

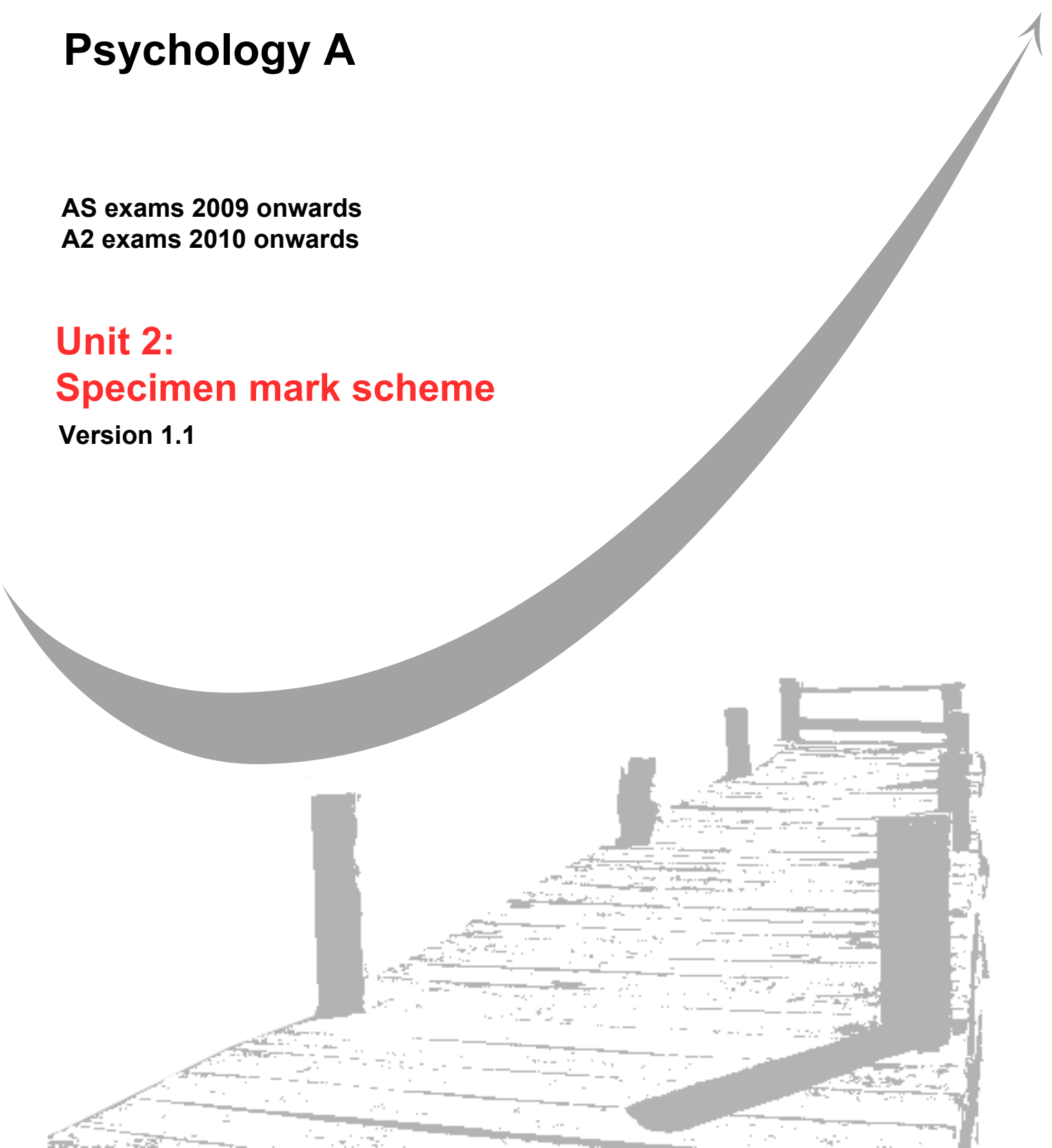
GCE
AS and A Level

Psychology A

AS exams 2009 onwards
A2 exams 2010 onwards

Unit 2: **Specimen mark scheme**

Version 1.1





General Certificate of Education

Psychology

Specification A

**Unit 2 PSYA2 Biological Psychology,
Social Psychology and
Individual Differences**

Specimen Mark Scheme

The specimen assessment materials are provided to give centres a reasonable idea of the general shape and character of the planned question papers and mark schemes in advance of the first operational exams.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

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SECTION A – BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

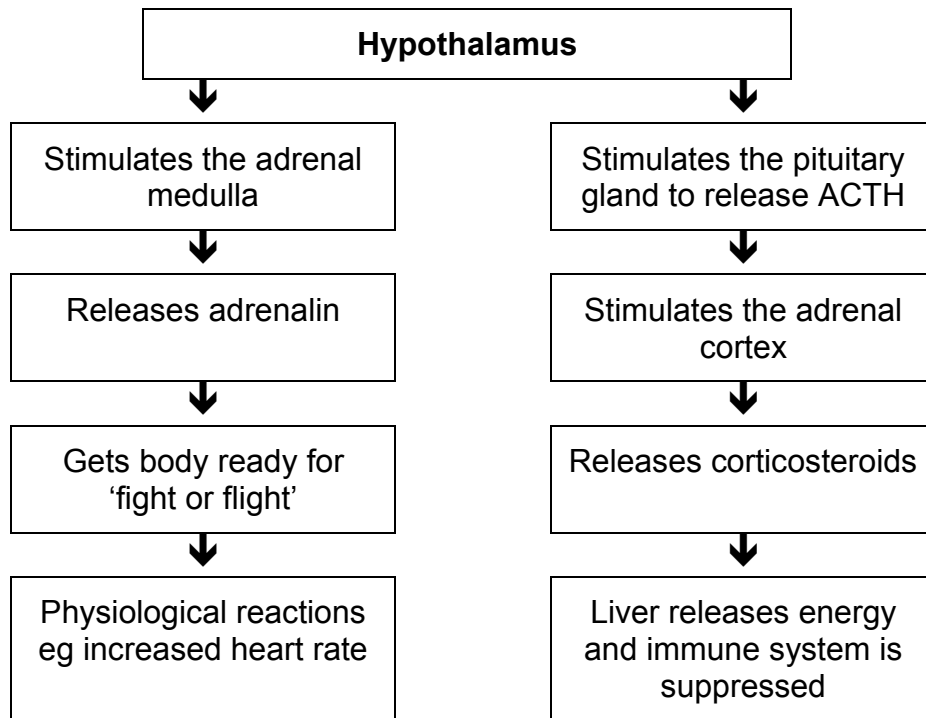
1

Total for this question: 6 marks

Use the phrases below to complete the diagram, so that it shows the role of the hypothalamus in the body's response to stress.

- Gets body ready for 'fight or flight'
- Stimulates the adrenal medulla
- Stimulates the adrenal cortex
- Releases adrenalin
- Releases corticosteroids
- Stimulates the pituitary gland to release ACTH

(6 marks)

**AO1 = 6 marks**

Correct selection and sequencing of body's responses. One mark per box.

2**Total for this question: 4 marks**

In a study of stress, the stress and blood pressure of participants were measured. Data from the study were plotted on the graph below.

Outline what the graph seems to show about stress and blood pressure and explain difficulties in drawing conclusions from this data. (4 marks)

AO3 = 4 marks Drawing conclusions from data

Up to 2 marks for outlining what the graph seems to show.

The graph indicates a positive correlation: as one variable increases, so does the other one. Therefore, high stress scores are correlated with high blood pressure, low stress with low blood pressure.

Up to 2 marks for explaining difficulties in drawing conclusions from this data.

The difficulties in drawing conclusions from this data include:

- because it is correlational, it does not indicate causality
- the sample size limits the extent to which the findings could be generalised
- absence of detail re sampling limits conclusions that can be drawn
- absence of detail relating to the measurement of the variables makes it difficult to draw conclusions.

3**Total for this question: 6 marks**

Angela and David both work as city lawyers. David is always in a rush, often snapping at his secretary and blaming her when things go wrong. He seems to be suffering from stress. Angela's job is just as demanding but she copes well, always seems very positive and, in spite of long hours, makes time to meet her friends after work.

With reference to the scenario above, outline factors that have been found to affect responses to stress. (6 marks)

AO2 = 6 marks Analysis of an unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of factors that affect responses to stress

Given that the scenario focuses on the difference between David and Angela, it is likely that candidates will draw on research into personality differences (Type A/B). David shows features of Type A personality (Friedman & Rosenman 1974), more likely to experience negative outcomes in stressful situations, competitive, achievement orientated, show time urgency, show anger/hostility. Angela shows features of Type B.

Candidates may make reference to other factors such as hardiness (Kobasa 1979) - three features of hardy individuals that enable them to cope well with stress: high sense of personal control over their life and circumstances; relishes challenge - sees challenge/change as positive rather than threat (positive reappraisal); shows commitment - to life, work, relationships, etc. Gender differences - Taylor (2000)

male response of “fight and flight” v female “tend and befriend response”.
 Frankenhaeuser et al (1976) males showed faster increase in stress hormones.
 Social support.
 Reference to control and attributions would also be creditworthy. Highly stressed individuals have little feeling of control over events in their lives. They make external attributions for negative or stressful events, eg David blames his secretary.
 Reference to aspects of workplace stress and daily hassles could be linked to the scenario.

6 marks Effective analysis and application

Effective analysis of the scenario to identify factors that could explain responses to stress. Outline demonstrates sound knowledge of research into factors affecting stress.

4-5 marks Reasonable analysis and application

Reasonably effective analysis of the scenario to identify some factors that could explain responses to stress. Outline demonstrates some knowledge of research into factors affecting stress.

3-2 marks Basic analysis and application

Basic analysis of the scenario to identify one factor that could explain responses to stress. Outline demonstrates basic knowledge of research into factors affecting stress.

1 mark Rudimentary analysis and application

Rudimentary analysis of the scenario identifying stress responses (rather than factors affecting stress). Outline is very brief and flawed.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

4

Total for this question: 8 marks

Discuss the use of drugs to manage the negative effects of stress.

(8 marks)

AO1 = 4 marks Outline of two or more drugs in managing stress

AO2 = 4 marks Discussion of drugs in managing stress

Drugs are used to treat the physiological symptoms of stress directly.

- Benzodiazepines – slow activity of CNS, enhance activity of GABA causing relaxation and reducing serotonin activity and thus reducing anxiety.
- Beta blockers act on ANS to reduce activity of ANS associated with anxiety, ie reduces blood pressure, heart rate, levels of cortisol.

For each drug award one mark AO1 for brief statement of the action of the drug eg Benzodiazepines cause relaxation. A further mark for elaboration of the mode of action eg slows activity of CNS, enhance activity of GABA causing relaxation and reducing serotonin activity.

Candidates who outline the use of one drug in detail may be awarded 3 marks.

It is likely that the discussion will focus on the use of drugs in general rather than on specific drugs and is most likely to focus on strengths and weaknesses of drugs.

Up to 2 mark for identifying strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths might include effectiveness, fast-acting, easy to use, addresses emotional aspect of stress so that cognitive/behavioural methods of managing the stress can be developed. Weaknesses might include treats symptom not cause, potential for addiction, side effects

Further 2 marks for elaboration, possibly in terms of the consequences eg addresses emotional aspect of stress so that cognitive/behavioural methods of managing the stress can be developed.

Equally creditworthy would be presentation of evidence that supports or challenges the effectiveness of this approach, consideration of the appropriateness of drug therapy for different disorders or reference to alternatives to drug therapy.

SECTION B – SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**5****Total for this question: 4 marks**

When a teacher tells you to do something, it is usual for you to obey.

- (a) Using your knowledge of factors that have been found to affect obedience, explain why you might obey in this situation. *(6 marks)*

AO1 = 4 marks Knowledge of factors found to affect obedience

AO2 = 2 marks Application of knowledge of obedience research to the situation

Up to 2 AO1 marks for reference to relevant factors and a further 2 AO1 marks for elaboration.

Explanations of why the candidate might obey may draw on:

- research into compliance, for example, through the process of gradual commitment (1 mark). This is where initially you obey a small order and then gradually obey a much more serious order (elaboration 2nd mark).
- theory, for example, through the agency theory (1 mark). This is when you believe that you are an agent and not responsible for your actions (elaboration for 2nd mark).
- obedience research, for example, Milgram focusing on authority figures, proximity, etc.

Up to 2 AO2 marks for explicit engagement with the situation.

- (b) In what ways would the situation have to change in order for you to resist the command? *(2 marks)*

AO2 = 2 marks Analysis of the situation and application of knowledge of obedience research

One mark for identification of a relevant change and a further mark for elaboration or the explanation.

Changes to the situation might include:

- reduced proximity of teacher
- presence of allies/others prepared to resist
- reactance in response to being forced to do something.

For example, if there was someone else who disobeyed (1 mark). This would encourage you also to disobey and resist the order (elaboration for 2nd mark).

6**Total for this question: 5 marks**

Milgram carried out an experiment investigating obedience. One criticism of this study is that it was unethical. Discuss **one** ethical issue raised by this research. *(4 marks)*

AO3 = 4 marks Discussion of ethical issues raised by Milgram's research

Up to 2 marks for identification of one relevant ethical issue and explanation of why it was an ethical issue. The ethical issues raised by Milgram's study include:

- deception and therefore prevention of full informed consent
- psychological harm, the inability (perceived) of participants to leave. The discussion could include the methods used to overcome the effects of the harm, such as in-depth debriefing and whether this was sufficient.

Up to 2 marks for brief discussion of the issue. This may focus on whether Milgram resolved it successfully, the intrinsic problem of 'right to withdraw' in studying obedience, whether the costs of such research outweigh the benefits.

7**Total for this question: 12 marks**

"People do not always conform or obey, sometimes they are able to resist such pressures."

Discuss research into the influence that individual differences have on independent behaviour. *(12 marks)*

AO1 = 6 marks Description of research into how individual differences affect independent behaviour

AO2 = 6 marks Commentary on and evaluation of the research

Individual differences cited on the specification are locus of control and attributional style. However, other individual differences such as gender, level of moral development, other aspects of personality, would be creditworthy. Reference to theory and/or studies is legitimate here.

Evaluation of relevant research might include consideration methodology of studies; consideration of external determinants as a counterpoint to internal factors.

AO1 Knowledge and understanding	AO2 Application of knowledge and understanding
6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed description of research that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of relevant social influence research. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.	6 marks Effective evaluation Effective use of material to address the question and provide informed commentary. Effective evaluation of research. Broad range of issues and/or evidence in reasonable depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Clear expression of ideas, good range of specialist terms, few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
5-4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate description that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.	5-4 marks Reasonable evaluation Material is not always used effectively but produces a reasonable commentary. Reasonable evaluation of research. A range of issues and/or evidence in limited depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Reasonable expression of ideas, a range of specialist terms, some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3-2 marks Basic Basic description that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.	3-2 marks Basic evaluation The use of material provides only a basic commentary. Basic evaluation of research. Superficial consideration of a restricted range of issues and/or evidence. Expression of ideas lacks clarity, some specialist terms used, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling detract from clarity.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed description demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.	1 mark Rudimentary evaluation The use of material provides only a rudimentary commentary. Evaluation of research is just discernible or absent. Expression of ideas poor, few specialist terms used, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling often obscure the meaning.
0 marks No creditworthy material.	0 marks No creditworthy material.

SECTION C – INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

8

Total for this question: 5 marks

The following are examples of different definitions of abnormality.

- A** The behaviour is very different from the behaviour shown by most people in the population.
- B** The behaviour prevents the person from achieving self-actualisation or personal autonomy.
- C** The behaviour means that the person cannot cope with everyday activities.
- D** The behaviour is very different from behaviour that is generally regarded as acceptable.

- (a) In the table below, write down which example **A**, **B**, **C** or **D** matches each of the definitions in the table. (3 marks)

AO1 = 3 marks One mark for each correct answer

Definition of abnormality	Example of the definition
Failure to function adequately	C
Deviation from ideal mental health	B
Deviation from social norms	D

- (b) Select **two** of the definitions given in the table and explain **one** limitation of each definition. (2+2 marks)

AO2 = 4 marks Explanation of limitations

For each definition: one mark for stating the limitation, one further mark for explanation. Candidates will need to indicate which definition the limitations refer to:

Failure to function adequately - Who decides the threshold for a failure to function adequately, particularly in cases such as psychosis where the person themselves may not be aware of any problem? Some dysfunctional behaviour could be seen as adaptive.

Deviation from ideal mental health - Who defines ideal mental health? How many of Jahoda's criteria constitute deviation? Cultural relativism, eg the rejection of autonomy in collectivist culture.

Deviation from social norms - What is socially acceptable varies within and between cultures. Need to distinguish between deviant behaviour and mental disturbance, for example, deviation from social norms. One limitation is that norms change with time (1 mark). Behaviour that is considered normal now would not have been considered normal in the past, such as attitudes towards unmarried mothers (2nd mark).

9**Total for this question: 5 marks**

One assumption of the biological approach to psychopathology is that abnormality is inherited.

Explain **one** way in which psychologists have investigated the genetic basis of abnormality. *(4 marks)*

AO3 = 4 marks Explanation of one way in which the genetic basis of abnormality has been investigated

Candidates are most likely to focus on twin studies, family relation studies/biological relatives or adoption studies.

Explanations should refer to:

- Assumptions about genetic similarity and shared environment
- Rationale that underpins the techniques
- Conclusions that can and cannot be drawn for such studies.

10**Total for this question: 6 marks**

(a) Outline key features of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology. *(6 marks)*

AO1 = 6 marks Outline of features of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology

Features may refer to assumptions, causes/explanations, concepts of abnormal behaviour:

- focus on the role of the unconscious in motivating behaviour
- abnormality arises out of unresolved conflicts of childhood, early experience
- defence mechanisms, repression, tripartite personality, stages of development and fixation.

6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed

Accurate and reasonably detailed outline that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.

5-4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate

Less detailed but generally accurate outline that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.

3-2 marks Basic

Basic outline that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding of features of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.

1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate

The candidate provides a description which is very brief or flawed and demonstrates very limited knowledge of the psychodynamic approach to psychopathology.

0 marks

No creditworthy material presented.

11**Total for this question: 7 marks**

James is afraid of flying. Just thinking about flying causes him distress and even going to the airport is a problem. In order to overcome this fear, he consults a behavioural psychologist who feels that he may benefit from systematic de-sensitisation.

- (a) Which approach to psychopathology would be most likely to advocate the use of systematic de-sensitisation? *(1 mark)*
- (b) Explain how systematic de-sensitisation might be carried out to overcome James's fear of flying. *(6 marks)*

AO1 = 1 mark

Identification of the behaviourist approach

AO2 = 6 marks

Application of knowledge and understanding of the therapy to an unfamiliar situation

Systematic de-sensitisation is based on reverse conditioning and the notion of reciprocal inhibition. If response to an anxiety-provoking stimulus is behaviour incompatible with anxiety, the anxiety aroused will lessen.

Explanation of the therapy should refer to:

- identification of elements in the hierarchy
- teach relaxation technique
- associate pleasant relaxation with least fear-provoking situation
- step by step progress through hierarchy.

6 marks Effective explanation

Effective explanation of the main stages of systematic de-sensitisation demonstrating sound knowledge of counter-conditioning process as applied to fear of flying.

5-4 marks Reasonable explanation

Reasonable explanation of the main stages of systematic de-sensitisation applied to fear of flying.

3-2 marks Basic explanation

Basic explanation of systematic de-sensitisation with some attempt to apply to fear of flying.

1 mark Rudimentary

Rudimentary, muddled, explanation of systematic de-sensitisation demonstrating very limited knowledge.

0 marks

No creditworthy material.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES UNIT 2

Question	AO1 mark	AO2 mark	AO3 mark	Total
1	6			
2			4	
3		6		
4	4	4		
Biological Psychology Totals	10	10	4	24
5a	4	2		
5b		2		
6			4	
7	6	6		
Social Psychology Totals	10	10	4	24
8a	3			
8b		4		
9			4	
10	6			
11	1	6		
Individual Differences Totals	10	10	4	24
TOTALS	30	30	12	72