

Examiners' Report
June 2018

GCE Psychology 8PS0 02

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.



Giving you insight to inform next steps

ResultsPlus is Pearson's free online service giving instant and detailed analysis of your students' exam results.

- See students' scores for every exam question.
- Understand how your students' performance compares with class and national averages.
- Identify potential topics, skills and types of question where students may need to develop their learning further.

For more information on ResultsPlus, or to log in, visit www.edexcel.com/resultsplus. Your exams officer will be able to set up your ResultsPlus account in minutes via Edexcel Online.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk.

June 2018

Publications Code 8PS0_02_1806_ER

All the material in this publication is copyright
© Pearson Education Ltd 2018

Introduction

In general, candidates' coverage of questions of biological and learning psychology was good in terms of all skill requirements. There was some variety in knowledge and understanding across topic areas. It would appear that candidates managed the time demands of the exam well, attempting all questions. A large number of candidates did not attempt Question 4, relating to adoption studies.

In questions that related to application to a context, there was often evidence of appropriate, and often detailed, application. This appears somewhat improved from previous series, although there was still the presence of purely generic answers from some candidates.

In terms of longer responses, candidates' answers were generally well attempted, with evidence of an increasing awareness of the requirements of "evaluate" questions.

Candidates who achieved higher marks supported their answers with evidence from research studies, therapies and theories, amongst other points. Candidates would benefit from knowing what is required from the different command verbs, in order to support their understanding of what the question is asking.

Question 1

Many candidates identified generic strengths with an absence of clear links to the Raine et al study, and therefore did not gain A01 credit. It was clear in many answers they knew the strength but could not provide accurate ways of answering this. Candidates who did give credit-worthy answers often demonstrated a lack of justification to the evaluation point, and so were unable to gain credit for the justification of the strength. Candidates that answered well had clear application to Raine et al's study, giving specific application/details from his procedure or findings, specifying murderers and clearly justifying why this was a strength.

1 You will have learned about the classic study by Raine et al. (1997).

Explain **two** strengths of Raine et al's (1997) study.

Strength 1

Used ~~brain~~ a PET brain scan, which gives the study scientific credibility as there was a ~~see~~ scientific method used. This then can also provide the study with being able to establish a cause-and-effect relationship.

Strength 2

~~The size of the sample~~ The participants that participated in the study (NGRI) were taken off of any medication they were on for 2 weeks prior to the study. This makes the results more reliable and internally valid as it makes the study more likely to be able to measure what was set out to measure.

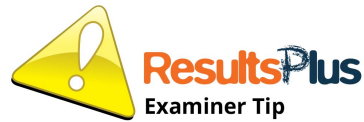
(Total for Question 1 = 4 marks)



The 'strength' is generic evaluation of a PET scan, without any links to the Raine et al study. As such, this does not gain credit.

The 'weakness' gains marks. It is explicitly relevant to the study, and the justification of why this is a weakness is clear.

2 marks



Be able to justify strengths and weaknesses

Question 2 (a)

Most candidates could write the correct correlational hypothesis for one mark but quite often were not clear in terms of what they were measuring within their biological practical. Operationalising the hypothesis, as in previous series, was absent in many responses.

There were occasions when candidates identified the aim of their practical rather than a hypothesis. A minority of candidates answered with other practical investigations, such as cognitive psychology.

2 You were required to carry out a practical investigation in biological psychology.

(a) State the hypothesis for your practical investigation in biological psychology.

Aggression & height

(2)

There will be a correlation between self-rated aggression and height.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The correlation between height and aggression is basic, with no further operationalization.

1 mark

2 You were required to carry out a practical investigation in biological psychology.

(a) State the hypothesis for your practical investigation in biological psychology.

(2)

There will be a ^{relationship} ~~relationship~~ ~~correlation~~ between self-rated levels of aggression, and height (in cm)



In comparison with the other example, there is clear operationalization of the same hypothesis.

2 marks

Question 2 (b)

Many candidates were able to identify an appropriate ethical consideration. The considerations were often underdeveloped in relation to the application to their biological practical investigation.

(b) Describe **one** ethical consideration you accounted for during your practical investigation in biological psychology.

(2)

I had to explain to my participant before hand that they were free to withdraw from the experiment whenever they liked. For example, if they felt uneasy when answering the aggression questions.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The ethical consideration (right to withdraw) is identified. Many students gained this mark.

This candidate further applies the ethical consideration correctly to their practical investigation, and therefore also achieves the A02 mark.

2 marks



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Make clear reference to the practical investigation in your answer

This allows access to A02 application marks

Question 2 (c)

There were many generic answers in relation to the Spearman's Rho.

A large number of responses quoted the numerical values of their Spearman's rho outcome from their biological practical rather than description of the outcome.

When candidates had read the question carefully, their answers were usually excellent in terms of what the question was asking: application to their biological practical.

(c) Describe the outcome of your Spearman's rho test for your practical investigation in biological psychology.

(2)

The Spearman's rho test results showed that there was no significant correlation between height and self-rated levels of aggression. The observed value was lower than the critical value which meant no significant conclusion could be made.



This response gains 1 mark for the description of the Spearman's rho outcome.

No further mark is given due to the remainder of the response being generic, and therefore not credit-worthy for an application question.

1 mark

Question 2 (d)

Improvements to the biological practical were quite often answered by identifying weaknesses and then how to improve upon the identified weakness for the second mark.

There were many generic answers that could have applied to any practical on their course. A number of candidates focussed upon weaknesses of the study, without attempting to identify an area for improvement. Where justification of an improvement was attempted, this was often limited in detail.

Stronger candidates would apply their improvements, giving specific details about their original sample, such as size and where they were obtained, and so clearly indicated what needed to be improved.

(d) Explain **two** improvements you could make to your practical investigation in biological psychology.

(4)

To improve it we could use a bigger sample, because we only used 30 16-17 year olds this means the results can not be generalised to anyone older or younger and therefore the sample is not representative and to make it more representative we should use more people who are younger than 16 and older than 17. Also, aggression scores were ~~real~~ found out through completing many questions about how angry certain situations make you, therefore to make this more accurate, use ~~as~~ people may have lied so they didn't look bad, ratings from friends and family should be used for aggression score.

(Total for Question 2 = 10 marks)



The need for a larger sample, with an indication of what their sample was, gains an AO2 mark.

There is evidence of identification of the weakness within this response. The improvement is then justified in relation to making the data more representative.

The comment relating to aggression scores identifies a weakness – 'They may have lied' – and suggests rating from others as the improvement (A02).

There is no justification of why this would be a valid improvement to gain the A03 mark.

3 marks

Question 3 (a)

There were many attempts to make the question apply to the stem, by referring to Belinda's name. Application to the content of the scenario in terms of the child's aggression or taking of toys was less evident.

More-able candidates used key terminology associated with Freud's theory – specifically the id and catharsis. They explained these terms with reference to Belinda and applied them to specific aggressive behaviours.

A minority of candidates focussed upon Freud's psychosexual stages of development. Despite the presence of some inaccuracies in relation to Freud's theory, the majority of candidates answered this question correctly and achieved good marks. They were able to apply the scenario to Belinda.

There was an absence of entirely generic responses without reference, in any form, to Belinda.

3 Belinda is an 11-month-old child whose parents were recently contacted by her nursery staff. They informed Belinda's parents that Belinda is aggressive towards other children. She has pushed other children over, taken their toys, and has shouted at the nursery staff.

(a) Describe how Freud's psychodynamic theory could explain Belinda's aggressive behaviour.

(3)

Freud's psychodynamic theory would explain that Belinda has a strong Id for her personality. Id acts on the pleasure principle, meaning that if it's not satisfied it becomes frustrated resulting in aggression. Belinda was aggressive towards children by pushing them and taking toys away, because her Id wasn't satisfied. The nursery staff may have asked Belinda to do something she didn't want to so she got frustrated. Belinda is only 11 months old meaning her super-ego hasn't yet developed. Therefore she has no morality principle which is why she doesn't feel guilty or apologise to the staff or children.



All comments are related to the scenario.

Initial description of id does not gain credit.
Application to Belinda and the id is creditworthy.

Further marks are given for:

- superego being underdeveloped due to her age
- reference to the morality principle, applied to a lack of guilt within the nursery

3 marks

Question 3 (b)

There were many examples of generic responses evaluating Freud, rather than his theory of aggression.

The strengths of the explanation for some, came across as more of a conclusion of Freud's theory than an evaluative point. Good examples focussed their strength around wider application of the explanation and catharsis.

Candidates showed a greater knowledge of the weaknesses of the explanation than the strengths. As with other questions in this paper, attempts at justification of the strength or weakness were typically generic, with a lack of application to Freud's theories.

(b) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of Freud's psychodynamic explanation of aggression.

(4)

Strength

It outlines reasonable explanations for why we behave in certain ways.

Weakness

It does not consider other theories of aggression such as hormones, brain structure and evolution and this makes it too reductionist.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Strength is insufficient to gain credit.

Weakness identifies an appropriate weakness, which is justified.

2 marks

Question 4

This question was not attempted by a large number of candidates. Furthermore, a large proportion attempted an evaluation of a *twin* study rather than an *adoption* study, which was not credit-worthy. A minority of candidates undertook an evaluation of adoption studies in general, rather than relating it to a specific adoption study.

Common adoption studies attempted were that of Heston (1966) and Kety et al (1968). A mixed range of abilities was evident when evaluating an appropriate adoption study.

Description of an appropriate study was often detailed, when present. More-able candidates provided information relating to a number of details, including aims, participant information, clinical diagnoses and methodology.

Evaluations, including those amongst the more-able candidates, often included generic evaluation, rather than specific application to the chosen study. As a levels-based question it was important to consider that an A01/A03 response was required, which needed an equal emphasis on knowledge and understanding versus evaluation and conclusion.

Those candidates who scored highly on both skills were able to demonstrate accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of a specific adoption study. This A01 knowledge was usually embedded within a logical evaluation throughout their answers, rather than evaluation being presented in isolation following a separate description of the study. This, therefore, allowed candidates to demonstrate logical chains of reasoning throughout, displaying an awareness of competing arguments, with a balanced conclusion.

The most-able candidates provided knowledge and evaluated through each statement or paragraph within their answer, allowing them to access quickly and efficiently the logical chains of reasoning throughout their answers, which then usually resulted in a balanced conclusion.

4 Evaluate one adoption study that you have learned about in biological psychology.

(8)

One adoption study we learned about is Kety et al, who researched the aim of whether schizophrenia had a more genetic basis for development & onset or did environment have an influence.

Kety Et al's findings of schizophrenia having a more genetic basis, with biological families having higher concordance rates than those than adoptive family members have high generalisability to those in similar situations due to a large sample in terms of MZ & DZ twins being used. However, all participants were selected from the Danish adoption house in Copenhagen therefore meaning results are more difficult to generalise to wider cultures outside of Denmark across the world.

Kety Et al also had high reliability within the ~~main~~ adoption study. 4 psychologist analysed mental health records of biological & adoptive relatives of the twins which in turn gives high interrater reliability. However, in terms of validity, the process of ranking adoptive & biological relatives using a schizophrenic disorder spectrum scale & placing relatives into categories is rather subjective - each participant will have been slightly different & may have been wrongly grouped, lowering the internal validity of Kety's study.

In terms of ethics, Kety Et al's study was fairly low in terms of gaining full informed consent. Data obtained from

relatives mental health records was gained without many of their consent or awareness. However, at this time in Denmark, Kety et al was not acting unlawfully as it was fully legal to access health records freely without consent.

In conclusion, Kety Et als study was not the greatest in terms of ethics & validity or generalisability, however these negatives are potentially justifiable by its uses to society. Finding schizophrenia to have a genetic basis allows for parents to be informed of the disorder & in turn help put actions in place to help reduce the childs stress & spot early signs to ensure diagnosis - ultimately improving quality of life.



The candidate begins to answer their question with an outline of the aims of Kety et al's study.

The second paragraph incorporates both description of the study and evaluation. There is no further description of the study throughout the response.

The third and fourth paragraphs continue to evaluate the study accurately in terms of reliability, validity and ethics.

A conclusion is evident.

Overall, the candidate demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of the study. They produce largely coherent chains of reasoning, resulting in a conclusion being present.

Level 3

6 marks

Question 5 (a)

Many candidates who described correctly a brief point about non-participant observation, then found it difficult to achieve more than one mark for this. The most common description given was that it was an observation that the researcher would not interact with participants. There was limited further expansion beyond this. Some candidates gave examples, but these only replicated the point already made.

Those candidates who gave higher-achieving answers expanded their definitions, and typically included reference to include overt/covert observations, which were explained and applied to non-participants. As with previous years, there were still some candidates evaluating within their answers, when this is a 'describe' question.

- 5** Malcolm carried out a non-participant observation in a local nursery to find out whether older children or younger children are more aggressive.

(a) Describe non-participant observation as a human research method.

(3)

Non-participant observation is when someone observes others doing an activity of sorts and he/she doesn't take part (only observes). In this case, Malcolm won't get involved with the children at the nursery as he is only observing.



One mark is given for a description of observing others but not taking part.

There is no additional credit for the example because it adds no additional description of non-participant observation.

1 mark



Do not repeat what you have already written

Present a range of information according to the number of marks available

Question 5 (b)

This was another question that a number of students did not attempt, though less so than for other questions.

There was a degree of confusion amongst a large number of candidates who discussed sampling of participants, rather than event sampling. Additional common incorrect answers focussed on where the study was conducted or putting on an 'event' to observe. Many candidates answered this incorrectly, which suggested a degree of guesswork on the part of the candidates.

There was at times limited application beyond reference to Malcolm, and not always consistently applied within a response. Those candidates who gave credit-worthy answers often focussed on the recording of aggressive behavior when it was observed. There was limited consideration to other elements of the event sampling, ie establishing categories of behaviour prior to this.

(b) Describe how Malcolm could use event sampling in his non-participant observation at the local nursery.

(2)

Malcolm could use event sampling by listing aggressive behaviours that could occur, such as hitting or shouting, and tallying them into categories 'younger child' or 'older child' when he sees the behaviours.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

One mark is given for a description of listing aggressive behaviour and an example of aggressive behaviour.

A second mark is awarded for tallying them into categories with an example that is relevant to scenario.

2 marks



Ensure that examples provide additional value to the response

Question 5 (c)

This question was answered well by the majority of candidates. Some did not apply the middle value element for this type of calculation.

Question 5 (d)

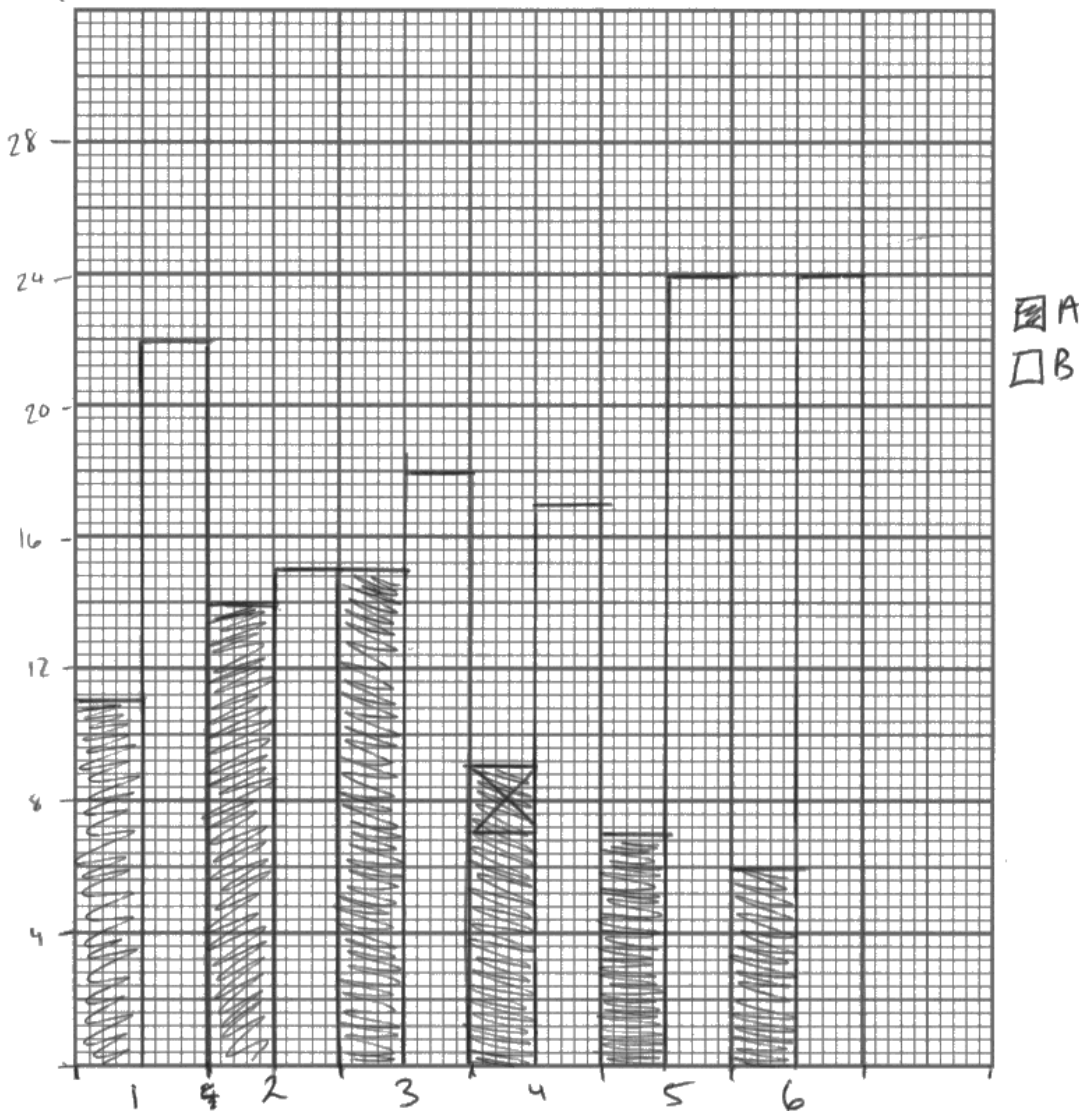
This question was answered relatively well by the majority of candidates. Titles were typically detailed. Where marks were lost, this was usually in relation to the correct labeling of the axes, with some candidates choosing to label the bars, rather than the axes.

(d) Draw a bar chart to display the mean number of aggressive acts for children aged one to two years old (Group A) and for children aged three to four years old (Group B), as shown in **Table 1**.

(3)

Title

A bar chart to display the mean number of aggressive acts for children aged one to two years and 3 to four years





One mark is given for the correct title.

Labelling of the axes and plotting of the data is inaccurate.

1 mark



Know how to plot data correctly within a bar chart, to avoid confusion with other types of graphs

Question 5 (e)

Many candidates could identify a participant variable, although the ability to explain it well in terms of the context was not always evident.

There was some confusion for several candidates between *participant* variables and *situational* variables. As has been consistent in other questions in which a justification was required, the justification was often absent or poorly expressed. There were indications of candidates elaborating on the variable identified, rather than justifying the response.

Common variables expressed included the identification of developmental issues, such as the presence of ADHD, and gender.

(e) Explain **one** participant variable that Malcolm could have controlled for when planning his observation at the local nursery.

(2)

A participant variable that could have been controlled is the gender of participants as he could have only talked participants that are males showing aggressive behaviour compared to participants who were females and displaying aggressive behaviour.

(Total for Question 5 = 11 marks)



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

One mark is given for the relevant participant variable of gender.

No second mark is given, because there is no justification of this participant variable.

1 mark



When directed to 'explain', justify your response, rather than providing elaboration: elaboration does not meet the requirements for A03

Question 6

There was a clear preference for flooding being used as a treatment for Matilda's phobia, despite other treatment options also being appropriate.

There was often inclusion of description of the treatment, rather than application of the treatment to the context of Matilda's phobia of buttons. Most candidates were able to apply the treatment to the scenario sufficiently to gain at least half of the available marks. Few candidates were able to write with sufficient depth to gain all available marks. A number of the candidates did not attempt to apply to the scenario at all.

- 6** Matilda has been diagnosed with a phobia of buttons. She has been undergoing systematic desensitisation therapy for three months, which has been unsuccessful. Her therapist has decided to try an alternative treatment for her phobia.

Describe **one treatment**, other than systematic desensitisation, that the therapist could use with Matilda.

The therapist ~~could~~ could use flooding. Flooding is where the person with the phobia, Matilda, is stuck in a room full of what she is scared of and can't come out until she has overcome ~~their~~ her fear. It works because she will become too exhausted from the amount of stress and panic to be scared of the buttons. However, in some cases the participant has come out with a ~~worse~~ phobia, stronger feeling towards the phobia.



One mark is given for the description of Matilda being 'stuck in a room and can't come out'.

A second mark is given for the reference to her becoming exhausted.

No mark is given for the final sentence, which is generic and not applied to Matilda.

2 marks

Question 7 (a)

This question appeared to be a question that candidates were either able to answer in full detail, or not able to answer at all.

When the question was answered accurately, frequent responses related to examples of sources used, tallying and counting up words and phrases etc. More-able candidates used key phrases such as 'coding units' and an explanation of gathering quantitative and qualitative data.

The outcome of this question suggests there to be a need for further development of knowledge of content analysis.

7 (a) Describe content analysis as a research method used in psychology.

(4)

Content analysis is used when analysing content or themes in the media such as TV and broadcasting. It consists of ~~the~~ creating common themes found in a text or piece of media and dividing them into categories whereby you then tally each time something occurs from each category. As a result of this it allows you to compare different aspects and themes and you can even turn it into quantitative data through tallying.



One mark is given for a description of analysing content or themes.

One mark is given within the second sentence for 'creating common themes'.

A third mark is given for tallying each time something occurs from that category.

The fourth mark is given for the results allowing for comparison, through use of quantitative data.

4 marks

Question 7 (b)

This question was answered quite well by many candidates, mainly in terms of subjective interpretation.

Few candidates developed their answers for an additional mark.

Some candidates attempted to apply their response to examples, which was often done well.

(b) Explain **one** weakness of content analysis as a research method used in psychology.

(2)

Initially, ~~because~~ ^{because} the data ~~is~~ ^{is} collected from secondary sources, ~~obtained qualitatively~~ ^{obtained qualitatively} sources, ~~then~~ the researcher has to personally interpret data. This means that the data generated is subjective and biased.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

One mark is given for identification of subjectivity as a weakness of content analysis.

The second mark is given for justification of the weakness in terms of secondary sources because the researcher has to interpret them personally.

2 marks

Question 8

Generally, the majority of candidates demonstrated knowledge of Watson & Raynor's study of Little Albert. More-able candidates demonstrated a breadth of knowledge, including aims, procedure and findings. Less-able candidates tended to report on procedure only.

Candidates gaining Level 3 and Level 4 responses gave a range of A03 points, well-applied. Most frequently, evaluation focussed on ethics, application and generalisability. However, less-able candidates focussed mainly on ethics and sample problems, with limited application to the study.

There were occasions in which some candidates focussed only on evaluation, overlooking a description of the study.

The volume of information provided for this question often resulted in additional paper being used. In such situations there was a mixture of candidates documenting many different, yet relevant points, and those who were somewhat repetitive in their description and evaluation. As a result, the amount written did not always correlate with marks awarded.

As a levels-based question it was important to note that an A01/A03 response was required, which needed to show an equal emphasis between knowledge and understanding versus evaluation and conclusion.

Therefore, those candidates who scored highly on both skills were able to demonstrate accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding of the Little Albert study. This A01 knowledge was usually embedded within a logical evaluation throughout their answer, not just in the second half of the response. This, therefore, allowed candidates to demonstrate logical chains of reasoning throughout, displaying an awareness of competing arguments with a balanced conclusion.

The most-able candidates demonstrated knowledge and evaluated through each statement or paragraph within their answer, allowing them to access the logical chains of reasoning quickly and efficiently throughout their answers, which then usually resulted in a balanced conclusion.

8 You will have learned about the classic study by Watson and Rayner (1920) Little Albert.

Evaluate the classic study by Watson and Rayner (1920) Little Albert.

(8)

The Little Albert study lacks generalisability. The study was performed with one 11 month old, white, male child. The small sample size (of one) means that it cannot be generalised to the wider population. The ethnicity and gender also mean that it could only be representative of white males should the sample size have been bigger. The evidence shows that it is questionable whether the results have any significant generalisability.

The results do however have a high level of experimental validity. The experiment was undertaken in lab conditions which means it was well controlled. In contrast to this the experiment does lack ecological validity. The likely likelihood of a situation like this happening in real life is extremely low as you will not hear a loud and arguably traumatizing noise when you see a rat. This can then be linked back to the previous point where

we question how far the results can be generalised to a real life situation.

In addition to this, the ethics of Watson and Raynor's study are questionable. We could begin by arguing whether or not 'little Albert' was protected from harm.

Many would argue he was deliberately subjected to harm in the form of the two rods being hit to create the loud noise. ~~It~~ It could be argued further that Watson and Raynor should have reversed the process so as to protect him from harm in the future. Lack of consent can also be argued as consent was given by his mother and was not the full informed consent from himself.

In conclusion Watson and Raynor's study did show that a fear could be conditioned however lacks generalisability and high ethical standards.



The first paragraph includes a brief description of the study, with an evaluation of this description relating to generalisability.

The second paragraph is predominantly evaluation, as is the third paragraph. The third paragraph includes a brief reference to noise being created. A conclusion is present.

The response demonstrates isolated knowledge and understanding of Watson & Rayner's study. The evaluation is well-developed in places and demonstrates logical chains of reasoning.

This response demonstrates a response in which there was a significant difference in the abilities across the two AOs.

6 marks

Level 3

Question 9

This question yielded a great variety of answers in terms of candidate responses. Many candidates were able to apply the Harrison study in terms of both operant conditioning (which they did seem to do better) but for some they also applied it very well, mainly to accurate brain functioning. Some candidates did not provide reference to brain functioning but other areas of biological psychology, such as hormones. As a result, these candidates did not fulfill this requirement of the question.

Most candidates demonstrated very little A01, and instead focussed on A02. There were occasions when A01 content lapsed, with greater emphasis on evaluation, which did influence the level awarded. Descriptive points tended to be a description of elements of operant conditioning.

Application to Harrison and the content of the scenario were evident in almost all responses. There was a number of candidates who focussed only A02. When present, it was applied in detail. Common applications related to positive reinforcements citing specific aspects, such as Harrison being cheered on by peers.

Evaluation was attempted for many and in some cases completed very well. Evaluation was present to a lesser degree than A02 content. Some candidates used research to support their arguments. Less-able candidates would not highlight this as A03, so this had to be identified by the examiner. More-able candidates would clearly identify such comments as evaluation.

As a levels-based question, it was important to note that an A01/A02/A03 response was required. This needed to show an equal emphasis between knowledge and understanding versus application versus judgment and conclusion.

Those candidates who scored highly on all skills were able to demonstrate accurate and thorough knowledge. They showed understanding of the extent to which both operant conditioning and brain functioning could explain and evaluate aggressive behaviour. They applied this effectively to the scenario. This A01 knowledge was displayed with sustained application to the context. They displayed logical chains of reasoning embedded throughout their answers, not just as a standalone evaluation. This allowed such candidates to demonstrate an awareness of competing arguments throughout their answer, leading to a balanced response.

The most-able candidates provided answers that did not only provide context-specific knowledge then evaluate what was being asked in the question. Rather, they demonstrated knowledge and evaluated through each statement or paragraph. This allowed candidates to access the balanced judgment/decision elements of the level banding quickly and efficiently.

9 Harrison and two of his friends were arrested for fighting whilst watching their local football club play against a rival team. During the fight Harrison's friends cheered him on and encouraged him to fight supporters from the opposing team. Harrison was arrested by the police and did not see the rest of the football match.

Evaluate how operant conditioning and brain functioning could explain Harrison's aggressive behaviour. You must make reference to the context in your answer.

(12)

The first thing that could be of trouble in Harrison's brain that caused him to be aggressive could lie in the way his brain functions.

Harrison could have previously suffered damage to his pre-frontal cortex that causes him to act aggressively. An example of this comes from the case study of Phineas Gage who suffered damage to his prefrontal cortex which caused him to suffer from being much quicker to aggression. This could be similar to Harrison and be a cause of why he acted aggressive.

Another thing that may have caused Harrison to fight may have been his friends. This could be because Harrison sees his friends as role models and when they encouraged him to ~~an~~ fight he saw this as the right thing to do as they may be of his gender and as they are his role models this caused him to act differently than what he usually would resulting in him being arrested.



The first paragraph provides an introduction to the essay.

The second paragraph identifies damage to the pre-frontal cortex as an explanation, which is supported by evaluation using research.

The third paragraph discusses role models, which is not operant conditioning.

There is an absence of any conclusion.

The response demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge. Application to the context is limited. There is limited supporting evidence provided.

3 marks

Level 1

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure that justification is provided where needed within the questions, to access A03 marks, and that attempts at justification are not further elaboration
- When being asked about A02 – skill application to a specific scenario or practical – it is important that responses are very clearly linked, to avoid generic answers
- Within evaluation extended response questions candidates should attempt to provide some description within the question, rather than the provision of only evaluative comments

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>

