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Examiners' Report
June 2011

GCSE Psychology 5PS02 01

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Introduction

As the first unit two GCSE Edexcel examination there was an impressive array of skills and knowledge displayed confidently by many candidates. This paper tested the knowledge of three key questions concerning phobias, media violence and criminality, all of which the candidates engaged with. Testing knowledge of theory, research and concepts, students demonstrated clear ability. Methodologically this paper demanded application of knowledge, and candidates clearly rose to this challenge and largely demonstrated good methodological awareness. Building upon unit one, candidates have gathered good experience of psychology and clearly presented thoughtful and logical arguments in the extended writing sections of the paper. Candidates were able to use research evidence effectively, a skill that will stand them in good stead for progression to A level study.

As with unit one, this unit uses a variety of assessment techniques ranging from multiple choice to extended writing. These assess various aspects of understanding, recognition and knowledge skills. The multiple choice, although not detailed in this report, served well in discriminating between candidates. Question 1abc tested biological knowledge. Almost all candidates were able to correctly identify that the amygdala was responsible for aggression, although they often could not pinpoint the amygdala on the picture. This often had a knock on effect with other areas of the limbic system, the two being mixed up. Many candidates correctly identified vicarious reinforcement from the example and that tallying was quantitative data. Unsurprisingly most identified that an educational psychologist worked for the education authority, although a small number felt they worked in prisons or for the health service. Around 95% of candidates correctly identified open and closed questions. Many confused social desirability with response bias and demand characteristics, but the majority of candidates showed good ethical awareness by correctly identifying that showing an actual spider would be more unethical than the other options. Three quarters of candidates correctly identified systematic desensitisation as the method used to treat little Peter, the remainder opted for flooding, which had an impact on the subsequent treatment description. 80% of candidates correctly identified that Sigall and Ostrove employed an independent measures design, 20% opted for a repeated measured design or correlation despite describing the design in the controls question and having a large hint in the question stem. Question 12 candidates found tricky, despite referring to 'most likely to result in criminality'. It is slightly worrying to think that the majority of candidates think that lack of discipline would be more likely to result in criminality than physical violence. However, candidates did well to identify self fulfilling prophecy. Responses were mixed for question 14a, many correctly identifying suspect characteristics, but often failing to identify interviewing techniques, as such the question discriminated quite well.

The remainder of this report will document non-multiple choice questions in terms of candidate performance, common answers, and offer examiners tips for future performance.

Question 1 (d)

Many candidates focused on an alternative explanation of the biological theory as one weakness, and when expanded earned credit. Some candidates made good use of animal and human studies, often collecting a second mark for a critique of evidence presented, such as animals not being similar to humans, or human studies being unique. Many candidates, however, failed to attempt this evaluation or offered description. One common mistake was to state that children may not be aggressive just because their parents are. This undermines the complexity of genetics and such a simplified answer did not warrant credit.

(d) Outline **one** weakness of the biological explanation for aggression.

(2)

The biological explanation can not be generalised to all people although there are studies which support it there are many which clash and give a different explanation such as ~~the~~ role-modelling (social learning theory).



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Examiner Comments

This candidate has hinted at issues with generalisability, without credit as it is not explained, and also hinted at evidence, again not explained. However, they did gain one mark for an alternative explanation and if role models had been elaborated there would have been a second mark awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Rather than learn a list of unexplained evaluation points, it may be preferable to learn two or three well. Make sure each point is explained fully and this can often gain more than the identification mark available.

Question 2 (a)

Over 95% of candidates were able to successfully define role model, often as 'someone we look up to' with stronger answers referring to identification.

- 2 Alistair loved driving fast cars. His neighbours disliked him because he beeped his horn and shouted at slower drivers. They said his father was just the same.

(a) Define the term 'role model'.

A person who is looked-up to from other (1)
people. The person also sets an example for others to copy



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Examiner Comments

This is a typical one mark answer.



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Examiner Tip

This question was only worth one mark, and the majority of candidates achieved this. It is worth preparing candidates to offer fuller answers, often examples help elaborate a definition.

Question 3 (a)

Almost every candidate was able to tally the findings in an appropriate manner.

Question 3 (c) (d)

Candidates found this two part question challenging, however it was pleasing to see that when presented with a novel stimulus, many candidates can appropriately apply methodological knowledge well. The first part of the question was more specific, relating to generalisability, which was more demanding. Successful candidates discussed sample bias or scale. Candidates who referred to subjectivity, researcher bias, and other such issues of reliability and validity, had to work harder to qualify their comment as an issue of generalisability. Part d was largely more successful and many candidates achieved marks with the issue of subjectivity that was explained well.

(c) Michelle concluded that violence on television has increased over time.

How might Michelle's choice of programmes affect the generalisability of her conclusion?

(2)

michelle has chosen a programme her parents^{like}, and a programme she likes. As she has grown up around her parents she may have similar likes/dislikes, so the programmes could also be quite similar. This means results cannot be generalised to programmes that are different.

(d) Identify **one** problem with Michelle's content analysis, other than generalisability, and explain how this problem may have affected the study.

(3)

Problem

content analysis is very subjective

Explanation

Different people ~~people~~ interpret aggression in different ways, so one person may think something was aggressive when another not. This makes her results less reliable as if she repeated the experiment with someone else observing, ^{the} results could be extremely different.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer has appropriately explained a possible source of sample bias and how this bias may affect the generalisability of her study. The second part explains subjectivity very well and uses key methodological terms. This answer gained full marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be comfortable with the novel methods stimulus from unit one, but it is worth practising these skills throughout unit two to keep them fresh.

Question 3 (e)

The majority of candidates engaged with the question, however, a disappointing number misunderstood the question and commented on how experiments were unethical without linking to why content analysis would be more appropriate, evaluating content analysis or referring to practical rather than ethical issues. Comparison was inferred as much as possible, but candidates should practice making their answers more explicit.

(e) Michelle really wanted to conduct an experiment into media violence, but she did a content analysis instead because it was more ethical.

Explain why a content analysis is more ethical than an experiment into media violence.

(2)

Experimenting in media violence especially when using people ~~to~~ could disturb a person or increase their levels of violence. Analysing a programme which already exists ~~goes~~ does not affect any people or ~~their~~ their rights.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer clearly engages with the question, offering a reason why content analysis is more appropriate than experimentation with enough amplification for both marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Questions such as this one are not 'straight from the specification' and assess candidate understanding of psychology rather than rote learning. In this question they are applying knowledge of both experiments and content analysis to meet the question demands. Candidates should be both aware and have experience of these questions.

Question 4 (b)

Very few candidates failed to achieve at least one mark for a role of the educational psychologist. Simple answers related the role to working in a school with children, however, there were many very impressive answers detailing the assessment of behavioural issues, liaison with agencies parents and teachers and intervention strategies.

(b) State **two** roles of an educational psychologist. (2)

First role

Analysed children that struggle with work and then help them.

Second role

Analysed children with behavioural problems.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Unfortunately some answers were repetitive and therefore achieved one mark overall. There should be two distinct roles of the educational psychologist presented.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Working through a typical case would give candidates enough information about the role of an educational psychologist; assessing a child's behaviour/needs through observation of child and interviews with parents and teachers; developing an intervention strategy, such as anger management that helps a child identify and manage anger triggers; implement staff training to help them cope with difficult behaviour and reinforce the intervention; discuss strategies with parents to reinforce at home.

Question 4 (c)

Candidates varied widely at all levels for this question, although just under half of candidates achieved one mark typically for 'educational experience'. Many candidates insisted that they should be practising teachers, which is not the case. Marks were awarded for 'Masters degree' or 'Doctorate in Educational Psychology', but not for Doctorate alone as it needs to be specific at this post graduate level. Candidates should be more careful and explicit when referring to chartered status as often it was claimed that chartered status was essential or the only qualification needed.

(c) After completing his psychology degree, Craig wanted to become an educational psychologist.

Outline what further qualifications and/or experience Craig might need.

(2)

Craig may need to have some relevant work experience such as working at a school, proving he can work well with children. Also, he may need a masters degree or higher level degree to become a chartered pt psychologist, for him to be able to be working as a qualified educational psychologist.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate gained both marks for 'experience in a school' and 'Masters degree'. This was fairly typical.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Answers concerning specific details, such as qualifications, should be clear.

Question 4 (d)

A disappointing number of candidates commented on the interpersonal skills that Craig should possess, such as being able to relate to others and communicate well, rather than detail an actual strategy. Simple answers were basic and often referred to the Peter Pan 'think happy thoughts' strategy. More successful answers detailed CBT, anger management or reinforcement as specific strategies.

(d) Once Craig is qualified, he will have to deal with children who have issues such as anger and aggression.

Outline **one** strategy Craig might be trained to use to deal with such issues.

(2)

IF the child is old enough Craig will be trained to teach the child techniques to control there anger themselves. Such as breathing techniques and knowing when there going to have anger outbursts.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Although basic, this answer presents anger management as identifying triggers and learning techniques to deal with anger, so gets both marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be conversant with specific strategies to deal with anger, and related, issues. This will prepare them for this type of question and prepare them for A level study.

Question 5 (a)

Credit was awarded for understanding the censorship role of the media and why it is used (protection). Almost all candidates were able to offer one or more of these aspects.

5 You are working as a psychologist and a television broadcasting company asks you to look at the effectiveness of the 9pm watershed.

(a) Explain the role of the 9pm watershed.

(2)

The 9pm watershed is there so programmes that may contain violence or sex cannot be broadcasted on the television until after 9pm.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer confidently deals with the censorship aspect of the watershed, but does not explain the role of the watershed being about protection of young people.

5 You are working as a psychologist and a television broadcasting company asks you to look at the effectiveness of the 9pm watershed.

(a) Explain the role of the 9pm watershed.

(2)

The watershed was enforced to prevent violence and bad language to be shown on television before 9pm. This was to stop small children from seeing anything they shouldn't or hear foul language. Programmes that are believed to have violence in them are shown after 9pm usually.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer gains both marks for dealing with censorship and protection.

Question 5 (b)

As the first experience of extended writing for this paper, candidates did well to formulate a debate for and against censorship. Strong candidates used Social Learning Theory and Bandura to argue for censorship, some mentioning William's. The against arguments tended to refer to freedom of speech, paternalistic state, exposure to uncensored media such as the Internet. Stronger against arguments cited research that indicated media violence was not prolific (content analyses) or Charlton's study. There were a number of answers that discussed censorship out of context of this topic area, such as military censorship and super-injunctions. Candidates should try and keep their answers in the context of the media violence topic.

*(b) Write a short report for the television broadcasting company describing the arguments for and against media censorship.

(5)

It is often argued that media censorship restricts freedom of speech, which is deemed as a basic human right, especially in the UK. Furthermore critics of media censorship argue that authoritarian or paternalistic governments may misuse such censorship in order to control information in their countries, which could lead to corruption. It was also found that the majority of people ~~feel~~ feel that parents should be responsible for what their children watch, so such censorship is not necessary. Moreover, UK has been found, using content analysis, to have less violent and sexual acts on TV during primetime than the European average. However the validity and reliability of this research has been criticised. ~~On the~~ ^{Some} people argue that, since it was found that 95% of ~~adults~~ ^{adults} ~~parent~~ wanted media censorship, it should remain due to public demand. Additionally, people feel that media censorship not only protects children, particularly 8 to 12 year olds, but it is also useful as a guideline to parents.

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Examiner Comments

This answer deals confidently and appropriately with media censorship. The for and against arguments are clear and well explained. There is slight unbalance between the for and against sides, but this did not detrimentally affect the grading of 5 marks. This answer has made good use of research evidence.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates need not cite research to gain full marks, but it does show good knowledge and understanding.

Question 6 (c)

Strong answers were able to explain preparedness in terms of harm in our evolutionary past and a genetic transmission of preparedness or survival of the fittest. The basic tenet of the theory was explained. Many candidates did not fully explain the basic tenets and referred briefly to past harm without linking to present preparedness. A significant number of candidates described Social Learning Theory.

(c) Carl found that most of his classmates were scared of snakes but not scared of the other animals he asked about.

Explain this finding using the evolutionary theory of preparedness.

(2)

Snakes can be poisonous, generations ago they could of harmed people, they then learnt from this harm either from watching people being harmed or being harmed, surviving this they passed the fear through generations as a survival instinct.



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Examiner Comments

This answer managed to offer both past harm and a reason for present preparedness, so gained both marks. There were stronger answers that detailed proneness to conditioning and survival of the fittest much better.



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Examiner Tip

Teaching the differences between Social Learning Theory and evolutionary preparedness may help candidates distinguish between each theory.

Question 6 (d)

Many answers detailed how feared animals were 'ugly, slimy, sudden', but stronger answers either concluded the study or gave further detail about how women were less likely to approach the feared animals. A third of answers wrote about the wrong study or did not attempt an answer.

(d) Bennett-Levy and Marteau (1984) carried out a study that supports the evolutionary theory of preparedness.

Describe the results and/or conclusion(s) of this study.

(2)

The study found out that people were more scared of animals that looked and had features that were very different to humans. They also found out people thought speedy animals were sudden as well. They found out that men and women described ugly in similar ways but women were less likely to approach an animal they were scared of. All the participants were told the animal were not dangerous but they still feared them, this supports the theory of preparedness.



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Examiner Comments

This is a very detailed answer referring to many aspects of the findings for all available marks.



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Examiner Tip

This question asked for the results and/or conclusions of the study. Similarly a question asking for the findings would be equivalent. A simple acronym such as NAPRC (name, aim, procedure, results, conclusions) can help structure revision.

Question 6 (e)

A minority of answers described classical conditioning rather than Social Learning Theory. Encouragingly the majority of candidates gained one or more marks for 'parents being seen and copied', parents being role models, and stronger answers including a good link to vicarious reinforcement (done well).

(e) When Carl asked the parents of his classmates, he found that they shared the same phobia as their children.

Describe social learning theory as an explanation of phobias.

(3)

this is because carl's classmate has grown up with his parents, and when he witnesses his parents being scared of something, he will be to. SHT is what usually conditions us to do anything, as well as being scared of something.



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Examiner Comments

This is a basic 'see and copy' answer typical of most answers. The answer needs to be further detailed theory to gain all three marks.



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Examiner Tip

Keep answers in context of the question. Describing Social Learning Theory generally, without reference to phobias, will result in not being able to achieve maximum marks.

Question 7 (b)

A quarter of candidates referred to flooding being used on little Peter or simply did not give enough creditable detail. Some confused little Peter with little Albert, many stating a rat was used to condition a phobia. Basic answers involved a rabbit being slowly introduced while Peter became relaxed, better answers gave more specific detail about the hierarchy and very strong answers referred to modelling.

(b) Describe how Little Peter's phobia was treated.

(3)

Peter had daily play sessions with the rabbit and other children who did not fear the rabbit. Each session Peter was introduced to the rabbit in different ways, this was done by ~~the~~ Jones working her way up the tolerance series which started at rabbit in cage in the same room up to rabbit allowed to touch fingers. During some of the sessions ~~the~~ Peter was classically conditioned ~~by~~ to feel comfortable ~~to~~ with the rabbit by being given food that he liked, he associated his happy feeling with the rabbit. The children acted as role models so when Peter was afraid of the rabbit another child would pick it up and show that the rabbit was not going to cause Peter harm.



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Examiner Comments

This answer gives good detail about the tolerance stages and writes about children as role models. Gaining all available marks, this candidate has done well.

Question 7 (c)

Over half of candidates did not achieve any marks. The various reasons include failing to answer the question, offering a weakness rather than a strength, or simply describing the study again. Those candidates that did do well engaged with a strength well, such as less distressing than flooding as done in stages, or used more than one strategy so cumulative success.

(c) Outline **one** strength of the treatment used to treat Little Peter's phobia.

it has less ⁽²⁾
it is more ethical issues
than other treatments and
was able to withdraw.



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Examiner Comments

This gained a typical one mark for reference to being able to withdraw. It would have gained a further mark if directly comparing to flooding or the stages being so gradual that clients need to be relaxed before progressing.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates could have either outlined one strength of systematic desensitisation generally or one strength of the treatment as it was used on little Peter.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to take account of the available marks when structuring and detailing their response as it gives a clear indication of the level of depth required.

Question 7 (d)

Only the stated guideline gained credit, so a minority of candidates lost out by either giving the incorrect guideline or giving tautological answers to question stem.

Question 7 (e)

Many candidates clearly saw the evaluate injunction in the question but failed to notice the generalisability aspect. Therefore many candidates simply evaluated the ethics, reliability and validity of the study. Focused answers confidently described the case study as unique and unrepresentative of other children/cases of phobias, therefore the treatment/findings may not apply to others.

(e) Evaluate the case study of Little Peter (Cover-Jones, 1924) in terms of its generalisability.

(2)

This ^{case} ~~case~~ study of little Peter is not very generalisable^e at all because firstly it is about one little boy, therefore it ~~only~~ ^{and conclusion and} the results and improvements ~~would~~ ^{is} have been individual to Peter himself and cannot apply to anyone else. In addition Little Peter is a little boy and ~~is~~ ^{is} as a result the results, conclusion and improvements ~~would not~~ ^{may not} apply to adults with different phobias ~~or~~ ^{Also} even any type of person with a different phobia/fear and how intense the fear/phobia is. ~~It may not~~ cannot apply to Little Peter's case study.



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Examiner Comments

This is a strong answer clearly focused on the requirements of generalisability.



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Examiner Tip

Generalisability in terms of evaluation is very different from stimulus generalisation. Many candidates referred to generalisation to other stimulus objects; clearly irrelevant to the question. It is not a requirement of the specification, and although interesting in itself, should be made distinct from the issue of generalisability.

Question 8 (a)

Candidates mostly gained full marks in this section, showing good practice of flow diagrams to illustrate classical conditioning.

Question 8 (b)

The majority of candidates failed to engage with the question and gave answers unrelated to the advantages of using animals for ethical reasons. Common mistakes were citing animal guidelines, referring to the generalisability issue or practical issues as to why animals are used. Candidates that were successful cited harm that could be caused if humans were used, and strong answers referred to not being able to use humans for isolation and deprivation studies.

(b) Pavlov used dogs in his experiments to test classical conditioning. Outline ethical reasons for using animals in laboratory experiments.

(2)

laboratory experiment are use animals because they are very controlled, the animals can be deprived of sleep/food etc whereas it would unethical to ^{deprive} humans of such things. At times laboratory experiment require pain to be inflicted upon the experimental subject ^{cause} ~~cause~~ humans pain is unethical hence animals ^{it is more} are ~~more~~ logical for animals to be used.



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Examiner Comments

This is a strong answer making reference explicitly to the question at hand, using deprivation and pain as reasons why animals should be used over humans.



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Examiner Tip

Questions that require specific answers should be practiced to avoid mistakes being made. Candidates should be aware of ethical and practical issues associated with animals being used. Ethical reasons are based around guidelines and choice over human research.

Question 9

This section of the unit built up to the nature/nurture extended writing, candidates should have prepared for this well. There was a normal distribution of scores and many candidates achieved three or more marks for having a basic but balanced answer. Candidates did well to describe Social Learning Theory as the nurture explanation, and stronger answers referred to classical conditioning also. There was still some lack of preparedness in answers for the nature side of the debate. It was encouraging to see research, such as Mineka, Watson and Raynor and Bennett-Levy and Marteau used appropriately in answers.

*9 Using the nature-nurture debate, explain why people might have phobias.

(5)

The cause of many phobias is not known although people can use nature or nurture to describe this. Some psychologists believe that phobias can be passed on through families and generations. Bennett-Levy and Marteau produced evidence to support the theory of preparedness. Their evidence supports the idea that prehistoric phobias are passed on through our genes. Other studies including twin studies also provide evidence. Identical twins are more likely to have the same phobia, suggesting a link to genetics. However many argue that social experiences cause phobias. Mineka et al provided evidence that monkeys can learn to produce a phobia through social learning theory. Watson and Raynor also showed that humans can learn phobias through classical conditioning a baby to fear rats. This evidence has proven a link between our social upbringing and our development of phobias.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good response, substituting thorough explanation of each theory for good and appropriate citation of research.



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Examiner Tip

Using research evidence is good, as long as appropriate and explained - name dropping does not gain marks.

*9 Using the nature-nurture debate, explain why people might have phobias.

(5)

People may have phobias because they could of learnt it from when they were born for ~~ex~~ ^{dog.} example when the child was little a ~~child~~ ^{dog} may have bitten her therefore she would be scared of dogs because she links the bite to the dog. Also people may have been copying off their parents, relatives etc. for example if a child saw their parents be scared of a pig then the child would want to copy off its parents so they would be scared of the pig then they would grow up with this phobia. Also children ~~can~~ can copy there role models and want to be like them.



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Examiner Comments

This a typical basic one-sided answer, referring to classical conditioning and social learning. Only balanced answers achieved three or more marks.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Nature-nurture questions do require both sides to be written about for higher marks.

Question 10 (a)

Using familiar terminology and standard paragraphing, this cloze question was largely successful. The most common correct answers were independent and dependent variables, although some were switched. Candidates found 'controlled' difficult and often substituted hypothesis with 'aim' or 'theory'.

Question 10 (b)

Some controls mentioned were generic to laboratory experiments, stronger answers were specific to the study. Successful answers referred to the control group having no picture in which to take comparison with the experimental conditions, and participant ratings of attractiveness to control for perception. Brief answers simply referred to having different pictures and descriptions.

(b) Experiments use careful controls.

Outline controls that Sigall and Ostrove (1975) used in their study of offender attractiveness and jury decision-making.

(2)
Sigall and Ostrove used ~~2~~ ² control groups - ~~to~~ one was given a case of fraud with no photograph ~~present~~, to other a case of burglary with no photograph - to ensure that ~~the~~ it was the photograph that was affecting the 'jurors' judgement. They also asked the participants to rate how attractive the photograph of 'Barbara' was to ensure they agreed with the researcher.



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Examiner Comments

This answer successfully offers a brief overview of the fraud and burglary control groups, then offers more sophisticated comments about the rating of attractiveness.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates often do well to identify controls used in novel stimulus, they did less well on this prescribed study. Procedure involves features such as IV, DV, sample, controls, apparatus and how it was conducted (timings, situation, instructions etc). Breaking the procedure down into features may help with depth of detail.

Question 10 (d)

Those candidates that attempted this question performed well, often citing Theilgaard and Madon as popular answers. Candidates should be encouraged to understand the difference between a published academic study and real life case, which was not appropriate for this question. Some candidates cited John Duffy or Rachel Nickel without reference to an academic literature written.

(d) Identify **one other** study you have learned about criminal behaviour **and** outline the aim of this study. (2)

Study
Theilgaard

Aim
Is there a gene that causes criminal behaviour?



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate correctly identifies Theilgaard as their study for the first mark. The description is minimal and somewhat simplistic, but correct enough for a second mark.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Questions about an aim could be allocated more than one mark (although this is not the case here). Simplistic aims will not achieve high marks, so it is worth expanding on aims where possible.

Question 11 (a)

Some candidates did little than repeat the question stimulus, producing tautological answers with little or no explanation. However, candidates that did explain one social explanation often opted for self fulfilling prophecy or large families. Large families were expanded well by explaining lack of attention and surveillance, lack of financial resources and poor education. Self fulfilling prophecy was very successful and those that focused on Bowlby also did well.

11 Read the following text.

Newhampton News

Last night John Smith was arrested for the recent burglaries in Newhampton. Described as a lonely man, John Smith spent much of his unhappy childhood in care following the separation of his parents. John came from a large family which often struggled to pay the bills and had to move house regularly. Judge Roberts described the case as a clear consequence of poor social family circumstances.

(a) Describe **one** social explanation of criminality.

(3)

A social explanation for criminality could be that the behavior is expected of them for example 'the self-fulfilling prophecy' that causes people to treat you differently because they expect you to behave like a criminal. In John's case the judge has already assumed that he is a criminal due to his background and childhood experiences. He would have probably been living with people who ~~also~~ had an expectation that he was going to be a criminal.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer does well to detail how self fulfilling prophecy can explain John Smith's situation. If there had also been reference to being treated differently (an important part of the process), or evidence, a third mark could have been achieved.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates often resort to colloquial answers when referring to social explanations. It is important to structure an answer around psychological concepts and theories to be convincing. For example, candidates using large families often referred to Farrington's research to support their answer.

Question 11 (b)

Candidates often misunderstood this question or did not have sufficient knowledge to answer it. Many outlined practical or methodological issues, such as prisoners lying. A disturbing number of answers did not understand that prisoners have the same rights as any participant in psychological research, in fact particular sensitivity is used in such cases. More successful answers acknowledged prisoner rights or explained possible distress that research may cause, either through raising sensitive past events or fear of reprisal felt disclosing information about other offenders. Some used the sophisticated issue of criminal/moral responsibility, which gained credit if done well.

(b) Criminals, like John Smith, are sometimes used in research to understand the causes of crime.

Outline **one** ethical issue with using convicted offenders in psychological research.

(2)

they will have to talk to
the offender & rely on what
they are saying as it has
already happened & they will
have to take their word for it.

(Total for Question 11 = 5 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a typical answer about a methodological issue so did not gain credit.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should be encouraged to highlight the injunctions and important information in each question to ensure they answer appropriately.

(b) Criminals, like John Smith, are sometimes used in research to understand the causes of crime.

Outline **one** ethical issue with using convicted offenders in psychological research.

(2)

Criminals may not want to be researched on especially if their sorry for their crime and do not want to talk about it. ~~and~~ Some criminals may use the situation to glorify what they have done what won't be good for them psychologically in the long run.

(Total for Question 11 = 5 marks)



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Examiner Comments

This answer gets one mark for 'not wanting to talk about' their crimes. If elaborated, such as how it causes distress etc, it may have achieved the second mark.



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Examiner Tip

Candidates need to ensure they know that special considerations are made when researching convicted offenders. It is worth researching guidelines beyond the BPS code, such as the ethical principles in criminological research.

Question 14 (a)

Although correct identification of 'suspect characteristics' gained an easy first mark for the majority of answers, only 40% achieved the second mark by identifying 'interview techniques'. Many selected forensic evidence as their second choice.

Question 14 (b)

Candidates need to be aware that offender profiling does not produce a visual description of the offenders face, nor is it solely based on eyewitness description. A minority of candidates referred to a picture of the offender not being good enough to catch them or that eyewitness testimony is not reliable enough to produce a profile. These were too general to gain credit. Popular creditable answers included 'guesswork' and qualified this by stating that the investigation may be misdirected/wrong person caught. Stronger answers referred to victimisation and there was good use of the Colin Stagg profile being wrong and ruining his life. There is a clear difference between approaches used by different countries and indeed different profilers, this may have confused some candidates and it would be worth candidates stating which they are referring to in order to make sense of some rather vague comments.

(b) Outline **one** reason why offender profiling might **not** be effective.

(2)

Offender profiling is useful as it helps the police, yet it does have weaknesses. One weakness is that it is only a guess, a strategic guess, but still not a concrete valid description of the criminal, so wrong people could be prosecuted.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a basic but typical two mark answer, referring to guesswork and the wrong person being convicted. It would be nice to see more sophisticated answers from such a popular topic in the future.

Question 15

Strong answers were able to outline some key biological explanations, such as genetics, chromosome abnormality, testosterone and neurological abnormalities. This was followed up by some important research by Christenson, the case of Charles Whitman and Theilgaard. The better answers went on to critique this research, answers that placed too much emphasis on biological evidence, such as Theilgaard, were misinformed. Alternative explanations included self fulfilling prophecy, social learning and maternal deprivation and evidence against included Madon, Bandura and Jahoda. A good balance of outline, evidence for and against and alternative explanations achieved the highest levels. Often there was a limited critique of evidence/lack of evidence against the biological approach.

*15 Bella believes that criminals are born and not made.

Evaluate this biological explanation for criminality.

(10)

Your evaluation **must** include:

- ✓ an outline of the biological explanation for criminal behaviour
- ✓ comparison with other explanations
- evidence for the biological explanation
- evidence against the biological explanation.

An biological explanation is that there is a criminal gene ~~responsible~~ responsible for criminality and criminal behaviour. This gene is passed from generation down to the next generation and this explains why some people are 'born' as criminals. They have the criminality gene ~~at~~ so they are destined for crime.

However social explanations suggest there are many other factors to why some people become criminals. For example, upbringing plays a significant role. If the child has grown up around parents who don't ~~also~~ punish immoral behaviour or perhaps they even encourage it, then the child is more likely to believe crime is acceptable and hence are 'made' criminals by ~~the~~ nurturing. Another explanation is the self-fulfilling prophecy. This theory suggests that people live up to the expectations of others. E.g. if someone is expected to become a criminal by family, friends, neighbours etc.

that person is more likely to ~~be~~ meet that expectation, engage in criminal behaviour and hence are 'made' into criminals by fulfilling the prophecy of others.

Some research has been conducted to suggest there is a gene responsible for criminality. Theilgaard's study showed there was correlation between gene abnormality (XYY or XXY genes) and criminal behaviour. However, it's important to note Theilgaard's sample size was incredibly ^{small} ~~small~~ and does not provide concrete evidence for the existence of a criminality gene.

Evidence against the biological theory is that if a parent is a convicted criminal then why are their children not criminals? ~~Not all are~~ On the other hand, not all criminals have criminal parents and this suggests there is no gene responsible for criminal behaviour.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is a good response but with limited outline of the biological explanation and very little critique or evidence against the biological approach. It does make good use of alternative explanation, hence 8 marks, it does not achieve the higher level.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Candidates that scored well in this extended writing question often highlighted the important information in the question and checked off each part as it was achieved. This often served them well.

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