



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Level Examination

# Psychology (Specification A)

# PSYA4

Unit 4 Psychopathology, Psychology in Action  
and Research Methods

**Specimen paper for examinations in June 2010 onwards**

**This question paper uses the [new numbering system](#) and [new AQA answer book](#)**

**For this paper you must have:**

- an AQA 16-page answer book.

## Time allowed

- 2 hours

## Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Examining Body** for this paper is AQA. The **Paper Reference** is PSYA4.
- In **Section A**, choose **one** topic. Answer **all** questions on the topics you choose. Where appropriate, refer to theories and/or studies.
- In **Section B**, choose **one** topic. Answer **all** questions on the topics you choose. Where appropriate, refer to theories and/or studies, approaches, issues and debates.
- In **Section C**, you should answer **all** questions.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.

## Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets
- The maximum mark for this paper is 85.
- In **Section A** and in **Section B** you will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

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**Section A Psychopathology**

Choose **one** topic from **Section A**. Answer **all** questions on the topic you choose.

Each topic carries 25 marks.

Where appropriate, refer to theories and/or studies.

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**Topic: Schizophrenia**

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**0 1** Outline and evaluate **one or more** biological explanations for schizophrenia. In your evaluation you should refer to research evidence. *(9 marks + 16 marks)*

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**Topic: Depression**

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**0 2** Explain the use of **one** cognitive-behavioural therapy as applied to the treatment of depression. *(4 marks + 6 marks)*

**0 3** Outline and evaluate biological therapies as treatments of depression. *(5 marks + 10 marks)*

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**Topic: Anxiety Disorders**

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**0 4** Outline clinical characteristics of **one** anxiety disorder *(5 marks)*

**0 5** Explain issues associated with classification and diagnosis of anxiety disorders. *(10 marks)*

**0 6** Outline and evaluate **one or more** explanations of the anxiety disorder outlined in your answer to Question **0 4**. Refer to research evidence in your answer. *(4 marks + 6 marks)*

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## Section B Psychology in Action

Choose **one** topic from **Section B**. Answer **all** questions on the topic you choose.

Each topic carries 25 marks.

Where appropriate, refer to theories and/or studies, approaches, issues and debates.

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**Topic: Media Psychology**

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0 7

In an experiment 70 teenagers were asked to complete a rating scale to assess their hostility, anger and anxiety. They were then randomly allocated to play either a violent or non-violent video game. After the game they completed the rating scale again. Scores on the scale before and after playing the game were compared.

Both groups had higher ratings on hostility and anger after playing the games, though the effect was more pronounced for the group playing the game with the violent content

Discuss the findings of this study in relation to research into media influence on aggression. (15 marks)

0 8

"There is an increasing body of psychological research into the phenomena of intense fandom and celebrity worship."

Describe what psychological research has shown about intense fandom **and/or** celebrity worship. (10 marks)

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**Topic: The Psychology of Addictive Behaviour**

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0 9

"Children who experiment with smoking can very quickly get hooked on nicotine and it only takes a few cigarettes to turn them into regular smokers, a new study has found. Two other studies published today show that smoking by peers and teachers can also independently influence the take up of smoking by young teenagers." (Action on Smoking and Health, 2002)

Explain why policy makers would be more inclined to accept the evidence of these "published studies" rather than mere opinion. (5 marks)

**Turn over for the next question**

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- 1 0** Outline and evaluate the learning model as an explanation of initiation and maintenance of smoking addiction in young people *(4 marks + 6 marks)*
- 1 1** "We are all exposed to models of addictive behaviour, yet not everyone becomes addicted."  
Discuss individual differences in vulnerability to addiction. *(5 marks + 5 marks)*

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**Topic: Anomalistic Psychology**

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- 1 2** The 'ganzfeld' is a technique used to investigate extra-sensory perception (ESP).  
Outline and critically evaluate findings from ganzfeld studies. *(5 marks + 10 marks)*
- 1 3** "Even if paranormal phenomena do not exist, paranormal experiences do, as surveys have shown that a considerable number of people report experiences which they interpret as paranormal." (Watt, 2001)  
Discuss cognitive factors underlying paranormal beliefs. *(4 marks + 6 marks)*

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### Section C Psychological Research and Scientific Method

This topic carries 35 marks.

Answer **all** questions on this section.

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**Topic: Psychological Research and Scientific Method**

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A psychologist believed that people think of more new ideas working on their own than they do working in a group, and that the belief that people are more creative in groups is false. To test this idea he arranged for 30 people to participate in a study that involved generating ideas about how to boost tourism. Participants were randomly allocated to one of two groups. Fifteen of them were asked to work individually and generate as many ideas as they could to boost tourism in their town. The other fifteen participants were divided into three groups and each group was asked to "brainstorm" to generate as many ideas as they could to boost tourism in their town. The group "brainstorm" sessions were recorded and the number of ideas generated by each participant was noted.

The psychologist used a statistical test to find out if there was a significant difference in the number of ideas generated by the participants working alone as compared with the number of ideas generated by the participants working in groups. A significant difference was found at the 5% level for a two-tailed test ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 1: Average number of ideas generated when working alone and when working in a group**

	Working alone	Working in a group
Average number of ideas generated	14	8
Standard deviation	1.89	2.98

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|---------------------|--|
| <b>1</b>   <b>4</b> | Identify the type of experimental design used in this study. <span style="float: right;"><i>(1 mark)</i></span>  |
| <b>1</b>   <b>5</b> | Identify <b>one</b> extraneous variable that the investigator addressed in the procedure for the study and explain how it was addressed. <span style="float: right;"><i>(4 marks)</i></span> |
| <b>1</b>   <b>6</b> | Name an appropriate test of statistical significance for analysing this data. Explain why this would be a suitable test to use. <span style="float: right;"><i>(4 marks)</i></span>          |
| <b>1</b>   <b>7</b> | Explain what is meant by " $p \leq 0.05$ ." <span style="float: right;"><i>(2 marks)</i></span>  |
| <b>1</b>   <b>8</b> | Give <b>one</b> reason why the psychologist used a two-tailed test. <span style="float: right;"><i>(2 marks)</i></span>  |

**Turn over for the next question**

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With reference to the data in **Table 1** outline and discuss the findings of this investigation. *(10 marks)*

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The psychologist noted that younger participants seemed to generate more ideas than older participants. Design a study to investigate the **relationship** between age and ability to generate ideas. You should include sufficient details to permit replication, for example a hypothesis, variables, detail of design and procedure, sampling. *(12 marks)*

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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