



**General Certificate of Secondary Education  
June 2011**

**Psychology**

**41801**

**(Specification 4180)**

**Unit 1: Making Sense of Other People**

***Report on the Examination***

---

Further copies of this Report on **the** Examination are available from: [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)

Copyright © 2011 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

**Copyright**

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).  
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

## **Unit 1 Making Sense of Other People (41801)**

### ***General comments***

This was the second Unit 1 examination under the new specification. Most candidates completed every item and so there were not many blank responses. It was also apparent that this year's candidates benefitted from lessons learned after the 2010 paper. In particular, although they still found questions relating to 'implications' of research studies very challenging, there has been an improvement in performance in this area.

Answers to all multiple-choice type questions were good to excellent.

Since the demise of coursework in GCSE Psychology, there is a noticeable decline in candidates' ability to answer items which relate to Research Methods; Section E of the question paper. Centres are encouraged to regard this as a priority area when developing schemes of work and devising appropriate practical activities for their candidates to undertake.

Once again this year, centres were reminded to advise their candidates to answer all questions in the spaces provided and not to write outside the box around each page or on blank pages. This is very important, as examiners are not able to see anything that is written outside these boxes. This instruction was also contained on the front page of the question paper. Again, the majority of candidates adhered to the instruction but a significant number did not.

Comments relating to candidates' performance on specific sections can be found below. It is hoped that these comments will help to inform the teaching of this unit.

### ***Section A Memory***

There were weaknesses in identifying practical applications. Many candidates described explanations, which is not what the question asked. If an application was not identified, no marks could be awarded.

Candidates showed sound knowledge of retrograde amnesia and were able to support this knowledge with explanations of anterograde amnesia. Unfortunately, a minority of candidates reversed the definitions of these terms and could not earn marks.

Most candidates could describe studies relating to eyewitness testimony. However, many descriptions were not clear. In particular, a number of candidates mixed details of more than one study together, making their descriptions unclear. This limited the marks they could earn to a maximum of 2 marks.

Candidates struggled with 1(d)(ii) with evaluations not well thought out in many cases; a lack of elaboration prevented candidates from gaining marks. 'The study lacks ecological validity' on its own will not earn any marks; it needs to be supported. For example; 'The study lacks ecological validity because watching accidents on film and being asked questions about it is not the same as a real life experience' would be awarded 2 marks as this answer makes it clear exactly how this particular study could be said to lack ecological validity.

## **Section B *Non-verbal communication***

In general, candidates found this section challenging and struggled to apply their knowledge and understanding to the questions.

Candidates were good at identifying features of posture BUT they were not good at explaining factors that might affect personal space or criticising studies. Answers tended to be vague. The presence of the picture in 2(b) seemed to distract candidates away from psychological studies. Instead many tried to describe what was in the picture to answer the question.

As stated earlier, there has been some improvement in explaining practical implications this year, but candidates still find it difficult to express themselves with clarity.

## **Section C *Development of personality***

Candidates were quite good at criticising Eysenck's type theory.

Candidates found 3(d) challenging. The full range of marks was awarded and there were some excellent answers. Knowledge of studies of Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD) was generally good. However, there were also many inaccurate descriptions which appeared to be combinations of studies rolled into one; for example, Raine's study of APD and Raine's study of aggression.

## **Section D *Stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination***

The 6-mark question was challenging but the full range of marks was awarded. Many candidates simply described research without actually saying how prejudice was being reduced.

Students should be advised not to use bullet points or headings when answering the 6-mark questions as these questions will assess candidates on their ability to use good English, organise information clearly and use specialist vocabulary where appropriate. If they do, they will not be able to enter the top band of marks and the maximum they could earn for their answers would be 4 marks.

Once again, the 'practical implications' item proved to be a challenge, although occasionally some excellent answers were seen.

## **Section E *Research methods***

Candidates showed lots of weaknesses when answering questions about research methods.

In a large number of cases, hypothesis statements often did not contain reference to both the IV and DV or an operational term.

Many candidates did not earn marks for describing how to obtain the random sample because they failed to mention the target population.

Many candidates did not understand the advantages and limitations of systematic

sampling.

5(f)(ii) was answered fairly well but many candidates did not refer to the aim and therefore could only earn a maximum of 2 marks.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html>

UMS conversion calculator [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)