

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCE Psychology 6PS04 01

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Introduction

The ability of candidates to respond to difficult questions on this paper is frequently extremely good. This year was no exception. Papers are required to differentiate between the performance of candidates who, through a combination of excellent teaching and intelligent use of past mark schemes and examiners' reports, are become increasingly adept at answering questions set on examination papers. While there is always a long 'tail' of candidates who do not give responses that access many marks, this 'tail' tends to be quite straggly. While every teacher wants all their students to do well, it is reality that with the system of assessment we have in Britain, it is necessary for performances to be differentiated across the whole range. This means that as examiners we are constantly aware of needing to become more discerning in the criteria candidates need to meet to achieve marks, so that the top end of the mark range is able to discriminate between the good, very good and exceptional candidates. This is why, this year, it was decided that whereas in the past when marking evaluation questions some marks had been available for generic points, this year only points made specifically about the material being evaluated would be given credit. Inevitably this means that scrutiny of marked scripts will all too often show evaluations that look good on first reading not achieving many marks because all, or most of the points made are general and not tied to the material under scrutiny.

As always with the synoptic paper the standard expected is high. This has never been a 'soft' option. To excel on this paper candidates not only need to have a very good grasp of the material they have been taught, they also need to be able to use the material in creative ways, express themselves clearly and develop a coherent argument. I am delighted to report that many students rise to this challenge and perform with aplomb. In so doing they are a credit to themselves and to the centres that enter them for the examination. Next summer will be the last main sitting for this specification. Over its lifetime this specification has, I believe, served us well. It has proved to be a well-rounded, manageable and interesting specification which nonetheless has provided challenges for us all.

Question 1 (a)

While better responses were able to give a range of both symptoms and features there were a significant number who only described symptoms. These were limited to a maximum mark of three. Such responses either omitted any features at all or else seemed to be unaware of how the term feature is used within the specification. The tendency to merely list symptoms has declined, though there were a few responses that did produce a list. Most popular symptoms to be described were hallucinations and delusions with alogia or another language-related symptom as the third. Features usually included incidence level, onset and prognosis. Most responses gained 3 marks and there were a good number of full mark responses.

This response gains full marks (5) and goes about the response in a systematic way. The answer is rich in detail with most points well elaborated.

Schizophrenia is characterised by both positive and negative symptoms. Positive symptoms are additions to behaviour. An example of such a symptom is delusions. This is where the person has false beliefs in their abilities, with a specific type being delusions of grandeur, where the person feels powerful. Hallucinations (another positive symptom) are where a person sees fake people and hears voices. Negative symptoms (those that take away from normal behaviour) include lack of energy and alogia. This results in a lack of social functioning.

Features of schizophrenia are facts about the disorder. Approximately 1 in 100 people across all cultures will develop either acute or chronic schizophrenia. It is found across all cultures, but is more common in immigrant populations and is more common in lower classes. Goldstein found that women experience a less severe course of schizophrenia than men.



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Examiner Comments

The identification of positive and negative symptoms does not in itself gain a mark and there is not sufficient elaboration in the second sentence to gain credit. However, as an examiner this point is 'held' for possible credit later on. The descriptions of delusions and hallucinations each get a mark.

The negative symptoms comment is added to the positive symptoms comment and now gains a mark for a well elaborated point. Lack of energy and lack of social functioning are not mainstream symptoms thus there is not an effective list mark. In addition the candidate has now got 3 marks for symptoms and as such cannot get any more marks unless there are features mentioned.

The level of incidence (1%) is given, again not enough on its own, however the elaboration of 'either acute or chronic' is ample to allow the awarding of a mark. The comment of across all cultures and then incidence in immigrant populations and lower classes is the fifth mark. The final sentence saying that women experience less severe course of the illness, if the Goldstein bit is ignored, would be worth a further mark if one was available.



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Examiner Tip

When a question asks for two things as here, 'symptoms and features' make sure you include as near as possible an equal number of points for each.

Question 1 (bc)

1b While part (a) was generally done well or even very well, this was not the case for part (b). Most responses correctly identified one biological explanation, however few were able to describe the explanation adequately to gain full marks. The most popular explanation was the dopamine hypothesis with the genetic explanation a remote second. Most responses included a lot of evaluation of the explanation including research evidence. This could not gain credit in part (b). Very few responses indicated specific, accurate and sufficiently detailed knowledge. If an answer described both the dopamine hypothesis and the genetic explanation these were treated as different explanations unless an explicit link was made between them by the candidate.

1c The evaluation of the explanation in part (b) was generally well done. Most responses gave a range of evidence, and used the evidence well. While not a feature of all responses it was very pleasing to see so many answers where the identification and use of the evidence was given sufficient prominence for it to be given credit while not including so much detail that it detracted from the standard of the response. This was a question where a tougher approach to the marking was applied so generic points were not given credit. Some of the comparisons to a non-biological explanation were done well, but some tended to be very formulaic. Nonetheless there were many responses that gained at least four of the six marks available.

This part b shows how many candidates, while knowledgeable lost marks as they included evaluation in a question that asked them to describe.

hypothesis, which suggests schizophrenia is caused by excess levels of dopamine in the brain. ~~It suggests~~ Problems with synapses in the pathway from the midbrain to frontal lobes are thought to cause positive symptoms like paranoia. Drugs that treat schizophrenia block dopamine receptors, suggesting it's the excess dopamine that cause schizophrenia. The drugs that treat schizophrenia and stop positive symptoms can cause side effects with similar symptoms to

Figgee looked at 13 studies of MRI scans, and found that schizophrenics have enhanced activity in the frontal region of the brain, which supports the dopamine hypothesis.

Parkinson's patients who were given Levodopa, which increases dopamine levels, showed some side effects similar to the positive symptoms of schizophrenia - suggesting more dopamine may cause schizophrenia.



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Examiner Comments

Part (b) This gets just 1 mark. Excess dopamine levels clinches the mark. The next sentence is somewhat confused, it then starts providing evidence to support the dopamine hypothesis, this belongs in part (c)

Part (c) The whole answer for this gained 5 marks. This excerpt shows how good use of evidence can be built on with two marks awarded for the material in this extract.



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Examiner Tip

If there are parted questions (a), (b) and (c) you will not be expected to say the same things in different parts. In this question part (c) should tell you that evaluation points do not belong in part(b).

Question 2

Most popular responses were Brown et al (or one of the other Brown studies), Mumford & Whitehouse and Cook & Mineka. Most responses showed a very systematic approach to the evaluation going through the three requested evaluation issues of generalisability, methodology and ethical issues giving (often) two points for each. There were many excellent answers but too many responses failed to gain full marks as the evaluations were either generic or superficial. Points claiming generalisability solely on the basis of the size of a sample did not gain credit, there needed to be some indication of why the sample may or may not be generalisable, usually to do with the characteristics of the sample. There were a substantial minority who criticised Cook & Mineka on the basis of human ethical guidelines, again this was not acceptable. A few did raise the issue of speciesism, at which point a link to human ethical guidelines could be made creditworthy. Still other responses claimed evaluation points that cannot be known from the report of the study. For example Mumford and Whitehouse imply they had informed consent from participants as they state that a number of the students refused to take part, they do not say they received parental consent, therefore to claim the latter as a good ethical point cannot gain credit as the study does not tell the reader whether this was the case or not.

This response evaluating Brown et al gained all 6 marks. It works through the issues systematically. A very efficient answer.

Brown was a very ethical study. Every participant gave ~~inf~~ consent. This is shown as 92 participants dropped out of the study, this shows that they did not give their consent to carry on but 303 did. It also shows they were given the right to withdraw as 92 people took advantage of that offer.

Brown used good methodology also. She got in touch with every applicable woman to her sample in the area of Islington and asked consent, then chose a random sample of 395 women to remove a source of bias.

Brown's study was not very generalisable though. She used a sample of women aged 18-50 with a child still at home under the age of 18 and with a husband in a manual trade; this specific sample makes it very hard to generalise outside of that group.



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Examiner Comments

The first paragraph gives two linked ethical points on consent and withdrawal, rich enough, because it is made very specific to the study for two marks

Paragraph two gains a mark for an excellent comment on the sample. It is specific and correct.

An excellent generalisability point in paragraph 3.



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Examiner Tip

Make sure evaluation points gain credit by making them specific to the study being evaluated

Question 3

While the proportion of answers that confused reliability and validity was lower than in previous series it did cause the loss of marks in a number of cases. A few responses offered a large number of definitions, a strategy that failed to gain more than two marks. Good responses used a range of evidence and often considered the merits of diagnosis using different tools. Some responses relied heavily on cultural issues, and while these are relevant to issues of reliability and validity the link needs to be made in the answer. For example, the presence or absence of culturally specific disorders in DSM did not gain credit unless it was shown how this could be an issue of obtaining a valid diagnosis. Most responses showed a good balance between reliability and validity, a sizeable number used Rosenhan's study for both reliability and validity correctly, which was particularly pleasing to see.

This response is a well organised answer. It follows the pattern recommended in numerous examiners reports giving three clear reliability points followed by three clear validity points. These excerpts shown here shows the pattern of how this candidate answered the question in a systematic way, first by working through points on reliability followed by points on validity.

diagnosis in the end. This can be ^{measured} tested via inter-rater reliability or test-retest reliability. Goldstein conducted a study where they re-diagnosed some patients with schizophrenia. It was shown that out of the 190 patients with schizophrenia diagnosed by DSM II, 166 were diagnosed with schizophrenia with the DSM III. This therefore shows that the DSM III is reliable.

Brom conducted a study where ~~the~~²¹ participants were a part of a reliability study. They were either interviewed by 2 interviewers, or their interview was recorded and listened to by another ~~man~~ interviewer. Their results came out as satisfactory. This shows that inter-rater reliability helps us recognise how reliable a diagnosis

dependency, showing the validity of DSM IV-TR is high. However, King-Cohen suggested that questionnaires and interviews may be biased with their questions as they target specific symptoms, thus restricting diagnosis of other ^{mental} illnesses that they may ^{possibly} have.

Lee also conducted a study on children in Korea in ADHD and found that male children responded to the DSM better than females. Gender bias reduces the validity of diagnosis as it means the DSM may work better for some than others. (Total for Question 3 = 6 marks)

Question 4

As is often the case with questions on the practicals included in the specification, it is often clear when candidates have not completed the practical task in their course.

(a) Linking the content of the leaflet with the key issue as requested by the question and required in the specification was rarely done with sufficient clarity to achieve both marks. There were a small number of responses where the choice of target audience would not have been appropriate for a leaflet produced by an A level student. If the target audience is seen as inappropriate and not linked to an appropriate key issue then this part may get no marks, though part (b) can still get full credit. Centres are strongly encouraged to advise students to select a target audience where knowledge and understanding of the key issue is going to be less than that of the student. Patients, family of patients, work colleagues are all highly suitable audiences for an informative and helpful leaflet on (e.g.) how to help a recently diagnosed patient with schizophrenia to cope with everyday life.

(b) This question had asked candidates to assess how successful they considered the leaflet they had produced would be. The majority of responses failed to address this issue, merely stating that they believed it would be successful but with little or no attempt to justify such a claim. This was a difficult question as it required the answer to link the nature of the target audience with the type of content they had included and make an explicit judgement on how these two would relate to one another. Few responses achieved this goal and as such there were very few that achieved full marks. This is the type of question that requires application of knowledge and understanding in a novel way during the examination. This means the skill tested here was more about being able to use understanding in new ways, an important synoptic skill.

This was one of the relatively few responses that succeeded in gaining full marks on both parts of question 4.

likely to believe everything they read and see in the media including negative portrayal of mental illness. therefore, my leaflet is relevant as it will act as a way to dispell rumours and show teenagers truths about mental illness.

I think my leaflet would be very successful in achieving its intended outcome. The intention of this leaflet was to highlight the wrong portrayal of mental illness in the media and to give people real facts and insights. By using facts and statistics gathered from other sources such as the internet, this will give people reliable information with regards to mental illness. Using facts and figures is useful because people are more likely to believe them and remember them. I also referred to well known celebrity figures in my leaflet, such as Stephen Fry, to show that successful people in the public eye can suffer with mental illness relatively secretly. I included this in the hope that this would change people's attitudes, which was the intended outcome of my leaflet in the first place.



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Examiner Comments

Part (a) clearly identifies the issue - the inaccurate portrayal of mental illness in the media as the issue and explains why this is relevant to the target audience, teenagers (identified at the start of the response.)

part (b) while it starts as many did with a statement relating to a belief in success this response then goes about justifying the claim. It met the criteria for a level 4 (4 mark) answer.

Question 5

There were a small number of responses that chose to describe and evaluate a therapy that was not a cognitive therapy, however the majority gave a description of one of the two cognitive therapies identified in the specification. Descriptions of the therapy varied in quality a great deal. There were many answers where brevity of description triumphed, meaning that however good the evaluation was, the examiners could not award a mark in the higher levels. Such answers tended to either focus on the rationale behind cognitive therapies or on the processes involved during therapy, better responses used both aspects in their writing.

Evaluation of the therapy was often done well. The question did not demand the inclusion of research evidence but the majority of better answers included such material. Better answers also tended to effectively explain both positive and negative evaluation points about the therapy. The question also asked for a comparison with an alternative treatment/therapy. Most responses did include at least an attempt at a comparison but weaker responses tended to include a short paragraph starting with "Another therapy is". In contrast better responses integrated the alternative therapy, drawing at least one comparison on issues such as attitude towards patients/clients, efficacy, side effects, financial implications and long term prognosis.

This essay achieved level 4, though it received 10, at the bottom of the level, rather than at the top.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is used (12)
to treat a variety of disorders, including
depression. First, the therapist and
client must build a rapport in order
for the client to feel comfortable
discussing their thoughts. Then the
practitioner will help the client
identify their 'faulty' thought patterns
as they talk. Normally the client
is set 'homework' specific to their
situation to help them prove to
themselves that their way of thinking
is irrational, so someone with
anxiety may have to meet a
friend in a pub. The client will
then be taught to recognise their
faulty thinking as it happens and
to challenge that with what they learnt.
The idea is that as their beliefs
are challenged, their thought patterns and
behaviour will change too as they are all
connected.

A strength of CBT is that it has been shown as successful in case studies such as Bradshaw with Carol, who had schizophrenia. Her social functioning score had increased after 3 years of CBT and her positive symptoms had lessened. This is valid support for CBT being effective in treating mentally ill people.

Another strength of CBT, especially in comparison with Psychoanalysis, another talking therapy, is that the patient gets personal support from their therapist but without the imbalance of power. This is because unlike with psychoanalysis, there is less interpretation of thoughts, leaving less room for manipulation, even unintentionally. Therefore the therapist is seen as working with the patient to treat them, which in itself can be very empowering.

A weakness of CBT is that, as seen with Cardé, it is very time consuming, often taking place over years of hour-long sessions. People with depression may not be able to dedicate that much time to a treatment before it becomes effective, therefore it may not be very useful.

Also, another weakness is that having their fundamental beliefs questioned can be quite distressing for the patient. This raises ethical questions about the treatment in regards to safe-guarding emotional wellbeing.



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Examiner Comments

Using the bullet points on level 4:

- Description of therapy will be thorough and detailed - yes, but only just - this description just scrapes into level 4, there is so much more that it would be nice to see included in a level 4 essay.
- Evaluation includes a range of issues supported by research evidence at least once - yes.
- Shows balance in the choice of points made - yes.
- Makes relevant comparison to another therapy - yes, adequate rather than wonderful.
- Therefore the balance of strengths and weaknesses for the level 4 criteria push it towards the bottom of the level rather than towards the top.



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Examiner Tip

Try and keep the balance between descriptive detail and evaluation moderately equal when possible.

Question 6 (a)

There were many responses here that failed to gain more than two marks as they made no serious attempt to link what they were writing about to the concept of a 'contribution to society'. Thus there were some very competent descriptions of development of gender identity, various therapies and other ideas from the psychodynamic approach but lacking the punchline that made it a contribution to society. Typical responses mentioned how Psychodynamic theory identified the importance of the Oedipus and Electra complexes in the development of gender identity but then failed to mention that this explained to parents why it was important to have a two parent family during this period of development so children were better adjusted.

This response is very clear in the way it demonstrates that the contributions do help society.

remembers about their dreams, and the latent content, which is the actual meaning of the dream. This contributes to society by providing ways of helping people with mental health disorders to understand what is happening in their unconscious. Another contribution a child's development. This contributes to society by helping us understand gender assignment and the idea of individuals not being ~~comfort~~ comfortable in their body, so we can aim to help them.



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Examiner Comments

Most responses gained two marks for explaining two contributions, however the requirement to show it was a contribution to society was mostly missing. This shows how to make that vital link.



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Examiner Tip

Make it easy for examiners to give you marks by making it very clear that you are doing what the question demands by your use of words

Question 6 (b)

This was a challenging question and in general was not well answered. The question required candidates to compare the usefulness of the psychodynamic and learning approaches. Many responses appeared to have been written in the belief that the use of the word comparison was sufficient to gain marks, irrespective of whether the material being 'compared' could indeed be legitimately compared. Some responses forgot the usefulness aspect and merely compared theoretical or methodological issues while others wrote two paragraphs one on the usefulness of one approach and the second on the usefulness of the other approach. Better answers that did address the question appropriately tended to compare the usefulness of therapies from the two approaches, the role of the two approaches in advising parents about the upbringing of their children in order to produce well balanced, stable and productive adults, and the understanding of criminality.

This response gained all 6 marks, mainly because it did compare the two approaches as requested by the question.

Understanding gender in the psychodynamic approach can be used to ensure a child has a strong relationship with their parents within the first 5 years to avoid fixation but again cannot be scientifically tested. This can be compared to the learning approach's understanding gender that it can be learnt through imitation, we are predisposed to learn from this is useful as can help with allowing children to identify themselves and their gender through gender assigned toys and colours.



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Examiner Comments

The response is systematic in the way it takes a point, draws the comparison and then elaborates. In addition to the clip shown here this response also compared therapies for phobias, relationships between clients and therapists and the ability for a client to generalise the therapeutic experience beyond the therapy situation.



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Examiner Tip

When comparing things make sure you compare like with like, otherwise it is not a proper comparison.

Question 7

While there were only a small number of responses that failed to gain some marks on this question there were very few who achieved full marks. There were two principle reasons for the paucity of very high marks. Firstly generic evaluation points that did not tie back to the question were not given credit. The question did make it clear that it was the 'proposed study' that needed to be evaluated, therefore general evaluation points that did not reference the proposed study gained no marks. Secondly, evaluation points that merely sought to change the study without explaining why this was a justifiable evaluation point did not gain credit. Thus to argue that more/different ages of confederates should be used to make the results more generalisable was not in itself creditworthy. However if a point was made that the choice of age of confederates could create difficulties, on either practical or ethical grounds that was creditworthy and a follow up point about the advisability of changing the ages of the confederates could have gained an elaboration mark in these circumstances. One generic evaluation point which does not gain credit unless it is qualified in some way is the notion that a large sample will make the study's results more generalisable, more reliable or more valid. Size of sample does not necessarily enhance a study. A poorly designed study will not produce generalisable, reliable or valid data however large the sample.

This question needed a response where each point made referenced the stimulus material in some way. This answer does just that, with each point contextualised, enabling the examiner to give this the full 8 marks available.

One ethical issue is that 3 of the ages of the confederate are under the age of 16 years old, so there would have to be parental consent.

Also, if a participant saw a 5 year old on its own walking towards them it may cause them distress as they may think it was lost. This may cause them some psychological harm.

One weakness is that the observers may get distracted talking on the phone so may not pay attention, or get distracted and miss some behaviour.

One strength is that there is inter-rater reliability as there are two observers watching the confederate and participant. This means that they can check for reliability of findings by using triangulation.



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Examiner Comments

Marks here were awarded for the two points in the first clip, there are then points on

- the issue of informed consent,
- observations in public places,
- the practical issue of using very young confederates who may become distracted,
- whether participants may feel threatened by an approaching confederate,

The second clip shows a short section that is not really creditworthy as if someone is observing and the set up is for them to appear to be using their mobile phone it can be assumed that it would be tried out so it was not a problem. However the next section is very good and worth two marks, as it explains there will be inter-rater reliability and for the second mark the link through to reliability.

Question 8

There were many responses to this question that were disappointing to read as the content indicated that the question had not been read carefully enough by the candidates. Weaker answers attempted to design an experiment to test for a difference between two manipulated groups, totally missing or misunderstanding the instructions in the question to design a correlational study. Such responses may have salvaged a few marks by giving information on a relevant timeline. A small number of weak answers firstly used watching television instead of social media then proceeded to describe a study almost identical to Eron and Huesmann.

Better responses indicated both a size of sample and source of participants that was reasonable as well as a timescale that was credible. Better responses also suggested at least partially realistic ways of collecting data both in the early years and when participants were adults. In addition there were some good points made about the practicalities of such a study. Almost all responses included some comments about ethical issues, confirming that the majority of candidates do fully understand the importance of ethical guidelines within psychology.

Questions such as this, which ask candidates to create a study under examination conditions are not marked for perfection. Examiners recognise that under exam conditions responses for these questions will have omissions and rough edges. The mark schemes make this clear.

This response does not get everything right, but it has a really good try.

Firstly, I would gather a large sample size of about 2000 children between the ages 5-10 years old. I would gather my sample by randomly selecting 10 children from each school out of 200 schools across England. The children would be observed between the years of 5 years old and 10 years old, from when they start school, and up to when they are in their last year of primary school. "social media" can include: facebook, myspace, twitter, uinstagram, snapchat and whatsapp. All of which are controlled to the extent that no other social media would be accessible for their ages. The same children will be observed during this period. Then they will be observed again at age 13 to ~~14~~ 16 years, where their behaviour will be noted down, ~~by~~ as well as collecting data from parents about these children, using interviews. The children will then not be

assessed until they are aged 25. By this age their data from the ages of 5-10 and compared to when they are adults, and a correlation will be made between the variable "Amount of time spent using social media before age of 10" and "Anti-social behaviour, including, problems with social interactions, and communication".

- As it is longitudinal, the same children will be examined, so long term effects can be looked at, however, there is the potential of people dropping out, as it is quite invasive to their life, this means the sample size is reduced, and thus is at risk of being unrepresentative. Correlational studies do not mean causation, so it cannot be proved that time spent using social media caused antisocial behaviour as adults.

It is not very ethical in terms of right to withdraw, participants may feel they do not have the opportunity to because they feel they must carry on for course credits.



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Examiner Comments

The criteria for level 3 (top level) stated a range of issues and particularly at least three elements in some depth. This answer considers sample in good depth, offers a reasonable timeline, attempts to tackle when data may be collected and in some cases how this may be achieved, considers some of the practical and ethical issues of such a study.

Question 9 (a)

This was the scenario question and was answered by around 40% of candidates. The question required the application of two different theories to explain acts of prejudice and discrimination. Almost without exception responses described Social Identity Theory as one of the theories. In general this was done appropriately and in sufficient detail to gain description marks for that theory. A second theory seemed to cause more difficulties. Once more too many responses indicated that the candidates were not able to think beyond a very narrow range of options. A substantial number of responses included agency theory as the second theory and, when used well this could produce a good answer, though it is not a 'natural' choice of a theory to explain prejudice and discrimination. Easier to justify in this respect was Social Learning Theory. Responses that used this tended to do quite well. A relatively small number of answers described realistic conflict theory as a second theory.

The essay required three tasks to be undertaken, a description of two theories, the evaluation of the two theories and the use of one or both of these theories to explain two of the scenarios provided. Weaker answers tended to leave all or part of one of these tasks undone, most usually the evaluation of the theories. Thus there would be an excellent description of Social Identity Theory, a very good use of it as a way of explaining one of the scenarios but no or little evaluation of the theory. Those who used agency theory all too often spent a lot of effort explaining blind obedience and describing Milgram's study, but failed to link this to the concept of prejudice and discrimination.

This essay gained 12 marks for content and 5 marks for structure.

~~deleted~~ deprecation on onay, Children may take that as a reason to do this themselves. This effect is particularly exacerbated if the act is committed by a role model, who is then either rewarded by for example, praise or doesn't receive punishment, the child is vicariously reinforced. The behaviour however first has to be paid attention to, remembered, reproduced and if there is motivation, it will be likely repeated. This could account for ~~example 3~~ example 3, perhaps, in Burma Islam is portrayed in a distasteful light and there is unlikely to be serious repercussions for the act of destroying

The Muslim homes, and property. A lack of consequence may further distort the idea of prejudice and continue to motivate others into criminal activities, especially those shown in the media. Anderson found that boys who were more likely to blast a loud blast of noise at someone were those who played more violent games. Anderson has also suggested the development of immersive gameplay further exacerbates the effect of a lack of consequence as games like Call of Duty simply sweep away damaged property or victims, thus shielding the player from the consequences. This lack of consequence could be seen in example 4, where the attackers may not have understood the consequences of destroying the wedding. Rideout found that 75% of all



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Examiner Comments

This essay gives a good description of Social Identity Theory, including examples, it then evaluates the theory as an explanation for prejudice using both Tajfel's work and also Sherif's study. It then ties this to the racist chants example from the question before rounding off with a criticism of the theory by Dobbs and Crano. Starting from the media as a source of Social Learning Theory a similar pattern is followed allowing the response to gain full marks for content. The clip here shows how the candidate displays rich and detailed knowledge and applies this effectively in answering the question.

The clip is typical of the whole answer which as commented above shows the quality of the content. It does also show why this gained 5 rather than 6 marks for the structure mark. The overall structure of the essay is good and it displays good focus and excellent use of specialist terms. However there is a clumsiness in style that at times detracts from the writing making it a lower level 3 rather than a top level 3.

This essay then gained 17 out of a possible 18 marks for this question.



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Examiner Tip

Synoptic essays are complex. Make sure you complete all the components required in the instructions.

Question 9 (b)

It was clear that some centres had practiced similar questions to this as preparation for the examination and better responses were often very polished in both style and content. However, too often responses included material from Clinical psychology, despite the instruction not to use this area. Leeway was allowed for studies learned about within the AS approaches which are also Clinical, such as Gottesman and Shields, however responses that used material such as this tended to then launch into evidence straight from their Clinical material.

Stronger responses gave a good initial definition of nature and nurture then proceeded to utilise their two Unit 3 topics, drawing on material to show both nature and nurture and frequently invoking an interactionist perspective. In such answers there would be evidence from research to support the claims made and a balance drawn between the views aired. Weaker responses tended to utilise the AS approaches, often stating with a brief example whether a particular approach supported nature or nurture. While an assertion would be made it was rarely followed up with any research evidence. Such essays tended to not rise above level 2 for structure as they often lacked focus and tended to be repetitive.

This essay gained full marks for content. It uses both Child and Criminological applications well. The candidate has a good command of the material and is able to marshal the arguments effectively.

Nurture is involved in child psychology through the assumption that our experiences in childhood affect our behaviour as adults. For example, Bowlby's maternal deprivation hypothesis stated that breaking the bond in the first two years of life would lead to serious and irreversible emotional, cognitive and social damage, such as affectionless psychopathy. Furthermore, privation clearly has effects on later life, as shown by the case study of Genie. Her isolation from society meant she never fully developed language and her behaviour was limited to the level of a young child. Daycare is also reported to affect us. This social experience may have negative effects on behaviour, for example Belsky and Rovine showed that continuous and early intensive daycare can lead to 'Secure attachment. Our attachments affect us later in life, for example a study by Barse showed that German marital couples had greater satisfaction if they had secure attachments as a child. This shows that our experiences of nurture in childhood affect us later in life. Nurture in child psychology is addressed by cross-cultural studies, e.g. by

Miyake and Sagi which have found attachment to be universal. Furthermore the evolutionary basis for attachment shows that attachment is adaptive, as it aids survival. This trait has been inherited via natural selection, showing behaviour can be natural.

Nature's role on child development can be difficult to assess. For example it is not known whether Genie was born mentally retarded, or whether her privation caused her learning difficulties. ~~Further~~ This means nature may be involved.

There is research evidence to support the role of nature in the evolutionary basis of attachment. Lorenz showed that precocial species imprint on the first moving thing they see to provide protection to aid survival. However, a weakness of this is that the results may not be generalisable to humans as there are many differences between animals and humans.

Another weakness which means that the role of nature is questioned is the possibility that temperament could impact on behaviour rather than maternal sensitivity, as reported by Fuentes et al. This reduces validity as

cause and effect of behaviour cannot easily be assessed, so nature and nurture can become inextricably linked.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The clip shows the child psychology section of the essay. The material used is well chosen and effective. The minor error in the mislabelling of 'secure attachments' regarding the Belsky and Rovine study is forgivable in what is otherwise a very accurate account. The material presented from the Criminological application is similar in style and standard. In terms of content it is a level 4, and when in level 4 the question asked is why not full marks. This answer fulfills all the bullet point criteria on the mark scheme for level 4.

The essay does lack really good structure, hence 4 (top level 2) rather than a level 3 mark. What makes it a level 2 is the comparison between the statements at the beginning of the structure level descriptors. This essay is generally focused, but there is some poorly placed material/repetition etc, hence the level 2.

Paper Summary

No examiner expects perfection on an examination paper, however with successive series providing more and more guidance for teachers and their students the quality of papers submitted becomes better. Thus to achieve those sought after grades it is even more important to follow a few simple guidance points.

Dos and Don'ts

- Do read questions carefully to ensure that the instructions are being followed
- Do make sure that every point made in an evaluation is specific to that study or theory
- Do avoid general evaluation points
- Don't use unexplained abbreviations in answers, these can lose marks
- Do spend a bit of time and effort planning the structure of the synoptic essay, remember this can gain up to six marks
This essay gained full marks for content. It uses both Child and Criminological applications well. The candidate has a good command of the material and is able to marshall the arguments effectively.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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