



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2012**

Psychology A

PSYA2

(Specification 2180)

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

Final

Mark Scheme

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SECTION A BIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Question 1 a

AO1 = 3 marks Knowledge of main features of pituitary-adrenal system

Main features of pituitary-adrenal system are that the hypothalamus communicates with the pituitary gland causing it to release ACTH. This hormone is then detected in the bloodstream by the adrenal cortex, which then releases corticosteroids such as cortisol and corticosterone. The corticosteroids have a range of effects such as causing the liver to release glucose.

An accurate diagram could also receive credit.

1 mark for a brief outline and 3 marks for a correct and coherent outline of the system.

Reference to acute or chronic stress is not relevant.

Question 1 b

AO1 = 3 marks Knowledge of main features of Sympathomedullary pathway

Main features of the Sympathomedullary pathway are that the hypothalamus activates the sympathetic nervous system, which then stimulates the adrenal medulla to release the hormones adrenaline and noradrenaline into the bloodstream. This gets the body ready for fight-or-flight, eg increase blood pressure and heart rate.

An accurate diagram could also receive credit.

1 mark for a brief outline and 3 marks for a correct and coherent outline of the system.

Candidates who simply mention “the adrenal gland” without specifying whether it is the cortex or medulla do not gain credit for that part of their answer.

Reference to acute or chronic stress is not relevant.

Question 2

AO1 = 4 marks Knowledge of research
AO2 = 4 marks Evaluation of research

Research could include the development of Holmes & Rahe's social readjustment rating scale and/or the use of the scale but candidates must make it clear which aspect they are referring to. They could also include Rahe et al study of naval personnel that showed there was a positive correlation between LCU score and illness. **Any other relevant study can receive credit, but it must be explicitly linked to life changes.**

The evaluation can consider methodological issues: correlations cannot indicate cause and effect; individual differences in how life events are interpreted; rating scale is completed retrospectively. Candidates could also use daily hassles as evaluation, ie it is better to look at small daily events than the less common but larger ones.

Examiners should be aware of depth/breadth trade-off. Candidates can offer one piece of research/study in detail or more than one but in less detail or an overview of what research has shown without reference to a specific study.

AO1 Knowledge of research
4 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of research into life events. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.
3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.
2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

AO2 Evaluation of research
4 marks Effective evaluation Effective commentary that demonstrates sound evaluation of research into life changes.
3 marks Reasonable evaluation Reasonable commentary that demonstrates some evaluation of research into life changes.
2 marks Basic evaluation Basic commentary on research into life changes.
1 mark Rudimentary Rudimentary, muddled, commentary on research into life changes, demonstrating very limited knowledge.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 3

AO2 = 6 marks Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of workplace stress.

The stem suggests several aspects of the workplace that could be responsible for Brett's days off. He might be affected by a lack of control in his environment, having to keep to tight deadlines, the fact that his pay is dependent on the performance of his colleagues. Candidates do not have to refer to all these factors, but they do need to show some engagement with the stem in their answer. They also must refer to psychological research into workplace stress.

- Answers that merely show knowledge of relevant aspects of research, up to 3 marks.
- Answers that merely engage with stem but do not provide relevant research, up to 3 marks.
- Answers that make no reference to relevant aspects of research and also no engagement with the stem, 0 marks.

Candidates do not have to refer to specific studies but what research has shown is creditworthy.

There are several studies that could be used to illustrate Brett's behaviour, Johansson et al; Marmot et al; Van der Doef & Maes; credit should be given to any relevant study ie one explicitly looking at stress in the workplace. Candidates could also include factors about stress and personality, but for top bands they must shape their answer to workplace stress.

AO2 Analysis of unfamiliar situation and application of knowledge of workplace stress.
6 marks Effective analysis of unfamiliar situation Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of factors that affect stress in the workplace as applied to Brett. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.
5 - 4 marks Reasonable analysis of unfamiliar situation Reasonable explanation of factors that affect stress in the workplace as applied to Brett. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.
3 - 2 marks Basic Basic explanation of factors that affect stress in the workplace but lacks detail and may be muddled.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Rudimentary, muddled consideration of factors that affect stress in the workplace, demonstrating very limited knowledge.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 4

A03 = 4 marks Knowledge and understanding of research methods

Candidates are asked why different findings/conclusions might be obtained by using questionnaires and interviews. They might refer to such issues as:

- People may or may not be more honest in a questionnaire than when faced directly with an interviewer.
- With an interview people have the opportunity to ask if they don't understand a question.
- In an interview people have a greater opportunity to use their own words to express themselves and can say exactly what they want.
- Interview can be more flexible, especially if using unstructured interview.

Any other relevant issue can be credited.

Examiners should be sensitive of breadth/depth trade-off. There could be one explanation in detail or more than one in less detail.

There is no requirement to engage with the stem although this would be creditworthy.

A03 Knowledge and understanding of research methods
4 marks Effective explanation Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of possible difference in results.
3 marks Reasonable explanation Reasonable explanation that demonstrates knowledge of possible difference in results.
2 marks Basic explanation Basic explanation of possible difference in results.
1 mark Rudimentary Rudimentary, muddled, explanation of possible difference in results, demonstrating very limited knowledge.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

SECTION B SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Question 5

AO3 = 4 marks Interpretation of data

The data suggest that the confederates have a considerable influence on whether or not the participant obeys; candidates could consider the implications of the difference between 92.5% and 10%. They might consider whether the confederates are acting as role models, informing the participant how to behave. Credit could also include comparison of power of confederates with power of having the experimenter in the same room.

The question is not just asking candidates to describe the data in the table, but to consider the effect that the confederates have, to access the top bands answers need to be shaped to fit the question.

AO3 Interpretation of data
4 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of what the data suggest about obedience. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.
3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.
2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 6

AO1 = 6 marks Knowledge and understanding of research into conformity

Candidates may offer any research that is relevant to conformity. The most likely studies are those by Asch, Crutchfield, Sherif, Perrin and Spencer; but any other relevant study is creditworthy. Zimbardo's prison study investigated conforming to social roles and is also creditworthy. An alternative approach may also include Normative Social Influence and Informational Social Influence as well as types of conformity.

AO1 Knowledge and understanding
6 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed description that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of research into conformity. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question.
5 - 4 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate description that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.
3 - 2 marks Basic Basic description that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed description demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

AO2 = 6 marks Evaluation of research into conformity

The evaluation may be in terms of methodological issues such as the artificiality of laboratory research; cultural and historical bias; ethical issues. For example, Asch's studies were carried out in America in the 1950s and have been criticized as only being relevant to that particular culture and in that historical time. When Perrin and Spence replicated Asch's study they did not find such high levels of conformity.

Candidates who focus on explanations as AO1 could use research to support such explanations as their AO2.

AO2 Application of knowledge and understanding
6 marks Effective evaluation Effective use of material to address the question and provide informed commentary. Effective evaluation of research. Broad range of issues and/or evidence in reasonable depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Clear expression of ideas, good range of specialist terms, few errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
5 - 4 marks Reasonable evaluation Material is not always used effectively but produces a reasonable commentary. Reasonable evaluation of research. A range of issues and/or evidence in limited depth, or a narrower range in greater depth. Reasonable expression of ideas, a range of specialist terms, some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3 - 2 marks Basic evaluation The use of material provides only a basic commentary. Basic evaluation of research. Superficial consideration of a restricted range of issues and/or evidence. Expression of ideas lacks clarity, some specialist terms used; errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling detract from clarity.
1 mark Rudimentary evaluation The use of material provides only a rudimentary commentary. Evaluation of research is just discernible or absent. Expression of ideas poor, few specialist terms used, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling often obscure the meaning.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 7

AO1 = 4 marks Knowledge of locus of control

Locus of control is how much a person believes that they have control over events that happen in their lives. This is usually measured along a scale with internal control at one end and external control at the other. Internal control refers to those people who see that they have a great deal of control over their own behaviour and will take responsibility for their own actions. External control refers to those who believe that their behaviour is controlled by other forces such as luck or fate.

No reference to internal/external limit to max 2 marks.

AO1 Knowledge of locus of control
4 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of locus of control. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question and explicit reference to internal and external control.
3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question and explicit reference to internal and/or external control.
2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 8

A02 = 4 marks Explanation of minority influence in social change

Unlike majority influence, which maintains the status quo, minority influence brings about social change. If a minority is consistent, flexible and non-dogmatic, they can challenge the beliefs held by the majority. Over time, through the snowball effect the minority becomes the majority and their beliefs become widely held. Sometimes through social crypto-amnesia, the original source of the influence is forgotten. Candidates may refer to research such as that by Moscovici, but the focus of the answer should be on explaining social change, rather than on describing his research itself.

A02 Explanation of minority influence in social change
4 marks Effective explanation Effective explanation that demonstrates sound knowledge of the role of minority influence in social change.
3 marks Reasonable explanation Reasonable explanation that demonstrates knowledge of the role of minority influence in social change.
2 marks Basic explanation Basic explanation of the role of minority influence in social change.
1 mark Rudimentary Rudimentary, muddled, explanation of the role of minority influence in social change demonstrating very limited knowledge.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

SECTION C INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

Question 9 a

AO1 = 3 marks **Outline one definition of abnormality
(apart from deviation from social norms)**

Candidates may choose any definition: deviation from ideal mental health and failure to function adequately are named on the specification. However, other definitions such as statistical infrequency are also creditworthy.

1 mark for identifying the definition and a further 2 marks for elaboration.

Question 9 b

AO2 = 4 marks **Evaluation of one definition of abnormality**

The evaluation must be relevant to the definition given in 9(a).

Failure to Function Adequately:

- Context is very important when deciding whether someone is functioning adequately; what may seem irrational in one context can be seen as rational in another. This limits the definition.
- Cultural relativism is an issue, what is considered adequate in one culture is not necessarily adequate in another. This also makes it difficult for this to be a universal definition.

Deviation from Ideal Mental Health:

- The characteristics are very strict and it is unlikely that many people would be able to meet them all, thus being defined as abnormal.
- The definition was based on Jahoda's views of psychological health and therefore represents a very Western view.

Examiners should be aware of depth/breadth trade-off.

Credit any other relevant point of evaluation.

AO2 Evaluation of one definition of abnormality
4 marks Effective evaluation Evaluation demonstrates sound analysis and effective use of a range material to evaluate one definition of abnormality.
3 marks Reasonable evaluation Evaluation demonstrates reasonable analysis and use of material to evaluate one definition of abnormality.
2 marks Basic evaluation Evaluation demonstrates basic analysis and superficial evaluation of one definition of abnormality.
1 mark Rudimentary evaluation Evaluation demonstrates rudimentary, muddled analysis of one definition of abnormality.
0 Marks No creditworthy material

Question 10 a

A03 = 2 marks Knowledge and understanding of research methods

A case study is an in-depth study of one person or a group of people over time. It is usually carried out in the real world. They are idiographic and very individualistic.

1 mark for a basic answer and a further mark for elaboration. Note that the answer does not have to be linked to psychopathology.

Question 10 b

A03 = 2 marks Weakness of research methods

Weakness of case study:

- Findings cannot be generalised very easily to other individuals.
- The information gathered is often based on retrospective data, which might not be accurate.
- Because it is very difficult to replicate a case study they lack reliability.
- As case studies are unique situations it is difficult to generalise (to other situations).

1 mark for a basic answer and a further mark for elaboration.

Note that the answer does not need to be linked to psychopathology.

Reference to ethical issues are not creditworthy.

Question 11

A01 = 2 marks Knowledge of cognitive approach to psychopathology

Abnormal behaviour is learned in the same way as normal behaviour.	
Abnormality is caused by distorted thoughts.	✓
Abnormality is caused by unresolved childhood conflicts.	
Abnormal behaviour is the result of irrational beliefs.	✓
Abnormality is due to damage to the brain.	

Question 12

AO1 = 5 marks Knowledge of Biological approach to psychopathology

The biological approach to psychopathology believes that disorders have an organic or physical cause. The focus of this approach is on genetics, neurotransmitters, neurophysiology, neuroanatomy etc. The approach argues that mental disorders are related to the physical structure and functioning of the brain. Therapies are also creditworthy, however simple description of therapies would not gain more than basic marks unless the underlying rationale is explicit.

For full marks there must be an explicit link to psychopathology.

AO1 Knowledge of Biological approach to psychopathology
5 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of key features of the biological approach to psychopathology. There is appropriate selection of material to address the question. There is explicit reference made to psychopathology.
4 - 3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge and understanding. There is some evidence of selection of material to address the question.
2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge and understanding but lacks detail and may be muddled. There is little evidence of selection of material to address the question.
1 mark Very brief/flawed or inappropriate Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge. Selection and presentation of information is largely or wholly inappropriate.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Question 13

AO2 = 6 marks Evaluation of psychoanalysis

The evaluation might consider:

- Therapy is very time-consuming and is unlikely to provide answers quickly.
- People must be prepared to invest a lot of time and money into the therapy; they must be motivated.
- They might discover some painful and unpleasant memories that had been repressed, which causes them more distress.
- This type of therapy does not work for all people and for all types of disorders.

Evaluation which is focused on the psychodynamic approach can be credited as long as it is used to evaluate the therapy.

A02
Evaluation of psychoanalysis
6 marks Effective evaluation Evaluation demonstrates sound analysis and effective use of a range material to evaluate psychoanalysis.
5 - 4 marks Reasonable evaluation Evaluation demonstrates reasonable analysis and use of material to evaluate psychoanalysis.
3 - 2 marks Basic evaluation Evaluation demonstrates basic analysis and superficial evaluation of psychoanalysis.
1 mark Rudimentary evaluation Evaluation demonstrates rudimentary, muddled analysis and or evaluation.
0 Marks No creditworthy material.

Assessment Objectives

Question	AO1 Mark	AO2 Mark	AO3 Mark
Biological			
1	3 + 3		
2	4	4	
3		6	
4			4
Total	10	10	4
Social			
5			4
6	6	6	
7	4		
8		4	
Total	10	10	4
Individual Differences			
9	3	4	
10			4
11	2		
12	5		
13		6	
Total	10	10	4

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