Psychology)

1(b) Good answer given by Nazma

1 Four of the following statements are descriptions of different components of the Working Memory Model.

- A** Stores acoustically coded items for a short period
- B** Stores and deals with what items look like and the physical relationship between them
- C** Encodes data in terms of its meaning
- D** Acts as a form of attention and controls slave systems
- E** Silently repeats words that are heard or seen

(a) In the table below, write down which description, **A, B, C, D** or **E**, matches each component part of the model. (4 marks)

Table to show components of working memory model

Components of working memory model	Descriptions of components
Phonological store	A
Visuo-spatial sketch pad	B
Articulatory process	E
Central executive	D

Examiner's comments Nazma shows a sound knowledge of the components of the model by correctly identifying all four descriptions and placing them in the appropriate places in the table.

Marks: 4/4

(b) Identify and explain **one** weakness of the working memory model. (4 marks)

Although the Working memory model is regarded as a good model, it doesn't really explain how the Visuo-spatial sketchpad and the phonological loop work together in that there is no explanation of what happens to information that could be placed in both systems.

Examiner's comments As with Gwen's answer, Nazma correctly identifies a weakness of the model. However, this is a better answer, as there is evidence of appropriate elaboration that adds to the explanation of the point being made. It is not totally clear what Nazma means when she talks about how the two components "work together", perhaps "how they are co-ordinated" would have made the point more clearly. Also some further elaboration of the point, perhaps in the form of a relevant example of information that could be placed in both systems, would have helped her cause.

Marks: 2/4

2 Explain **one** way in which anxiety can affect the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. (4 marks)

Anxiety has been shown to decrease the accuracy of eyewitnesses' recall of events. Loftus created anxiety in some participants by having a man emerge, after an argument in a nearby room, covered in blood and holding a knife. This seemed to distract their attention away from the man's face as only 33% of them could identify the person from photographs.

Examiner's comments Nazma does enough in her answer to get three of the available marks: she identifies the weapons effect as a valid way in which anxiety decreases eyewitnesses' recall and she explains that it is the anxiety caused by the weapon and the blood which appears to be the important factor. A little more in the way of elaboration would be necessary to gain all four marks available, such as reference to the greater identification percentage of the man who was holding a pen and not creating anxiety.

Marks: 3/4

- 3 One strategy often used by students to try to improve their memory ability is to repeat information that they wish to learn over and over again. In order to investigate this, an experimenter gave a group of participants a list of unconnected words with the instruction that they were to repeat the list out loud over and over. A second group of participants were given the same list of words, but were only allowed to read them once. Ten minutes later each group was asked to recall the list. The number of words recalled by the two groups was compared.

- (a) Give a directional hypothesis for this study. (2 marks)

Participants who were asked to verbally repeat a list of words will remember significantly more words than participants who were asked to merely read a list of words once.

Examiner's comments Nazma identifies both the IV and the DV within her hypothesis and she clearly states which condition she expects to be superior.

Marks: 2/2

- (b) Explain why it is important that the same list of words was used with both groups of participants. (2 marks)

The use of the same list in both conditions is a form of control. If all the conditions are the same in both groups except the variable being tested, in this case being asked to repeat the list or not, then any change in the DV must be due to the IV.

Examiner's comments A clear, accurate, elaborated and yet concise answer. Nazma clearly understands controlled conditions, and communicates her understanding of them well.

Marks: 2/2

- (c) (i) State what the independent variable is in this study. (1 mark)

The independent variable is whether participants are asked to repeat the list of words or just read it once.

Examiner's comments A clear and accurate statement of the IV gains the mark available.

Marks: 1/1

- (c) (ii) State what the dependent variable would be in this study. (1 mark)

The dependent variable is how many words participants remember in each condition.

Examiner's comments Again, a clear and accurate stating of the required answer.

Marks: 1/1

(d) A volunteer sample was used in this study.

Outline **one** weakness of this type of sampling for this study.

(2 marks)

Volunteer sampling is often biased as the participants select themselves and thus are usually highly motivated to do the study.

Examiner's comments There is enough for both marks here: bias is a weakness of this type of sampling and indeed it can be due to the high motivation levels of such participants.

Marks: 2/2

(e) The findings from this investigation are shown in the table below.

Table to show mean number of words remembered by participants using repetition and participants not using repetition

	Mean number of words recalled
Participants using repetition	13.6
Participants not using repetition	8.4

Explain **one** conclusion that can be drawn from these findings.

(4 marks)

One conclusion that can be drawn from these findings is that using repetition facilitates recall as we can see that the mean number of words remembered by the repetition group was much better than the just read group. The Multi-store model says that when information is repeated it is rehearsed, this keeps it in the short-term memory store and transfers it to the long-term memory store from where it can be recalled.

Examiner's comments A clear and accurate answer, which states a valid conclusion and then explains it in terms of the Multi-store model.

Marks: 4/4

4 Outline and evaluate the multi-store model of memory.

(12 marks)

Atkinson and Shiffrin's multi-store model suggests that long-term memory and short-term memory are like hypothetical stores of information. They believe that memory has three stages; sensory memory, short-term and long-term memory. Information first enters sensory memory where it undergoes encoding and then transfers to short-term memory. Once there it's rehearsed or verbally repeated in order to undergo further encoding before being transferred to long-term memory, otherwise it will decay.

A big aspect of the model was rehearsal; information can't reach long-term memory unless it's rehearsed. The more it's rehearsed, the longer the memory will be as the trace becomes stronger.

The model has been criticised as lacking ecological validity because the evidence for the model comes mainly from laboratory based experiments using meaningless verbal data.

It's also criticised as being simplistic; the model assumes that both short and long term memory consist of individual stores made up of one component each, but research into the working memory model has demonstrated that short-term memory possibly consists of different components.

Peterson and Peterson's research supports the role of rehearsal. They found that when groups of participants were asked to recall words from a list, but were prevented from rehearsing them by having to count backwards in threes, recall dropped from 80% after a three second interval, to 20% after an eighteen second interval, suggesting that rehearsal is necessary to embed information in the LTM. This therefore shows a strength of the model in its views on rehearsal.

Examiner's comments *Nazma's first paragraph gives an outline of the model, which lacks some detail, but is generally accurate. A description of STM and LTM would have been a good idea, as would have the role of attention. Some of the material is repeated, such as the role of rehearsal.*

Nazma begins her evaluation with a point about ecological validity and although this term is not fully explained, she does relate why it could be an issue for the model. The second critical point about the simplicity of the model is well explained and her knowledge of the working memory model is used effectively as evaluation here. The final point about rehearsal is clearly explained and has a decent degree of elaboration. Overall, both strengths and weaknesses have been considered, a reasonable commentary is evident and a narrow range of issues has been considered in greater depth.

Marks: AO1 4/6 + AO2 6/6 = 10/12

OVERALL MARK: 31/36

2 PSYA1 Attachment question (Developmental Psychology)

2(a) Moderate answer given by Yasmin

1 Outline two behaviours characteristic of an infant with:

- (i) an insecure-resistant attachment type;
- (ii) an insecure-avoidant type. (2 marks + 2 marks)

A child that has an insecure-resistant attachment type is a child that is not very secure and resists people. On the other hand a child that has an insecure-avoidant attachment type is also insecure and avoids contact with other people.

Examiner's comments This answer is generally poor and uninformative. Yasmin appears to have just used the terms that were in the question without displaying any understanding or knowledge. At first appearances, it seems Yasmin does not actually have an answer to this question, but the last remark about avoiding social contact is a feature of insecure-avoidant attachment and so is creditworthy. It would have been a good idea if Yasmin had separated the two parts of her answer so that the examiner could see where one ends and the other begins.

Marks: 0/2 + 1/2

2 (a) Outline key features of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment. (6 marks)

Attachment is in our genes and helps us to survive because we have someone who will help us and look after us. It works two ways too as adults have it in their genes to make attachments with babies.

Examiner's comments What Yasmin has written is quite brief really for a question worth six marks. However, what she has written does answer the question as it is accurate and relevant. Generally, though, her answer is basic: two key features are identified, but there is little in the way of detail provided and there is little evidence of selection of material to answer the question. It scores at the bottom end of the mark band as the quality of the answer is closer to the band below than the band above.

Marks: 2/6

- (b) Explain **two** limitations of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment. (2 marks + 2 marks)

Evolutionary theory is post-hoc. This means that it consists of 'looking back' assumptions rather than any proven facts. This leads to the belief that because attachment behaviour continues it must have an evolutionary value.

There are many studies that support the theory. The Minnesota study found that children who had good, secure attachments had better social skills later on in life. This suggests that early attachment type is linked to social ability.

Examiner's comments Yasmin's first weakness is a relevant one and is explained clearly and well. There is easily enough elaboration to gain both marks available.

Yasmin's second point is a correct one and reasonably well explained. However, it details a strength of the theory, not a weakness and therefore is not creditworthy. If the question had asked for two criticisms, this approach would have been acceptable as criticisms can be positive as well as negative.

Marks: 2/2 + 0/2

- 3 Lilleth is an experienced nurse who has been put in charge of a newly- established children's ward in a local hospital. Being placed under hospital care can cause disruption to attachments and this can have negative effects for children. Therefore it is Lilleth's aim to use her knowledge of childcare practice to try to ensure that any such negative effects do not occur in the children's ward.

Outline **two** strategies that Lilleth could use to try to reduce the negative effects of disruption to attachments. (3 marks + 3 marks)

They could make sure that parents and guardians could stay overnight with their children, especially if they were in hospital for a long time. They could also make sure there was someone else to make a bond with while the children were in hospital.

Examiner's comments Two adequate strategies are supplied here, but neither is really elaborated to the point where they would gain extra credit. Describing how the strategies would be carried out would have been a good idea, or outlining the rationale behind the strategies would have been at least an equally good form of elaboration. **Marks: 1/3 + 1/3**

- 4 A psychologist conducted a research study to investigate the implications of providing caregivers with training designed to increase their sensitivity.

Using an independent groups design, twenty caregivers were randomly assigned to the group receiving training to increase their sensitivity. The remaining twenty, a control group, received no such training.

The findings were that caregivers in receipt of sensitivity training were rated as more sensitive than caregivers in the control group. For children around the age of two, those in the care of the caregivers who received the sensitivity training were more secure in their attachments than those cared for by the control group.

The researcher concluded that the findings were directly due to the sensitivity training.

(a) (i) Select from the following options, **A**, **B** or **C**, which aspect of the experimental design allowed the researcher to reach this conclusion.

- A** That an independent groups design was used.
- B** That participants were randomly allocated to the training or control group
- C** That an equal number of participants were used in both groups.

(1 mark)

C That an equal number of participants were used in both groups.

Examiner's comments Yasmin has chosen the wrong option and therefore does not seem to know that the correct answer is that an independent groups design was used. **Marks: 0/1**

(a) (ii) Explain, using the option selected in (a) (i), why the researcher was able to reach this conclusion. (2 marks)

Because the same number of participants is used in both groups it has an equal effect, which is fair.

Examiner's comments This is somewhat of a nonsensical answer and it is clear that Yasmin has little or no understanding of this area of methodology. **Marks: 0/2**

(b) Each caregiver was assessed on a sensitivity scale with a maximum possible individual score of 100. The data was placed into a table.

Table to show sensitivity scores

	Received sensitivity training	No sensitivity training
Total sensitivity scores	1404	1022
Measure of central tendency	70.2	51.1
Standard deviation	9.88	5.02

The measure of central tendency for each group was calculated by dividing the total sensitivity score by the number of caregivers in that group.

- (i) What measure of central tendency was used? (1 mark)

The mean was used which is a type of average where you divide all the scores by the number of participants.

Examiner's comments *The mean is indeed the correct answer, but there is no need, as the question does not require it, to add on an explanation of how to calculate it. This irrelevant material does not lose her any marks, but Yasmin has wasted time by including it.*

Marks: 1/1

- (ii) Explain one strength and one weakness of the measure of central tendency used in this investigation. (2 marks + 2 marks)

The mean uses all the numbers and this is its strength.

Examiner's comments *A relevant strength is apparent in the answer, but there is a lack of clarity and no real elaboration that adds to our understanding of the point being made.*

Marks: 1/2

A weakness of the mean is that you can't always use it.

Examiner's comments *A tricky one, as it is true that the mean cannot be used with nominal data, but the point is made very weakly and in an uninformative fashion due to the lack of explanatory elaboration. A 'weak' mark would be awarded here.*

Marks: 1/2

- (c) What do the standard deviations tell us about the data in the table? (3 marks)

Standard deviation is a type of measure of dispersion. It tells us about the variation of the data.

Examiner's comment *There is no credit gained in knowing that standard deviation is a measure of dispersion as the question does not call for this. Some credit is gained, however, for knowing that standard deviation tells us about the variation of the data, but this account is basic and lacking in explanatory detail.*

Marks: 1/3

5 Ainsworth investigated attachment behaviour using a controlled observation called the Strange Situation. This involved testing levels of stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. However, the procedure has been accused of lacking validity.

(a) Explain what is meant by the term validity. (2 marks)

Validity refers to how valid something is, whether it is valid or not.

Examiner's comments Unfortunately, this is all too common an answer to questions about validity and demonstrates that candidates continue to have a poor knowledge of this important concept. Yasmin's answer is a circular one, using the term validity to try to define what validity actually is. Therefore she does not demonstrate any understanding of the term at all.

Marks: 0/2

(b) Explain why the Strange Situation may be lacking in validity. (3 marks)

It might be that the Strange Situation, which was done by Ainsworth, doesn't measure what it claims to be measuring, but actually measures something else all together and therefore it is lacking in validity.

Examiner's comments Only one laboured point is apparent here, though it is a relevant point: that the Strange Situation may not test what it claims to test. Yasmin seems to know the study, as she is aware that Ainsworth performed it, but she does not gain credit for this knowledge, as the question does not require this information. Yasmin should have gone on to elaborate this point by explaining why it may not be measuring what it claims and maybe to tell us what it actually could be testing.

Marks: 1/3

OVERALL MARK = 12/36

2 PSYA1 Attachment question (Developmental Psychology)

2(b) Good answer given by Stuart

1 Outline two behaviours characteristic of an infant with:

- (i) an insecure-resistant attachment type;
- (ii) an insecure-avoidant type.

(2 marks + 2 marks)

Insecure-resistant infants are distressed when their mother leaves them and when she comes back they will want physical contact with her, but will also resist such contact. They also dislike strangers.

Insecure-avoidant infants don't look for contact with their mother and they don't even seem disturbed when she leaves them.

Examiner's comments *Stuart sensibly separates his answers from each other and generally shows a good knowledge of both attachment types. The first answer is outlined better as Stuart provides more descriptive detail here than in his second answer. Perhaps Stuart could have gone on to mention how insecure-avoidant infants dislike social intimacy.*
Marks: 2/2 + 1/2

2 (a) Outline key features of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment.

(6 marks)

The evolutionary perspective was mainly put forward by Bowlby and believes that when babies are born they have been biologically pre-programmed to form an attachment. Babies are undeveloped when born and quite vulnerable and dependent on their mother for protection and food. In this way it can be seen that attachment therefore has a survival value. There is some evidence that attachments form a basis for later social relationships; they teach us how to get on with other people.

Examiner's comments *Stuart outlines two relevant key features of the evolutionary perspective; that attachment is a pre-programmed biological process important for survival and that attachment forms a template for future relationships. His outline appears to be less detailed than it could be, but generally accurate. It falls into the bottom part of the mark band as it is closer to being basic than to being accurate and reasonably detailed. Stuart's descriptions could have been clearer at times and generally needed a little more description.*
Marks: 4/6

- (b) Explain **two** limitations of the evolutionary perspective explanation of attachment. (2 marks + 2 marks)

The evolutionary theory believes that having a secure bond to a special person enables children to go on and become emotionally secure adults. However, the temperament hypothesis thinks that some babies are just born secure and friendly and that's why they have secure attachments and go on to be secure adults.

The evolutionary theory believes that there is a 'critical period' in which an attachment must be formed or else it won't occur. However, there is quite a lot of evidence that goes against this idea.

Examiner's comments *Stuart takes the perfectly reasonable approach of giving two beliefs of the theory and then showing their weaknesses. With the first weakness about the continuity hypothesis this approach works well, as the alternative view of the temperament hypothesis is well explained and elaborated. However, the second weakness about research against the idea of a critical period, although a valid point, is not elaborated at all and we are given no inkling of what this evidence against the idea of a critical period is. Remember, it is only the material specifically directed at weaknesses that gain credit here.*

Marks: 2/2 + 1/2

- 3 Lilleth is an experienced nurse who has been put in charge of a newly- established children's ward in a local hospital. Being placed under hospital care can cause disruption to attachments and this can have negative effects for children. Therefore it is Lilleth's aim to use her knowledge of childcare practice to try to ensure that any such negative effects do not occur in the children's ward.

Outline **two** strategies that Lilleth could use to try to reduce the negative effects of disruption to attachments. (3 marks + 3 marks)

Lilleth could ensure that adequate substitute emotional care was provided while children were in the hospital. Timetabling nursing staff so that there was regular contact between a child and the nurses looking after it could do this. Doing this should ensure that children in the hospital could form substitute attachments and this process could be part of a nurse's training. Lilleth could also use the work of Robertson and Robertson in the 1970's as a strategy. When children's mothers went into hospital the Robertsons fostered them and maintained emotional bonds with home by bringing familiar things along with them. This could be done in the hospital; children could bring comforting things from home like toys to reduce the negative effects of separation.

Examiner's comments *Two strategies are provided and both are based on a sound knowledge of childcare practices. The first strategy scores maximum marks as it identifies a relevant strategy and then thoroughly elaborates it by outlining how the strategy would be undertaken and the process by which it would work. The second strategy is also a good one, based on relevant research, and although it is elaborated to some extent, it is not made fully clear how the strategy would work.*

Marks: 3/3 + 2/3

- 4 A psychologist conducted a research study to investigate the implications of providing caregivers with training designed to increase their sensitivity.

Using an independent groups design, twenty caregivers were randomly assigned to the group receiving training to increase their sensitivity. The remaining twenty, a control group, received no such training.

The findings were that caregivers in receipt of sensitivity training were rated as more sensitive than caregivers in the control group. For children around the age of two, those in the care of the caregivers who received the sensitivity training were more secure in their attachments than those cared for by the control group.

The researcher concluded that the findings were directly due to the sensitivity training.

- (a) (i) Select from the following options, **A**, **B** or **C**, which aspect of the experimental design allowed the researcher to reach this conclusion.

- A** That an independent groups design was used.
- B** That participants were randomly allocated to the training or control group
- C** That an equal number of participants were used in both groups.

(1 mark)

A that an independent groups design was used.

Examiner's comments *Stuart has selected the correct option and obviously knows that it is the use of an independent groups design that allows us to reach the conclusion that the findings were due to the sensitivity training.*

Marks: 1/1

- (a) (ii) Explain, using the option selected in (a) (i), why the researcher was able to reach this conclusion. (2 marks)

The use of an independent groups design where each group is exposed to a different version of the independent variable, means that as the only thing that differed between the two groups was whether they had sensitivity training or not, then it must be that which caused the findings.

Examiner's comments *A correct explanation is apparent which is also clearly and adequately elaborated, showing that Stuart has a full grasp of the rationale that underpins the methodology in use.*

Marks: 2/2

- (b) Each caregiver was assessed on a sensitivity scale with a maximum possible individual score of 100. The data was placed into a table.

Table to show sensitivity scores

	Received sensitivity training	No sensitivity training
Total sensitivity scores	1404	1022
Measure of central tendency	70.2	51.1
Standard deviation	9.88	5.02

The measure of central tendency for each group was calculated by dividing the total sensitivity score by the number of caregivers in that group.

- (i) What measure of central tendency was used? (1 mark)

The mean is the measure of central tendency used.

Examiner's comments A concise and accurate answer, which is all that is required.

Marks: 1/1

- (ii) Explain one strength and one weakness of the measure of central tendency used in this investigation. (2 marks + 2 marks)

A strength of the mean is that it is calculated from all the values that make up the data.

Examiner's comments A relevant strength is quoted with clarity and enough elaboration to justify awarding both marks available. **Marks: 2/2**

A weakness of the mean is that if there any outlying abnormal values in the data, then the mean can be misrepresentative.

Examiner's comments A relevant weakness is also quoted and again with clarity and sufficient elaboration. **Marks: 2/2**

- (c) What do the standard deviations tell us about the data in Table 1? (3 marks)

Standard deviation informs us about the variation in the data from the two groups. There seems to be more variation in the group that received sensitivity training.

Examiner's comments A relevant and well expressed answer. However, it lacks sufficient elaboration to gain all the marks available. Perhaps Stuart could have gone on to tell us that the standard deviations seem to tell us those participants in the group that received sensitivity training appear to have a wider variation in their degree of sensitivity. **Marks: 2/3**

- 5 Ainsworth investigated attachment behaviour using a controlled observation called the Strange Situation. This involved testing levels of stranger anxiety and separation anxiety. However, the procedure has been accused of lacking validity.

- (a) Explain what is meant by the term validity. (2 marks)

Validity concerns how well a study measures what it claims to measure, for example can the findings of a study be related to settings outside the research setting.

Examiner's comments Stuart provides a clear succinct answer. He clearly understands the concept of validity. He provides a good degree of elaboration too, adding to the clarity of the point being made. **Marks: 2/2**

- (b) Explain why the Strange Situation may be lacking in validity. (3 marks)

It has been claimed by its critics that what the Strange Situation actually measures is an infant's particular attachment to someone, rather than it's overall attachment type.

Examiner's comments Stuart shows that his knowledge and understanding of the Strange Situation stretches to a solid grasp of a criticism of the observational technique. This is stated with accuracy and clarity, though maybe lacks a little in the way of elaboration to claim all the marks available. **Marks: 2/3**

OVERALL MARK = 29/36

CANDIDATE EXEMPLAR WORK PSYA2 – ADDITIONAL SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1 PSYA2 Stress question (Physiological Psychology)

1(a) Moderate answer given by Steve

- 1 Outline how the body responds to stress. (6 marks)

The body has three stages in its response to stress. Firstly is alarm where the stressor is perceived. Secondly is resistance where the body is activated and fights the stress. Thirdly and lastly is exhaustion.

Examiner's comments Steve is attempting to outline Seyle's General Adaptation Syndrome and he gets the three stages in the right order. There is a little description of the first two stages, but generally the outline, though accurate, is basic and lacking in detail. This would be regarded as a 'weak' three marks.

Marks: 3/6

- 2 (a) Identify one source of stress in the workplace. (1 mark)

One source of stress in the workplace is how much control you have over your job.

Examiner's comments Steve correctly identifies a relevant source of workplace stress.

Marks: 1/1

- (b) Outline what research has shown about how this source of stress can affect an individual. (2 marks)

Marmot did some research and found that low job control is linked to higher stress.

Examiner's comments Steve's answer is brief, but accurate. He would have needed to go on and elaborate this point to receive the second mark available, perhaps by showing which aspect of Marmot's research suggested this conclusion.

Marks: 1/2

- 3 In response to rising stress levels in the local population, a Health Service Provider was keen to provide stress management techniques as part of the treatments they offered.

One technique that was introduced involved helping a client to identify his/her negative, irrational thoughts and to replace them with more positive, rational methods of thinking. The therapist helps a client to understand better where their faulty thinking is leading, by the client and therapist working together using role play so that the consequences of the faulty thinking can be plainly seen. New goals are then set for the client, so that more realistic and rational beliefs are included into his/her ways of thinking.

- (a) (i) Identify the stress management strategy outlined above. (1 mark)

The stress management strategy outlined is the cognitive behavioural therapy. It is highly regarded as it is a short-term treatment and is cost-effective.

Examiner's comments The strategy is correctly identified and the mark secured, but the evaluative content, although correct, is irrelevant to the question asked.

Marks: 1/1

- (a) (ii) Explain one reason why this stress management technique could prove to be effective. (2 marks)

It's effective as a client identifies their negative, irrational thoughts and replaces them with positive, rational ones. It has both cognitive and behavioural elements.

Examiner's comments The question calls for an explanation of why the strategy is effective, but what Steve provides instead is a description of the rationale behind the treatment and this, on its own, is not creditworthy. If Steve had offered the final sentence of his previous answer, which was irrelevant there, he would have accrued credit here. However, it is not possible to export answers in this fashion.

Marks: 0/2

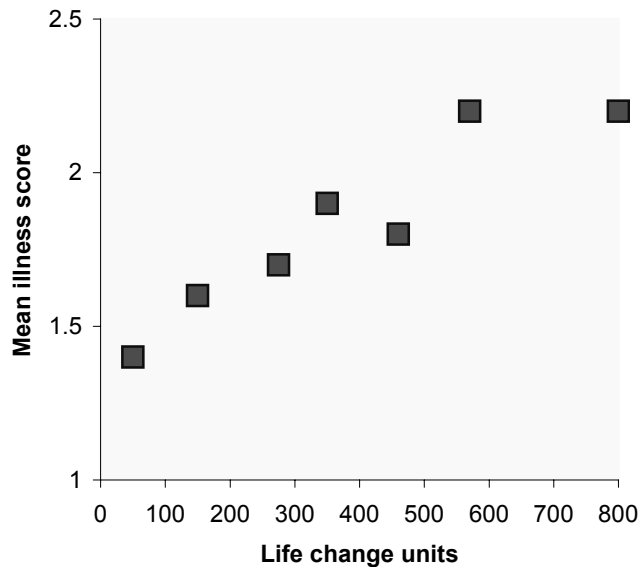
- (b) Explain **one** limitation of the stress management technique described above. (2 marks)

One limitation of the technique is that it is difficult to assess its effectiveness in treating depression, the disorder it's most used with. This is because if you use different measuring scales you get differing results.

Examiner's comments This is better: the answer addresses the question, a relevant limitation is given and it is sufficiently elaborated to gain both marks available.

Marks: 2/2

- 4 In a study of stress, the number of life events individual participants experienced was measured as well as an illness score for each individual. Data from the study were plotted on the graph below.



Outline **two** conclusions that could be drawn from the graph above. (4 marks)

The graph shows that as the number of life change units increases, so does the mean illness score.

Examiner's comments What is given here is a finding, not a conclusion. This unfortunately can be an all too common error with students. If Steve had referred to the direction and strength of the relationship being depicted, such as the results suggesting a positive correlation, then credit could have been gained from this answer. Also the question calls for two conclusions and only one is attempted.

Marks: 0/4

- 5 Discuss psychological evidence that suggests personality can affect our experience of stress. (6 marks)

Type A personality type was researched by Friedman and Rosenman and they found that these people were always in a hurry and get frustrated easily. They tend to have heart attacks.

Kobasa studied the hardy personality type. These people are good at resisting stress because they have control over what they do in life.

Gender can also affect stress levels; exams don't stress girls as much as boys and they return to normal quicker afterwards too. Females also tend to have more social support groups to help them through times of stress than males.

Culture affects stress levels in a similar way to gender; cultures that have social support networks deal with stress better than those that don't.

Examiner's comments *Steve's answer covers a wide range of individual differences, including personality factors. However, material on the other individual differences of gender and culture are totally irrelevant to this question and gain no credit, though they incur no penalty by their inclusion other than that of wasting valuable time.*

The comments on Type A personality and the hardy personality are relevant and accurate, but they form only a basic explanation of how personality factors affect the experience of stress. Overall, Steve only demonstrates a little knowledge and understanding in this area and his consideration of evidence is superficial. The mark awarded therefore is at the lower end of the mark band, as the material used is closer to being rudimentary than to being reasonable.

Marks: 2/6

OVERALL MARK = 10/24

1(b) Good answer given by Sharon

1 Outline how the body responds to stress.

(6 marks)

The pituitary adrenal system is under the control of the hypothalamus in the brain. It is activated when a situation is perceived as stressful, leading to the hypothalamus stimulating the release of a hormone called ACTH. This goes to the adrenal cortex, stimulating the release of more hormones called corticosteroids into the blood. This produces a range of effects on the body.

Examiner's comments Sharon delivers a relevant answer about the body's response to stress that shows a reasonable level of knowledge of this area. It is by no means a perfect answer, but one is not required in order to gain full marks. But there is a lack of clarity in the answer at times and also some lack of detail, for instance some indication of what the 'range of effects on the body' might be. So overall it is less detailed, but generally accurate.

Marks: 4/6

2 (a) Identify one source of stress in the workplace.

(1 mark)

Repetitive jobs with high levels of responsibility are a source of stress in the workplace.

Examiner's comments A relevant source of stress in the workplace is clearly identified.

Marks: 1/1

(b) Outline what research has shown about how this source of stress can affect an individual.

(2 marks)

Johansson et al (1978) conducted an experiment comparing high-risk of stress workers with lower-risk of stress workers. They wanted to see if repetitive jobs with high levels of responsibility increased stress-related arousal and stress-related illnesses.

They measured stress hormones in the workers urine and recorded any stress-related illnesses and days off.

The high-risk workers had more stress hormones, more stress-related illnesses and more days off than low-risk workers, suggesting that repetitiveness and high-levels of responsibility incur long lasting chronic physical arousal, which leads to stress-related illnesses and days off from work.

Examiner's comments Sharon certainly seems to know this classic study of workplace stress in admirable depth and communicates her knowledge and understanding with clarity and in a manner that addresses the requirements of the question. She explains the assumption which is being tested, namely that repetitiveness and high levels of responsibility create arousal leading to stress-related illnesses and absenteeism. She also explains how this assumption is tested out, the findings that are produced and conclusions that can be drawn from the study. Although an excellent answer, only two marks were on offer, so Sharon may have spent too much time and effort on answering this question.

Marks: 2/2

- 3 In response to rising stress levels in the local population, a Health Service Provider was keen to provide stress management techniques as part of the treatments they offered.

One technique that was introduced involved helping a client to identify his/her negative, irrational thoughts and to replace them with more positive, rational methods of thinking. The therapist helps a client to understand better where their faulty thinking is leading, by the client and therapist working together using role play so that the consequences of the faulty thinking can be plainly seen. New goals are then set for the client, so that more realistic and rational beliefs are included into his/her ways of thinking.

- (a) (i) Identify the stress management strategy outlined above. (1 mark)

It is the cognitive-behavioural therapy. CBT.

Examiner's comments A correct answer.

Marks: 1/1

- (a) (ii) Explain one reason why this stress management technique could prove to be effective. (2 marks)

Its effective because CBT is appealing to people who find treatments that search into inner emotional conflicts too threatening. It empowers these people by educating them with self-help strategies.

Examiner's comments A valid positive criticism is given which is sufficiently and clearly elaborated to gain both marks available.

Marks: 2/2

- (b) Explain **one** limitation of the stress management technique described above. (2 marks)

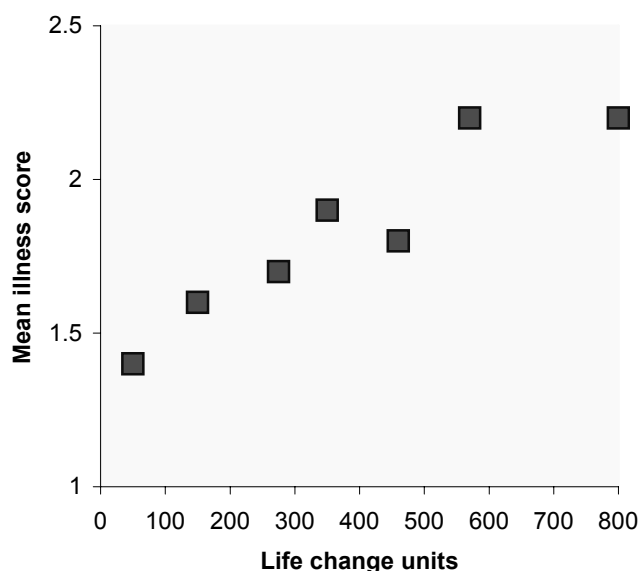
One limitation is that behavioural therapy is more effective than CBT in treating specific phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorders. Therefore it is not the best treatment for all disorders.

Examiner's comments A valid limitation is supplied and explained. The answer has clarity and is sufficiently elaborated to earn both marks available.

Marks: 2/2

- 4 In a study of stress, the number of life events individual participants experienced was measured as well as an illness score for each individual. Data from the study were plotted on the graph below.

Graph goes in here (scattergram)



Outline **two** conclusions that could be drawn from the graph above. (4 marks)

One conclusion is that there appears to be a positive correlation between life changes and physical illness, we know this because as the life changes units increase so does the mean illness score.

Also we can conclude that it is a strong positive relationship because the data forms an almost straight line from the bottom left up to the top right of the scattergram.

Examiner's comments *Two well described conclusions are offered, so the rubric of the question has been adhered to. These conclusions are drawn from data observations taken from the graph, so all available marks are gained.*

Marks: 4/4

- 5 Discuss psychological evidence that suggests personality can affect our experience of stress. (6 marks)

Type A people are ambitious and somewhat competitive in their behaviour. They feel the pressures of time too and these personality qualities can raise blood pressure levels that can lead to stress related illnesses.

Type C people suppress their emotions; they are nice, likeable persons and are helpful to others. It has been suggested that because they are eager to please others it can have negative effects on their own stress levels. Morris found a link between Type C personality and cancer. Women with cancerous breast lumps suppressed anger more than women with non-cancerous lumps; this suggests a link between cancer and suppressing your anger levels.

Type D people are gloomy types and tend to worry about things. They have an increased risk of heart attacks that may be due to their personality type.

Examiner's comments Sharon has provided material on three personality types. With Types A, C, and D? She describes the associated personality traits and explains the consequences of such personality types. As she has covered three types, less detail is necessary than if she had only covered two personality factors.

Overall her answer is reasonable, but the material offered is certainly not used effectively enough to gain access to the highest band of marks. As she provides a good elaboration of Type C with her references to findings and conclusions drawn from relevant research, the mark awarded would seem to sit at the higher level of the next mark band. More use of research like this could have made the answer effective enough to gain more credit.

Marks: 4/6

OVERALL MARK = 20/24

2 PSYA2 Social Influences question (Social Psychology)

2(a) Moderate answer given by Kate

- 1 Outline **one** explanation of why people obey. (4 marks)

One reason people obey is when they perceive the person giving the orders as a legitimate authority.

Examiner's comments: The reason given for obedience is a valid one and is clearly stated. However, there is not enough in the way of elaboration for any more marks to be awarded. If Kate had gone on to explain what is meant by 'legitimate authority' or even given a descriptive example of one, for instance a general in the army, then further credit would have been awarded.

Marks: 1/4

- 2 Research studies investigating conformity have often used laboratory-based experiments.

Explain **two** limitations of laboratory-based experiments into conformity.

(2 + 2 marks)

Laboratory experiments into conformity have generally been very strictly controlled allowing us to see causality, but they often lack ecological validity.

Participants in laboratory experiments don't behave as they usually would. If they were in an observation then they probably would act normally and that is better for the results.

Examiner's comments: The practice of separating out answers for this type of question is recommended as then it is clear as to where one answer finishes and the next begins.

Both answers have value, but each only scored one mark. The material about causality is irrelevant as it does not concern a limitation and gains no credit, but laboratory experiments can lack ecological validity, so that part of the answer does gain credit. Kate would have needed to explain why ecological validity might be lacking to pick up the other mark.

With her second answer, it is never really made clear why participants may not behave normally in a laboratory experiment. If this had been done, then both marks would probably been awarded.

Marks: 1/2 + 1/2

- 3 (a) What is meant by the term conformity? (2 marks)

Conformity is yielding to group pressures.

Examiner's comments: A valid outline of the term, but too limited in its scope to gain both the available marks.

Marks: 1/2

- (b) (i) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer.

Situation A

Nazma had recently moved to a new area and school and was finding it difficult to make friends. She noticed that a large group of students had a strong allegiance to the local football team Vale City. Nazma purchased a replica team shirt and started to wear it daily to school. Almost immediately she was asked if she would like to attend games with fellow student supporters of the team. Nazma readily agreed, even though she actually had no interest or knowledge of football at all.

Normative social influence is the type of conformity that is illustrated, because Nazma has recently moved to the area and doesn't know anyone.

Examiner's comments: Kate identifies the type of conformity, but no more than that. Possibly her comments about Nazma being new to the area are meant to express that she is conforming to be accepted, but unless a point is clearly made, credit cannot be awarded through guessing what a candidate means.

Marks: 1/1 + 0/2

- (b) (ii) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer.

Situation B

Bryher has been invited out on a date by her new boyfriend who has taken her to a fashionable restaurant. Bryher is keen to make a good impression and not embarrass herself in any way. However, she has never been to a restaurant before and is alarmed at the vast array of cutlery and crockery placed before her. Bryher decides to observe other diners' behaviour before selecting which utensils to eat her food with.

Informational social influence is displayed. Bryher is in a restaurant for the first time and so as not to look silly she looks to the other diners for guidance.

Examiner's comments: Kate identifies the type of conformity and there is enough in the second part of her answer to justify giving her all the marks available: the idea of her being in a novel situation is there, the desire not be embarrassed and looking to others for guidance.

Marks: 1/1 + 2/2

4 Discuss the influence of individual differences on independent behaviour. (8 marks)

Psychologists have tried to find out what factors make some people more independent in their behaviour. Those people who have an internal locus of control seem able to resist people's attempts to make them conform. This is because they believe themselves to be in control of their lives and the outcomes of their behaviour.

There is also some evidence to suggest that having feelings of social responsibility makes people more independent in their behaviour. It's not clear though to what extent research supports the idea of a relationship between individual differences and independent behaviour, maybe situational factors play a part too.

Examiner's comments: *The AO1 part of this answer slots into the 'basic' mark band descriptor. Some relevant knowledge and understanding is evident, but there is a lack of detail regarding the points covered. Further description of these points would have helped, as would the presentation of relevant research details.*

There are a couple of sentences of AO2 material and some appropriate points are made, which if developed further into an effective and elaborated commentary could have gained maximum credit. As it stands, the AO2 content is rather superficial and again slots into the 'basic' mark band descriptor.

Marks: AO1 2/4 + AO2 2/4 = 4/8

OVERALL MARK = 12/24

2(b) Good answer given by Jo

- 1 Outline **one** explanation of why people obey. (4 marks)

One reason why people obey was a psychological factor identified by Milgram and is known as the agentic shift, where people move from an autonomous state to an agentic state. This is where the person giving the shocks doesn't see themselves as responsible for their actions, because they believe that they are acting as an agent for the experimenter who gives the commands.

Examiner's comments: Jo provides a relevant, accurately described and elaborated reason for obedience. Indeed, there is enough in the way of elaboration to give her all the marks available.

Marks: 4/4

- 2 Research studies investigating conformity have often used laboratory-based experiments.

Explain **two** limitations of laboratory-based experiments into conformity.

(2 + 2 marks)

Conformity experiments have often been accused of being somewhat artificial in that the tasks participants had to do were not ones they'd come across in real life, like estimating the lengths of lines.

A lot of conformity experiments could also be accused of suffering from demand characteristics.

Examiner's comments: Both of Jo's limitations are placed in context of conformity experiments. Although not strictly necessary, this does in the case of the first limitation allow Jo to provide clear elaboration, and so gains both marks available. Her second limitation suffers from a lack of explanatory elaboration: she would need to explain why such experiments might suffer from demand characteristics.

Marks: 2/2 + 1/2

- 3 (a) What is meant by the term conformity? (2 marks)

Conformity is sometimes called majority influence and it is where a person adopts the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of people in a particular group.

Examiner's comments: A full, accurate and clear enough answer to gain both marks on offer.

Marks: 2/2

- (b) (i) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer. (3 marks)

Situation A

Nazma had recently moved to a new area and school and was finding it difficult to make friends. She noticed that a large group of students had a strong allegiance to the local football team Vale City. Nazma purchased a replica team shirt and started to wear it daily to school. Almost immediately she was asked if she would like to attend games with fellow student supporters of the team. Nazma readily agreed, even though she actually had no interest or knowledge of football at all.

Nazma demonstrates normative social influence. She wants to be accepted by the others and feels that if she has the same interests as them she will be accepted.

Examiner's comments: Jo identifies the type of social influence and explains how Nazma is trying to be accepted by conforming to group norms. However, Jo does not refer to features in the scenario explicitly enough to get the third mark available. She would need perhaps to make reference to the purchase and wearing of the replica shirt.

Marks: 1/1 + 1/2

- (b) (ii) Identify the type of social influence illustrated in the situation described below. Refer to features of the situation to justify your answer. (3 marks)

Situation B

Bryher has been invited out on a date by her new boyfriend who has taken her to a fashionable restaurant. Bryher is keen to make a good impression and not embarrass herself in any way. However, she has never been to a restaurant before and is alarmed at the vast array of cutlery and crockery placed before her. Bryher decides to observe other diners' behaviour before selecting which utensils to eat her food with.

Bryher demonstrates informational social influence by trying not to embarrass herself in the restaurant by copying more experienced diners' actions. She is looking for information as to how to behave. She is likely to adopt this behaviour in the future too.

Examiner's comments Informational social influence is correctly identified and this time enough reference is made to information contained within the scenario to justify awarding all the marks available.

Marks: 1/1 + 2/2

4 Discuss the influence of individual differences on independent behaviour. (8 marks)

Crutchfield found that non-conformists in his conformity experiments had higher levels of self-esteem and perhaps it was this that made them independent. Oliner and Oliner found that people who had gone against the majority and protected Jews during the holocaust tended to have an internal locus of control. This means that they tended to believe they had influence over events in their life including successes and failures and maybe it was this that made them independent.

Elms and Milgram backed this up by finding that disobedient people scored high for internal locus of control and for social responsibility. Williams and Warchal found that non-conformists to an Asch type task were more assertive. Atgis did a meta-analysis of studies investigating the relationship between locus of control and conformity. High scorers for external locus of control were more likely to conform.

Nemeth and Chiles did a Moscovici type task and found that exposure to a model of independent behaviour influenced the ability to resist conformity pressures. However, some research into the relationship between locus of control and conformity has been contradictory; some indicates locus of control to be important and some that it isn't always related to conformity. These contradictory findings could be due to methodological issues, for instance how accurately locus of control can be measured, the presence of demand characteristics and how conformity is actually measured.

Examiner's comments The selection of material to outline the influence of individual differences on independent behaviour is admirable in its scope: a wide range of relevant material about the influence of locus of control on conformity and situational factors is evident. Findings of relevant research are accurately and clearly presented. Perhaps Jo concentrated too much on the AO1 material, as the AO2 evaluation is not of the same standard. There are occasional evaluative points within the answer, but often they are not developed in any way that could be seen as effective. However, the last paragraph is all AO2 material and contains some informed points, though again they could have been more developed to form an effective commentary. It is important with these types of split AO1/AO2 questions to get a balance of material within the answer. **Marks: AO1 4/4 AO2 3/4 =7/8**

OVERALL MARK 21/24

2 PSYA2 Abnormality question (Individual Differences)

2(a) Moderate answer given by Gail

1 Three of the following statements describe limitations of different definitions of abnormality.

- A** What seems like abnormal behaviour may actually be beneficial to an individual.
- B** This definition does not tell us which infrequent behaviours are undesirable.
- C** It is difficult, maybe impossible, for an individual to achieve all the criteria that make up this definition.
- D** This criteria has sometimes been used as a justification to punish social deviants.

In the table below, insert the limitation **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** that matches the corresponding definition of abnormality. (3 marks)

Table showing definitions of abnormality

Definitions of abnormality	Limitation of definitions
Deviation from ideal mental health	C
Failure to function adequately	A
Deviation from social norms	B

Examiner's comments: Gail has selected the correct limitation for the first two definitions of abnormality, but her selection of option B for the deviation from social norms is wrong: option B is actually a limitation of the statistical infrequency definition of abnormality. This definition is not on the specification, but the deviation from social norms definition is and so students are expected to have knowledge of it and its limitations.

Marks: 2/3

- 2 Some patients, especially children and those with mental impairments may not be able to give informed consent for treatment of their mental disorders.

Explain how informed consent could be gained in an ethical manner for these types of patients. (4 marks)

Informed consent could be gained from the parents of patients like these, or whoever was legally responsible for them. If patients can't give permission themselves to be treated then they would need to have someone else to do it for them.

Presumptive consent is another way of getting informed consent when you can't get it from the people involved.

Examiner's comments: *The two ways of gaining informed consent offered by Gail are similar in that they are both appropriate methods, but are not elaborated in any way that are explanatory of the answers offered. The point offered about gaining consent from parents or guardians does not actually explain why this method would be ethically acceptable.*

Gail also does not explain what presumptive consent is and why this method would be ethically acceptable.

Marks: 1/2 + 1/2

- 3 (a) Which of the following three options describes ECT as a type of treatment? (1 mark)

- A A biological therapy
- B A form of psychoanalysis
- C A cognitive behavioural therapy

Option C. ECT is a cognitive behavioural therapy.

Examiner's comments: *Gail should have selected option A and so doesn't get the mark available here. She does however go on to gain marks in the second part of this question, so its evident that she does have knowledge about E.C.T. as a form of treatment, but candidates should know all aspects of the treatments and therapies listed on the specification if they are to be able to answer all possible questions they could be asked about them.*

Marks: 0/1

(b) Evaluate ECT as a means of treating abnormality.

(4 marks)

ECT has had a lot of success with severe depressives and it does stop a lot of them from committing suicide so it saves lives. A lot do get depressed again later on though.

Examiner's comments: *Gail chooses to concentrate on one evaluative aspect of ECT, its success rate in treating depressives, and this is a perfectly legitimately strategy, though one that requires more depth than if several aspects were addressed.*

Gail's answer overall is a basic one; there is superficial consideration of the evidence and the answer would have benefited greatly from relevant elaboration: for example, using actual data about the improvement rate of depressives treated with ECT or stating that due to its success rate with depressives it has become the preferred treatment for severe depressives.

Marks: 2/4

4 Discuss the behavioural approach to explaining psychological abnormality (12 marks)

The behavioural approach is one of the main approaches that attempt to explain psychological abnormality. It does not see mental disorders as having a physical cause and structure like the biological approach does. Nor does it believe that abnormal behaviours come from problems within the unconscious mind like the psychodynamic model does. Instead it believes mental disorders are actually a result of maladaptive or wrong learning. Things that happen to us in our lives are seen as the triggers that spark off abnormal behaviours, not things within us.

Behaviourism is reductionist and too simplistic as it explains abnormal behaviour in a very narrow way; there are more possible causes to abnormality than just poor learning.

As behaviourism is very scientific it is quite easy to test out its ideas about abnormality in a scientific way. The behavioural approach has given rise to behavioural treatment and they have good success rates, especially with certain conditions.

Examiner's comments: *Gail presents quite an impoverished AO1 outline of the behavioural approach in that most of her description consists of what the approach is not, rather than what it actually is. She would have been well advised to spend less time telling us that the behavioural approach is not like the biological or psychodynamic approaches and more time on what the behavioural approach itself actually consists of. Indeed only the last two sentences of the paragraph of AO1 material have any real creditworthiness. Overall, this forms a basic description of the approach that is lacking in detail. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question and the quality of the answer is closer to the mark band below than the one above, so it scores two marks for AO1.*

Three relevant AO2 evaluative points are made; they are not used effectively and only a basic commentary is evident. There is superficial consideration of the issues presented and as a basic evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is also apparent. The material fits the descriptors of the 'basic' mark band very well, albeit closer to the band above than the band below, resulting in an award of three marks.

Marks: 2/6 + 3/6 = 5/12

OVERALL MARK = 11/24

2 PSYA2 Abnormality question (Individual Differences)

2(b) Good answer given by Mhara

1 Three of the following statements describe limitations of different definitions of abnormality.

- A What seems like abnormal behaviour may actually be beneficial to an individual.
- B This definition does not tell us which infrequent behaviours are undesirable.
- C It is difficult, maybe impossible, for an individual to achieve all the criteria that make up this definition.
- D This criteria has sometimes been used as a justification to punish social deviants.

In the table below, insert the limitation **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** that matches the corresponding definition of abnormality. (3 marks)

Table showing definitions of abnormality

Definitions of abnormality	Limitation of definitions
Deviation from ideal mental health	<i>C</i>
Failure to function adequately	<i>A</i>
Deviation from social norms	<i>D</i>

Examiner's comments: Mhara shows commendable knowledge of limitations of definitions of abnormality by selecting all three correct answers.

Marks: 3/3

- 2 Some patients, especially children and those with mental impairments, may not be able to give informed consent for treatment of their mental disorders.

Explain how informed consent could be gained in an ethical manner for these types of patients. (4 marks)

As informed consent can't be gained from these types of patients, it would be possible to get it instead from their parents or legal guardians. In order to do this the parents/guardians would have to be made aware of what would be involved and any possible risks of the treatments involved.

It might also be possible to use an ethical committee to gain informed consent. This committee would consist of experts in the field, but some lay people too. They would consider all the evidence about the treatments, how humane and dignified they were and any possible risks. In that way they could make an informed decision about whether the treatments should be allowed.

Examiner's comments: Two valid methods of appropriating informed consent are provided and both are sufficiently elaborated to gain maximum marks. The elaboration adds to the understanding of Mhara's explanations, demonstrating a sound knowledge of the associated ethical issues.

Marks: 2/2 + 2/2

- 3 (a) Which of the following three options describes ECT as a type of treatment? (1 mark)

- A A biological therapy
- B A form of psychoanalysis
- C A cognitive behavioural therapy

ECT is a biological therapy.

Examiner's comments: The correct selection of option A gains the mark available.

Marks: 1/1

- (b) Evaluate ECT as a means of treating abnormality (4 marks)

ECT is a controversial treatment because it's not known completely how the treatment works; various unproven reasons for its success with depressives have been put forward. It has also been heavily criticised, especially in its early days of usage, for the inhumane nature of the treatment, which often proved traumatic for patients. E.C.T. was even accused of being more like a punishment than a treatment. It is administered in a more ethical manner nowadays.

Examiner's comments Mhara provides several evaluative points about ECT, offering up a mixture of positive and negative points. Less depth is required with this approach than if just one evaluative aspect of ECT had been presented.

Overall she presents an evaluation that is reasonably effective: however, the points she makes could have done with a little more elaboration to be of a standard required for full marks. For instance it is not really made clear as to why ECT was regarded as inhumane, nor how it is administered in a more humane way now.

Marks: 3/4

4 Discuss the behavioural approach to explaining psychological abnormality. (12 marks)

The behavioural approach believes that all mental disorders are learned through experience. Classical and operant conditioning plus social learning theory can explain the formation of maladaptive behaviours known as abnormal behaviour. For instance with operant conditioning if a person is rewarded with attention for displaying depressive behaviour then they will repeat the behaviour. Anorexia can be seen as being caused by people observing and imitating super-thin role models presented in a positive light by the media. This is a social learning theory explanation. Behaviourists believe the mind is an unnecessary concept and so therefore there is no such thing as mental disorders or mental illnesses, only abnormal behaviours. Also if abnormal behaviours are learned, then they can be unlearned and it is this idea that underpins behavioural treatments.

Behaviourism is very good at explaining disorders that do have an environmental component, for instance a lot of phobias are learned through experience. However, there are also a lot of mental conditions, such as schizophrenia, which cannot be explained in this way. Thoughts and emotions have been shown to be involved in a lot of mental disorders and yet behaviourism doesn't even acknowledge their existence; therefore it is a somewhat impoverished view of abnormality.

The behavioural approach can be seen in a positive light, as it doesn't label people as 'ill' which can be very damaging and long lasting to a person. The approach however only addresses the symptoms of abnormal behaviour rather than the actual causes, so again it can be seen as an impoverished view of abnormality. This causes problems for treatments too, as if only symptoms are addressed, then the positive effects gained by such behavioural treatments often prove to be short lasting. For example releasing an anorexic from hospital after she has gained weight through a regime of positive reinforcement may seem like a cure, but if the causes of why the anorexic was ill in the first place haven't been addressed, then there is a good chance they will become under weight again.

Examiner's comments Mhara separates her answer out into a passage of AO1 material presented first, followed by a passage of AO2 material. This can prove to be a sensible strategy as it can help a candidate to present a balance of material, which this kind of question requires. However, presenting a combination of AO1 and AO2 material simultaneously is in no way a lesser approach as long as a balance is achieved.

The descriptive AO1 material is appropriately selected and an accurate and reasonably detailed account is presented. However, the material is not always presented as clearly and coherently as is required to reach the upper end of the top mark band and so five marks rather than six are awarded. The comments on treatments are relevant as they are used as part of a general outline of the approach. The AO2 material is produces a reasonable commentary, but is not always used effectively. A wide range of evaluative aspects is covered for the hypothetical time scale available though, and the mark awarded here is therefore at the upper end of the mark band descriptor.

Marks: 5/6 + 5/6 = 10/12

OVERALL MARK = 22/24