

PSYCHOLOGY

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Paper 9698/01

Core Studies 1

General comments

In this examination session candidates achieved marks that were spread across the whole of the available range. At one extreme there were those who impressed with the depth of their answers which without doubt resulted from some very hard work from both them and their Teachers. They are to be congratulated on their efforts. At the other extreme some candidates disappointed because they did not prepare for the examination sufficiently, often being unable to write more than a few, apparently random, words. There are those who could have done better, but failed to apply simple principles of examination technique. Yet again, failure to apply some basics resulted in a mark which did not reflect candidates' true ability.

Candidates frequently spent too much time on their **Section A** answers which did not leave enough time to write sufficient answers to the question in **Section B**. An extreme example is the candidate who wrote more than half a side of paper for each short answer question for **Section A**. This candidate wrote excellent answers and achieved maximum marks, but, the question had been answered in the first few lines and marks awarded, and so the other twenty lines were redundant. Of course this candidate 'ran out of time' and only managed to answer the first six questions. This meant a total script mark of 24 out of 100. This candidate would be unlikely to pass, despite having the ability to achieve a grade A. Clearly to maximise marks the time spent on each question should equate to the marks allocated. For Paper 1, for example, if Question 1 is worth 4 marks and Question 16 (a) is worth 10 marks then more time should be spent on Question 16 (a) than Question 1. This strategy applies to all papers and adherence to it would be beneficial for a significant number of candidates.

As in previous examinations some candidates did not address the different nature of questions in **Section B** Paper 1 from questions in **Section B** of Paper 2. There are a number of important differences:

- Firstly, for Paper 1, the question in **Section B** (either **Question 16** or **Question 17**) requires consideration of one of the three studies listed, and not all three. The question states 'Choose any one of the studies listed below..'. For Paper 2 answers must be provided for all four studies listed. Part (a) states 'What do these studies tell us about..'
- Secondly, part (c) for Paper 1 wants advantages/strengths and disadvantages/weaknesses related to the one chosen core study. The question states 'Using your chosen study as an example...'. Part (b) for Paper 2 wants advantages/strengths and disadvantages/weaknesses but this time not related to any specific core study. Here, the question requires the problems any psychologist may have. As the mark schemes reflect these differences candidates who take note of and act on these comments will have an advantage over those who do not.

Answers to Papers 1 and 2 see candidates writing about the core studies. Candidates frequently quote specific detail about what happened in the studies and they can discuss aspects of the studies when they evaluate them. For Paper 3 candidates often assume they do not need to refer to the work of any psychologist at all and they can write an answer based on their own common-sense view of the world. This assumption is false. Answers to Paper 3, like Papers 1 and 2, require that candidates quote the work that they have studied. To refer to a piece of psychological evidence, perhaps from one of the recommended texts, proves that the candidate has studied psychology; to write anecdotally in superficial terms, does not.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

For this question on the Loftus and Palmer study most candidates successfully gave one explanation, commonly the fact that participants were influenced by leading questions, but often failed to provide a second explanation. It may well be that, as suggested in the Loftus study, people are simply not very good at estimating speed.

Question 2

Empirical evidence is that which has some scientific basis and here any of the studies carried out by Hudson would apply. The reports of 'western explorers' such as Robert Laws or Mrs Fraser are not empirical but are anecdotal: they are stories that may or may not be true. For part **(a)** reference to any study by Hudson received credit. For part **(b)**, a cultural universal is any behaviour that cannot be learned and so is very likely to be inherited.

Question 3

There are many characteristics of autism and any four were required. Most commonly autistic children have poor verbal and non-verbal communication skills, they exhibit repetitive behaviour, they like routine and, of course, they have no theory of mind.

Question 4

In response to the 'Washoe question' candidates were able to provide appropriate answers without too much difficulty. Some candidates merely referred to jargon terms such as 'differentiation' and 'combining signs', whilst others simply gave an example. Both options received credit.

Question 5

This question did not ask for ethical guidelines that were broken but rather two ethical issues. One ethical issue is confidentiality, and in this study, Bandura et al did not name the children. An answer such as this would receive full credit. Most candidates wrote about the harm the study may have caused, or lack of the right to withdraw, and such answers also received credit. Note that a question about ethical issues could be asked about any core study.

Question 6

There are two parts to the study by Hodges and Tizard: one compared ex-institutional children (both adopted and restored) with a control group and the other study compared the ex-institutional restored with the ex-institutional adopted. This question focused on the latter and so any candidate failing to do this did not receive credit.

Question 7

This question on Freud required two pieces of evidence to support his theory of sexuality. One piece of evidence to suggest that Hans was in the phallic stage was that he continually played with his 'widdler', or that he wished his mother to play with his 'widdler', or any similar comment involving Hans' 'widdler'. A second aspect is that if he is in the phallic stage he should experience the Oedipus complex and evidence here would include Hans' attempts to seduce his mother, or equally valid is the 'giraffe episode'.

Question 8

Part **(a)** required an outline of one of the aims of the Dement and Kleitman study and most candidates had little difficulty with this. However, part **(b)** required a comment about the results in relation to the aim. More was needed than the comment 'the results supported the aim'; for two marks some mention of actual results was required.

Question 9

Part (a) of this question on the Sperry study has been asked many times, and in this instance candidates were well prepared, with most being able to provide an appropriate answer. Part (b) contained the 'twist': in real life participants do not have their left or right visual field isolated: if they view an object with both eyes (or even one eye) then information is automatically sent to both hemispheres of the brain.

Question 10

The term diffusion of responsibility, required in part (a), was successfully answered by most candidates. Part (b) asked candidates to think why there was diffusion of responsibility in laboratory studies but why it was not found on the subway train. The main reason for this difference is that in the laboratory studies the 'victim' was in a different room, whereas in the field study the victim was face-to-face with the participants.

Question 11

For this question on the Tajfel study, credit was given for any correct aspect of the task, ranging from decisions about dots and/or artists through to allocating rewards using a matrix. For part (b), again a straightforward question, the most appropriate answer was that the boys preferred the maximum difference option in preference to others, thus demonstrating out-group discrimination.

Question 12

The Gould question was difficult because it required candidates to think of four different reasons why the army recruits may have performed badly on the tests. However, if each reason is separated there is little problem. For example, answers such as 'cannot read or write' would count for two marks.

Question 13

This was another question that required an understanding of the main aim and findings of a study. Here, the main difference between the results of the Clark and Clark study and Hrabka and Grant was answered correctly by nearly all candidates as was the explanation for the difference.

Question 14

In the Rosenhan study the pseudopatients, as asked in part (a), were 'normal' people from a range of occupations. In part (b) they gained admission by telephoning the hospital for an appointment and reporting fake symptoms (that they could hear voices).

Question 15

Very few candidates successfully gained full marks for this question which combined advantages and disadvantages of the case study method with the Thigpen and Cleckley core study. Whilst candidates could often give an advantage or a disadvantage or even both, and whilst they could describe aspects of the study itself, very rarely, if ever, were the two matched up. For example if a candidate had written 'case studies allow a great deal of personal information to be gathered, in this study Eve White/Black had over 100 hours of interviews', then a maximum mark would have been achieved.

Section B

Question 16

- (a) Most candidates were able to outline some of the main findings of their chosen study whether it be Dement and Kleitman, Milgram or Haney, Banks and Zimbardo. What distinguished the good from the very good answer was the range of findings and the detail included. Often answers were too brief and resembled an answer to a **Section A** question.
- (b) Put another way, this question asked: 'how true to real life is your chosen study?' and candidates were invited to give a range of points relating to whether the study was true to real life or not. Most candidates were able to make some relevant comments.

- (c) Often this question part caused most problems for candidates as the requirement was to consider both the advantages and disadvantages of carrying out studies in a laboratory. The optimal strategy was to provide two arguments for and two arguments against. Candidates are reminded that the question did request that the chosen study be used as an example to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages.
- (d) All candidates made reasonable suggestions for ways to increase the ecological validity of the study. On the one hand the more able candidates often provided more detailed explanations of how their suggestions would work, and on the other there were those who could not develop their suggestion beyond a few sentences or so. It is worth adding that having more participants does not necessarily increase the ecological validity, whereas changing the type of participant involved may well do so.

Question 17

Not a popular question, and for those candidates who did do it, the vast majority chose Samuel and Bryant, with Schachter and Singer and Raine et. al. hardly ever being used.

- (a) This was generally answered well, with most candidates being familiar with what was found in the Samuel and Bryant study.
- (b) This produced some good answers, with candidates being able to describe the sample and how the participants were selected.
- (c) This required a consideration of both the advantages and disadvantages of using a restricted sample of participants. Whilst most candidates could provide a number of disadvantages, such as inability to generalise, very few could extend their range of advantages beyond the 'they are easily available' type of comment.
- (d) This caused one or two problems for some candidates, but most were able to make appropriate suggestions of what an alternative sample might be. As with **Question 16** it was insufficient to answer only half the question. The other half of the question 'and say what effect this would have on the results of the study' carried 5 marks and so to ignore it was costly. It is worth adding that candidates should ensure they can answer all question parts before embarking on a question rather than discovering half way through that they are unsure how to answer parts (c) or (d).

Paper 9698/02

Core Studies 2

General comments

Overall there were some very impressive answers to both the short answer questions and the essays. It was apparent that some Centres cover the studies in more detail than others especially in questions requiring specific details such as **Question 4** on Raine's study. Such questions provided discrimination between those candidates with detailed knowledge and those with more superficial knowledge of the studies. The essay questions were generally answered well with few rubric errors. Again it was apparent where candidates had been prepared for the examination with essay practice as these candidates wrote in sufficient detail and explained points made in relation to the question asked. Weaker answers were brief and failed to link points sufficiently to the question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) This question was generally answered correctly with full marks given for references to 'hitting with mallet', 'throw doll in the air', 'sock it to him' etc. Some answers just referred to *physical* and *verbal* aggression rather than giving specific examples, such answers were also awarded full marks. Some candidates referred to films in their answers and were under the impression that the subjects had watched films rather than an actual model, no marks were awarded for such answers.

- (b) This question was answered very well with answers frequently outlining the implications of television violence or behaviour of parents and other role models on the behaviour of children.

Question 2

- (a) There was some confusion over the difference between quantitative and qualitative data. Correct answers referred to the lack of statistical analysis and the greater depth of information gained. Weaker answers failed to refer to the study by Freud.
- (b) Many candidates referred to the problem of generalising from the case study methods, such answers gained 1 mark. Better answers referred to the problem of subjectivity in Freud's method, and the difficulty involved in the interpretation of the qualitative data obtained. For full marks answers needed to refer to the study of little Hans rather than just general comments.

Question 3

- (a) Answers were generally accurate here, although some candidates only referred to one factor rather than two i.e. physiological arousal or cognitive appraisal.
- (b) Some candidates found this question difficult and offered vague answers such as 'we experience emotions everyday'. More accurate answers referred to the interaction of physiological arousal and cognitive appraisal of the situation in the experience of emotion.

Question 4

- (a) Full marks in this question required two specific differences between the brain scans of the NGRI group and the control group. For example 'NGRI had less activity in prefrontal and parietal areas, more activity in occipital, less in left amygdala and hippocampus, more in right amygdala and hippocampus'. Weaker answers made general or inaccurate comments such as 'the NGRI had smaller brains' or 'they had less/more glucose activity'. Some candidates gave only one difference rather than two.
- (b) This was generally answered well, common answers including 'the technique is fairly new and its accuracy is not established', reference to the influence of other factors affecting the scans and some referred to the ethics of convictions based on such new techniques.

Question 5

- (a) This question was answered well with reference to the abuse of patients by staff and staff ignoring patients including their lack of eye contact.
- (b) This part was also answered well, with reference to views of mentally ill people, staff expectations and stereotypes, fear, and the characteristics of the profession including lack of funds, resources and time pressures.

Section B

Question 6

- (a) Candidates were required to describe what the studies tell us that is *useful*. Some answers referred to the use of the findings e.g. the use of Samuel and Bryant's findings in education, for example in the structuring of teaching and learning, other answers described the findings. Both types of answer were acceptable but for full marks the answer needed to be detailed and comprehensive.
- (b) This question required a range of problems related to making useful investigations. Each problem was worth 3 marks and so those answers which addressed only one problem could only obtain a maximum of 3 marks out of 10. Better answers linked the problems to the issue of usefulness. For example, for a study to be useful it needs to have ecological validity otherwise the findings can not be generalised to and used in everyday life. For full marks each problem should be applied effectively to a study, the problem of ecological validity could be linked to Loftus and Palmer and their use of film clips rather than real life situations. Weaker answers simply described a problem in relation to each of the studies listed with no reference to the issue of usefulness.

- (c) Here candidates were required to give an account of whether it is important for psychology to be useful. Good answers gave a range of points (4) which were accurate, showed understanding and supporting psychological evidence. Weaker answers failed to develop an argument, lacked balance and were unable to extend beyond specific studies. Good points included reference to the ethics of psychological research, the need to rectify problems in society, and the advancement of our understanding of human behaviour.

Question 7

- (a) This was the least commonly answered question of the three but was generally answered well by those who attempted it. There was some confusion over the definition of 'psychometric measures' with some candidates merely describing the method of the listed studies rather than the specific psychometric methods used. Good answers were able to describe the psychometric aspects of the studies. Again for full marks the answer needed to be detailed and comprehensive.
- (b) This question required a range of problems related to the use of psychometric tests. Each problem was worth 3 marks and so those answers which addressed only one problem could only obtain a maximum of 3 marks out of 10. Better answers linked the problems to the issue of psychometric testing and applied it effectively to a study, for example ethnocentrism which could be linked to Gould's study. Weaker answers simply described a problem in relation to each of the studies listed, with no specific reference to the issue of psychometrics.
- (c) Candidates were required to give an account of how valuable psychometric tests are. Good answers gave a range of points (4) which were accurate, showed understanding and supporting psychological evidence. Weaker answers failed to develop an argument, lacked balance and were unable to extend beyond specific studies. Good points included reference to the ethics of psychometric testing, the use of psychometric tests for personnel selection, the need for tests to be fair and valid, and their therapeutic value in the diagnosis of mental disorders/problems in functioning.

Question 8

- (a) This was a very popular question and was generally answered well. Good answers demonstrated a good understanding of what each of the studies show about social processes, for example the ease with which it is possible to create inter-group discrimination as shown in Tajfel's study or the power of social roles as demonstrated in Zimbardo's study.
- (b) This question required a range of problems related to the study of social processes. Each problem was worth 3 marks and so those answers which addressed only one problem could only obtain a maximum of 3 marks out of 10. Better answers linked the problems to studying social processes and applied it effectively to a study, for example the problem of demand characteristics which could be linked to the study by Milgram. Weaker answers simply described a problem in relation to each of the studies listed with no specific reference to the study of social processes.
- (c) Candidates were required to give an account of the extent to which they agreed with the statement 'All psychology is social psychology'. Good answers gave a range of points (4) which were accurate, showed understanding and supporting psychological evidence. Weaker answers failed to develop an argument, lacked balance and were unable to extend beyond specific studies. Good points included reference to other perspectives such as cognitive, physiological etc, consideration of the focus of the core studies, examples of the influence of social factors on behaviour and the importance of other factors.

General comments

See **General comments** for Paper 9698/01.

Comments on specific questions

Psychology and Education

Section A

Question 1

Candidates were able to describe what is meant by 'special educational need' without too much difficulty. For part **(b)** one type of need was often a specific example rather than the more general 'giftedness' but this approach was acceptable. For part **(c)** there was no distinction in the question between giftedness and difficulty so candidates could select their preference. Most typically segregation, integration or acceleration were referred to with generally good description being evident.

Question 2

In response to this question candidates often became confused between learning style and teaching style. A learning style is that preferred by the pupil or student; a teaching style is that operated by the teacher. As this question focused on learning styles any reference to teaching styles received no credit. In part **(b)** the work of Kolb was that most commonly referred to. For part **(c)** candidates could suggest any strategy that would make learning more effective. Here, as with all part **(c)** questions, the requirement is to make suggestions based on psychological evidence rather than those 'made up on the day' by candidates.

Section B

Question 3

In this essay question, candidates were free to choose any one perspective, which was likely to be behavioural, cognitive or humanistic. Generally answers were very good, with a significant number of candidates understanding their chosen approach well. In part **(b)** often alternative approaches were described (as a second part **(a)**) rather than used as a way of evaluating the approach they had described in part **(a)**. In part **(c)** appropriate suggestions were made for teaching science which were clearly based on a perspective rather than mere anecdote.

Question 4

Answers in response to this question on disruptive behaviour were a little disappointing in that candidates often described anecdotally what had disrupted their classes (one or two amusing stories here) rather than referring to specific educational and behavioural difficulties represented in the texts. For part **(c)** a distinction needs to be made between corrective strategies (which are applied after a disruptive behaviour has occurred) and preventative strategies (which are applied by a teacher to try to stop a disruptive behaviour from happening). This question was exclusively on the latter, so any reference to the former received no credit.

Psychology and Environment

Section A

Question 5

Psychologists make the distinction between natural and technological with the latter referring to something man-made rather than occurring naturally. A natural disaster would, therefore include floods/drought, earthquakes, etc; the former would include an aeroplane crash, a ship sinking, an event at a factory. For question part **(b)** candidates were free to choose any technological catastrophe and a wide range of examples were quoted, typically those at Three Mile Island (America), Chernobyl (Russia) and Bhopal (India). In part **(c)** the most common suggestion was to counsel the victims, typically to relieve post-traumatic stress disorder.

Question 6

Most candidates correctly stated what 'territory' was although a few did become confused with personal space. The crucial difference is that territory involves land, whereas personal space does not. In part **(b)** two of the three types of territory were required with an example of each, and most candidates managed this quite successfully. Part **(c)** also saw many correct answers which mainly involved placing items in strategic places to defend semi-public territory.

Section B

Question 7

Quite a popular question which had candidates writing (in part **(a)**) about a whole range of aspects including the effects of noise on social behaviour, such as aggression and helping, health and performance. In part **(b)** answers tended to be rather anecdotal and general (as with many other essay questions) but some very good answers were observed. For part **(c)** answers also tended to be anecdotal (such as 'music gets a party going') rather than those which are supported with psychological evidence. In this instance candidates could have referred to the Mozart effect or the use of Muzak or the work of Adrian North.

Question 8

This question provided an interesting range of answers given that the climate and weather are very different across the world, yet the texts available tend to be based on American society. Syllabus areas such as this are ideal for evaluative part **(b)** answers as the issue of generalisability (does it apply to all countries in the world equally) can be raised. For question part **(c)** candidates were asked to design the climate and weather for Mars. This produced fascinating answers and reflects what applied psychology is all about.

Psychology and Health

Section A

Question 9

The requirement in part **(a)** of this question was to define the term 'adherence to medical advice', and this was answered appropriately by most candidates. In part **(b)** two measures were required, and these could be grouped into those which are subjective (asking practitioner or the patient) and those which are more objective (such as pill counts and blood/urine samples). For part **(c)** candidates had little difficulty in suggesting ways in which adherence could be improved but again, suggestions based on psychological knowledge received more marks than those that did not.

Question 10

Stress is a very difficult term to define simply but generally candidates coped with it very well. Note that the quoting of textbook definitions is not required. In part **(b)** where the requirement was to describe one cause of stress, candidates often took the anecdotal option rather than linking the cause to psychological literature, such as a life event or a daily hassle. If a candidate were to write 'I am stressed when I miss my bus' this would achieve 1 mark as the answer is correct. But if the candidate were to go on to say that this is what is known as a daily hassle then it is evident they have studied psychology and so they would gain more marks.

Section B

Question 11

A number of candidates appear to misunderstand what this area is about. It is worth consulting a text relevant to the area. Not only are a number of health books appropriate but the book by Pheasant (see syllabus reading list, Psychology and Organisations) is very useful for this area as well. The main concern of this area is why people have accidents. Is it because people make errors (theory A) because they are accident prone perhaps or is it because they are too tired or have a poor biorhythm curve for example. Theory B suggests that systems are at fault and people make errors through poor design (e.g. substitution errors). Many examples exist – the sinking of the Titanic was due to the 'illusion of invulnerability' for example and accidents at Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and others can be attributed to unsafe systems which affect the health of many people.

Question 12

The patient-practitioner relationship is fundamental to health and as such a great deal has been written on the topic area. Although many candidates used the information available, there were those who merely wrote about their personal experiences when visiting a practitioner. Answers must be psychologically based if they are to achieve more than a few marks. In part **(c)** candidates were given the opportunity to improve either the patient or practitioner side or to consider both. Again, some candidates wrote legitimately about training courses for practitioners, or making them move toward being more patient-centred. Others did not take the evidence based route and again did not score many marks.

Psychology and Abnormality

Section A

Question 13

Abnormal affect due to trauma, the focus of part **(a)**, relates to the major psychological or emotional effect a serious traumatic event has on a person. Whilst some candidates considered appropriately traumatic events, others mentioned relatively minor events which would be unlikely to cause serious trauma such as fugue, amnesia or prolonged post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the consideration of such effects being required in part **(b)**. In part **(c)** counselling figured prominently as did systematic desensitisation for reducing PTSD.

Question 14

Part **(a)** required an understanding of degenerative abnormality, which is the premature neurological degeneration that occurs as the human body deteriorates with age. Part **(b)** required a description of two types and the most common forms are Alzheimer's disease, Pick's disease and Korsakoff's psychosis (alcohol related). Candidates successfully answered both these question parts. Part **(c)** was more taxing as in some respects degeneration is part of the natural ageing process, but it is suggested that this can be halted either by certain types of drug or by changes in diet, as was sometimes suggested by candidates.

Section B

Question 15

This question on abnormal learning allowed consideration of a number of learning abnormalities, many of which have no defined cause but which do open themselves to interesting debate as to the cause. For example in Britain there is currently the view that some autism is caused by a certain type of vaccination. Some candidates legitimately chose to focus on autism but others, equally legitimately looked at other abnormalities such as attention deficit sometimes with and sometimes without hyperactivity. Better candidates considered a range of possible causes, including diet. As mentioned, discussion in part **(b)** was good, given the competing explanations of cause. For question part **(c)** most candidates looked at ADHD and the control of it by the drug Ritalin. Others considered diet, not surprisingly perhaps as this was referred to in the source.

Question 16

For this question, candidates could focus exclusively on abnormal need or they could look at abnormal avoidance, or they could consider a combination of the two. For those opting for abnormal need, answers were often disappointing as descriptions were often not at all psychological. Those emphasising abnormal avoidance, mainly in the form of phobias fared much better with psychologically based answers evident. For part **(c)** again systematic desensitisation featured prominently as it is one of the favoured ways of modifying phobic behaviour.

Section A

Question 17

An explanation of leadership style, as required in part (a) of this question is the way in which a leader directs a group toward the attainment of goals. In part (b), two theories of leadership were required and although there were only six marks allocated to this part, many candidates wrote far too much, often writing what appeared to be more like an essay answer. Answers to part (a) questions should be no more than one side of examination paper for the entire **Section A** answer (approximately thirty minutes of time). Candidates generally struggled with part (c), even though this part was important, for without followers a leader has no one to lead.

Question 18

This was not a popular question. Temporal refers to time and this was emphasised by part (b), which asked about shiftwork. Two types could be the rapid rotation system or the short rotation; the metropolitan or continental rota; they could be flexitime or the 'on-call' system. (The book by Pheasant referred to earlier is excellent here.) For part (c) candidates merely had to consider an alternative either by suggesting an alternative shift system or by introducing some motivator to reduce negative affect.

Section B

Question 19

The selection of people for work is a process which occurs in all societies and at many different levels. In part (a) candidates had to describe what *psychologists* had discovered about such selection. Whereas some candidates did precisely this (and gained credit), many others merely wrote common-sense answers (and did not). Part (c) was an invitation for candidates to express views on how selection processes could be made more fair and equal and many candidates impressed here. The most common suggestion was to have a formal interview where all applicants are asked the same pre-prepared questions in the same order.

Question 20

In this question candidates could look at one or more aspects of group processes. For example, candidates could look at group processes such as cohesiveness, co-operation and competition. They could look at group decision-making. They could look at 'groups gone awry' (Riggio) which refers to groupthink and group polarisation. Or candidates could look at all of these – as some candidates did. In part (c) strategies for developing team-building were required, and some interesting suggestions were made. Those based on psychological knowledge, e.g. those of Belbin, gained most marks.