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Examiners' Report
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GCSE Psychology 5PS02 01

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Introduction

Candidates found this paper accessible with few blank spaces on question scripts although the overall performance for the cohort was slightly lower than for 2016.

Responses to the extended response question were not as encouraging compared to previous series as many candidates focused on AO1 but did not attempt much AO2 evaluation. Candidates should be mindful that balance is critical to any extended essay-type question and that those that focus on both aspects of the response evenly will gain the higher marks.

As mentioned in the 2016 report, candidates should be reminded to give specific detail where possible for their responses. This is very important as it allows the candidate to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a psychological concept or study effectively. Generic, vague statements may sometimes gain credit but those with specific details will always be rewarded more credit. This was the case again in 2017 with many candidates still giving purely generic, rote learned statements.

Again, as was mentioned in 2016, questions on this examination frequently use stimulus material or scenarios appropriate to the section. Candidates should be reminded that they should contextualise their response so that it is applied appropriately to the stimulus or scenario provided. Candidates who do contextualise their responses will, in general, be able to be awarded greater credit than those who do not.

The remainder of this Examiner's Report will focus on each individual question and specific examples which can be used to help prepare candidates for future 5PS02 examinations.

Question 1 (a)

There was one mark available for the research method. Candidate performance was split with just over half getting 1 mark.

There were a range of responses here with a variety being acceptable due to the nature of Charlton's study. The most common acceptable answers were naturalistic study, questionnaire, or observation method.

Common errors included candidates thinking that Charlton's study was a case study or a field experiment.

1 Charlton et al. (2000) investigated whether TV would have an effect on aggressive behaviour in children in St. Helena.

(a) State what type of research method Charlton et al. (2000) used.

(1)

Observational

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark for an acceptable method.

Question 1 (b)

There was one mark available for the experimental (participant) design used, with the majority of candidates achieving 1 mark.

Candidates commonly stated repeated measures and due to the nature of the study independent groups/measures was accepted.

Some candidates did get mixed up with 1(a) and put natural experiment here, so candidates are reminded to read the question carefully.

(b) Name the experimental (participant) design used by Charlton et al. (2000).

(1)

repeated measures

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark for the experimental (participant) design.

Question 1 (c)

There was one mark available for an aggressive behaviour and one mark for a non-aggressive behaviour. The majority of candidates were able to get at least 1 mark, usually for the aggressive behaviour.

Common acceptable aggressive answers included kicking, pushing, shouting, hitting, punching, fighting and verbal aggression. Common acceptable non-aggressive answers included hugging, politeness, sharing and holding hands.

(c) State **one** aggressive and **one** non-aggressive behaviour Charlton et al. (2000) were looking for in their study.

(2)

Aggressive

Hitting

Non-aggressive

Hugging

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks – one for each acceptable response.

Question 1 (e)

There were two marks available for a strength of Charlton's study. One mark for a brief strength, two marks for a more detailed explanation.

The response had to have something about Charlton to be credited (children, video cameras, small island etc.) and the best answers were all directly linked to the context.

Common acceptable answers included the natural environment and naive participants. Common errors included generic responses, generalisability, using a weakness and not giving enough information (for example, 'it was natural').

(e) Explain **one** strength of Charlton et al.'s (2000) study.

(2)

It was done in their natural environment so people would wee more likely to act how they normally would resulting in more reliable results

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 0 marks. It is a generic response and the question asks for one strength of Charlton et al.'s (2000) study – this response could be about any study and it is not clear it is related to Charlton's research so did not gain credit.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Candidates need to contextualise their response when giving a strength of a named study.

Question 1 (f)

There were two marks available for a weakness of Charlton's study. One mark for a brief weakness, two marks for a more detailed explanation.

As with the previous question, the response needed something about Charlton to be credited (children, video cameras, small island etc.), with the majority of responses doing so.

Common acceptable answers included no control over TV / it was different to the mainland; teachers/parents influence children's behaviour and generalisability. Common errors included generic responses, using a strength, not giving enough information (for example, 'it was not generalisable') and lack of informed consent for the children (the parents gave consent so this was not creditable).

(f) Explain **one** weakness of Charlton et al.'s (2000) study.

(2)

One weakness of Charlton et al.'s study
is that because he used questionnaires
some of the children and parents could
have used social desirability as they
didn't want to look bad in the small
community and give bad impressions
as everyone was close in nature.

(Total for Question 1 = 9 marks)

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This was awarded 2 marks for an elaborated response. The response accurately explains that as questionnaires were used the parents could have been socially desirable and as they did not want to give a bad impression of the community they could have lied.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Candidates need to contextualise their response when giving a weakness of a named study – this response does this well.

Question 2 (a)

There were two marks for explanation of limbic system/amygdala as a biological explanation of aggression.

The response needed to have something about Vanessa/the hockey match/fighting with the (hockey) player to be credited, with the majority of candidates doing so and achieving at least 1 mark.

Common acceptable answers included damage to the limbic system, damage to the amygdala, and a tumour affecting brain function. Common errors included generic responses, use of XYY, hormones, and no reference to damage or malfunction.

2 Vanessa has been excluded from her hockey team for fighting with another hockey player during training.

(a) Using the limbic system/amygdala as a biological explanation of aggression, explain why Vanessa may have been fighting with the other player.

(2)

She may have been fighting due to damage to her amygdala (the part of the brain responsible for aggression) such as Charles Whitman who had a tumour pressing on his amygdala causing increased aggression. Vanessa could have a tumor or damage to her amygdala.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks. There is application to the scenario and it mentions both damage to the amygdala as well as the possibility of a tumour.

Question 2 (b)

There was one mark available for identifying a biological explanation (other than brain function), with the vast majority of candidates doing so accurately.

Common acceptable answers included testosterone, hormones, genes, and XYY chromosome/gene. Common errors included castration and social explanations.

(b) Identify **one** biological explanation for aggression **other than** the limbic system/ amygdala.

Player.

(1)

Testosterone levels.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comment
This response was awarded 1 mark for testosterone.

Question 2 (c)

There were four marks available – two for a strength, two for a weakness. Performance was split over the full mark range, with the majority of candidates being awarded 0-3 marks and the very best achieving full marks.

Common acceptable answers for a strength included scientific/objective, evidence from animal/human research and cause and effect.

Common answers for a weakness included alternate theories for aggression (e.g. social learning), differences in animals and humans and correlational research (or exceptions to aggression research).

(c) Outline **one** strength and **one** weakness of the biological explanation of aggression.

(4)

Strength

It can be backed up by various case studies relating to serial killers / other criminals.

Weakness

It cannot be backed up as easily by experiments, as most tests have been done on animals so the results are not completely generalisable.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark overall.

There were no creditworthy ideas for the strength, a weakness is identified (lack of generalisability to humans) but not fully explained.

Question 3 (a)

Candidates were given 2 marks for identifying the two correct responses, with the vast majority of candidates achieving this.

Common errors where candidates lost marks included marking GCSE which is not required or interest in how children develop (this is advantageous but not a requirement).

Question 3 (b)

There were three marks available for an explanation of how an educational psychologist could help Jason. Performance was good on this question with the majority of candidates getting 2-3 marks.

Common creditworthy answers included different forms of assessment (e.g. observe Jason at school), treatment (e.g. give Jason breathing exercises), and advice/support (e.g. identify the triggers to Jason's anger). Common errors by candidates were to offer brief, unexplained ideas, or where they focused on the educational psychologists' characteristics/role rather than how they could help Jason.

Jason pushed over a table in a classroom and then knocked a fire extinguisher off the wall when he stormed out of a lesson. He was then sent to his head teacher. The head teacher asked an educational psychologist to help Jason with his anger management problem.

(b) Explain how an educational psychologist could help Jason with his anger management problem.

(3)

An educational psychologist would firstly analyse Jason's behaviour in the classroom and try to identify any factors that trigger his aggression. With this information, she would draw conclusions from it and also from the previous incident and plan how to help him. They would also contact their parents to discover if this type of behaviour is regular at home too, to help further identify triggers. The educational psychologist would plan interventions, and would speak empathetically, alone with Jason. They would teach relaxation techniques and inform him on alternative ways to respond to the factors triggering his aggressive behaviour. This should all help Jason manage his anger and learn to act more calmly.

Question 4 (a)

There were four marks available for a description of how Shane could use a content analysis for the video game. It was common for candidates to be quite repetitive with their statements although overall performance was good with the majority of candidates being awarded 2-3 marks.

Common creditworthy answers included how he would categorise aggressive behaviour, examples of aggressive behaviours, tallying and asking others to conduct the analysis/check the analysis. Common errors included repetition of the stem, suggesting analysis with no details about how to do this and general repetition of ideas already presented.

4 Shane has downloaded a new video game for his mobile phone. He played against his friends and noticed that the game contained a lot of aggression.

(a) Describe how Shane can use a content analysis on the amount of aggression in the video game.

(4)

Shane could write down all the acts of aggression he came across in the game. He could then also write things that are not aggressive. Shane should write a tally while playing the game of how many acts there were for example everytime there was use of a gun he should tally. Shane should then analyse his results & compare the aggressive to the non-aggressive.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark was for the categories of aggression (example given later) and has non-aggressive in there too. The second was for the idea of tallying. The response was judged to be not quite enough with the analysis, as it does not say how.

Question 4 (b)

There were two marks available for an appropriate explanation of how Shane could have ensured reliability. Performance was split almost evenly across the mark range.

Common creditworthy answers included repeating the analysis at another time, and having another person check the analysis. Common errors included using a different sample, validity issues and a focus on controls with no explanation of how this could contribute to reliability.

(b) Explain **one** way that Shane could have made sure his content analysis was reliable.

(2)

He could use inter-rater reliability, this is when someone else also watches the video game and tallies up what they think is an aggressive act, as the end anything that doesn't match up is disregarded so the results are not subjective and hence more reliable.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark was for someone else doing the analysis and then a further mark for the appropriate justification for this (inter-rater-reliability).

Question 4 (d)

There were two marks available for an appropriate suggestion of how Shane could deal with protection of participants. The majority of candidates were able to offer at least one appropriate suggestion so scored at least one mark.

Common creditworthy answers included Shane checking the age rating of the game, limiting the time his brother plays the game, turning the volume off if there is swearing, allowing his brother to stop playing if he feels upset/distressed, and informed consent from parents. Common errors were brief, unexplained statements (e.g. 'right to withdraw') and stating how his brother will be affected – so not focusing on the question.

Shane is considering giving the video game to his younger brother to see if he finds the game aggressive.

(d) Suggest how Shane could deal with the ethical issue of protection of participants with regard to his younger brother.

(2)

Control how long his brother plays the game for so the exposure to violence is kept to as minimum as possible. If there is swearing, in the game, turn the volume off so he isn't exposed to bad language.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark was for the idea of controlling how long he plays the game for and the second was for turning the volume off if there is swearing.

Question 5 (a)

Candidates were given 2 marks for identifying the two correct responses, with the vast majority of candidates being awarded both available marks.

Common errors where candidates lost marks included modelling and vicarious reinforcement.

Question 6 (a)

There were four marks available – two for practical issues, two for ethical issues.

Typically, candidates focused on weaknesses of using animals, although strengths were credited where relevant and appropriate. Performance was across the full mark range but the majority of candidates scored 0-3 marks as they struggled to offer two practical and two ethical issues with enough information and accuracy to gain full marks.

Common creditworthy practical issues included the differences between humans and animals, and methodological issues. Common creditworthy ethical issues included isolation of social species, minimising the number of animals and minimising pain.

Common errors included the idea that animals cannot give consent (or other human participant guidelines), that researchers cannot use endangered species and that animals cannot be harmed.

6 One way of investigating phobias in psychology is by using animals in laboratory experiments.

(a) Outline **two** practical issues and **two** ethical issues when using animals in laboratory experiments.

(4)

Practical issues

Animals are a lot smaller and less complex than humans. This is an issue because not everything researchers find about animals, apply to humans and not all information is found. Animals and humans aren't actually that similar, and therefore can't be directly compared because there are differences.

Ethical issues

Isolation. Animals shouldn't be isolated if they aren't used to it, because it causes distress and anxiety. They should also use as less animals as possible so less harm and distress is caused to the animals.

Practical issues

① Extinction; By using too many of the same species for experiments in a lab, the ~~rate~~ number of that species in the wild will surely drop.

① Also, animals aren't able to speak to tell us ~~information~~ information that a human could.

Ethical issues

① animals can't give consent and can not withdrawl their participation when the want to.

② Animals should be left in the wild, they weren't made to be ~~exper~~ experimented on.

Question 6 (b) (i)

There was one mark available for a definition of an open-ended question, with the majority of candidates getting the mark.

No marks were given for an example.

Common creditworthy answers included questions that allow participants to answer how they want, that they are free to answer how they want, allows participants to elaborate, or enables participants to expand on their ideas. Common errors were just giving an example of an open question, that it collects qualitative data, or a definition of a closed-ended question.

An alternative way of investigating phobias is through the use of the questionnaire as a research method.

(b) Define the following terms as used in the questionnaire method:

(i) open-ended question

(1)

very indepth in depth and produces qualitative data. Produces gather alot of information as Participants are free to answer however they like.

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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark for the statement about how participants are free to answer how they like.

Question 6 (b) (ii)

There was one mark available for a definition of a closed-ended question. It was surprising the number of candidates who did not achieve credit as they used very categorical statements (yes or no questions) or did not articulate their definition very well.

No marks were given for an example.

Common creditworthy answers included a question that has a fewer number of answers / restricted responses / limited responses. Common errors included when the answer is yes or no (e.g. 'where you answer yes or no'), just giving an example of a closed question, that they collect quantitative data, or a definition of an open-ended question.

(ii) closed question.

(1)

> There are limited answers which Must be chosen to represent Participants opinions.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark. This was for the idea of limited answers to represent opinions.

Question 6 (d)

There was one mark for stating one aim of Bennett-Levy's study, with the majority of candidates achieving 1 mark.
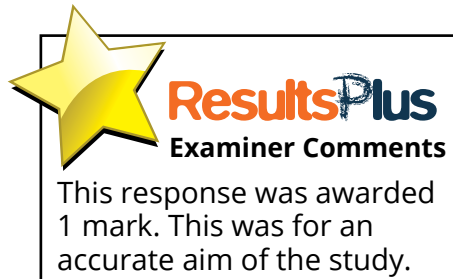
Common creditworthy answers included fear of animals based on ugliness / sliminess / suddenness, certain animals / characteristics of animals causing a phobia / fear. Common errors were to give the aim of the wrong study, or a vague answer (e.g. 'to see if people are scared of the same things').

Bennett-Levy and Marteau (1984) used the questionnaire method in their study.

(d) State **one** aim of Bennett-Levy and Marteau's (1984) study.

(1)

To investigate whether we are evolved and prepared to fear certain animals more than others.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark. This was for an accurate aim of the study.

Question 6 (e)

There was one mark for stating one finding of Bennett-Levy's study, with the majority of candidates achieving 1 mark.

Common creditworthy answers included the idea that cockroaches or spiders were most feared, or women being less likely to go near certain animals, or that animals judged differently to humans were rated as uglier. Common errors included animals being judged as different to humans, being rated as more fearful, or vague or erroneous answers (e.g. 'they found you can create a phobia to someone').

(e) Outline **one** finding of Bennett-Levy and Marteau's (1984) study.

(1)

People were more afraid and less likely to approach animals who were slimy, speedy, sudden movers or looked different from humans.

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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark. This was for an accurate finding from the study.

Question 6 (f)

There were four marks for evaluation of the questionnaire method to investigate phobias. Performance was split across the full mark range in a mixed distribution of marks, although the majority of candidates achieved 2 marks.

Candidates who did not refer to investigating phobias (a generic response) were given max 2 marks for their answer.

Common creditworthy statements included questionnaires being standardised, more ethical than exposing to phobic stimuli (in lab/real life) and regarding social desirability.

Common errors included giving purely generic evaluation (max 2), brief unexplained points, and that questionnaires gather a certain type of data (they can collect both so not correct to say only one type can be collected).

(f) Evaluate the use of the questionnaire method when investigating phobias.

(4)

On the one hand the questionaire method for phobias is an ethical way to investigate phobias. This is because it does not cause the participant any physical or phychological harm as they do not have to confront there phobia or see it in real life. They can j'ust mark how they would feel. So this is an ethical way to investigate phobias.

However, Social dascrability bias may effect the results. Some people may lie and change their answer as they do not want to be seen as weak and scared of everything. This will effect the reliability and accuracy of the results as it would not be a representative.

(Total for Question 6 = 13 marks)

Question 7 (a)

There were four marks available for the explanation of how social learning theory can explain Javinder's fear response. Candidates commonly got 1 or 2 marks but struggled to get the third or fourth mark as they had limited use of key terms from the theory and usually gave repetitive ideas.

Common creditworthy points included the idea of the father being a role model and why, reinforcement and remembering (retention) the father's reaction. Common errors included little or no use of the theory (the question is AO2 so requires application of theory), use of evaluative material and brief or unexplained ideas.

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7   Javinder was at home with his father when he saw a large spider in their garage. At first Javinder was not scared. However, he began to show signs of distress after his father screamed at the sight of the spider.

(a) Using your knowledge of social learning theory, explain why Javinder showed signs of distress in response to the spider.

(4)

Javinder payed attention to his father's reaction to the spider. He kept the memory of his father screaming and the reaction. He reproduces the reaction. which leads to him being motivated to be scared of the spider as his his father's reaction shows him signs of distress as he is motivated to repe reproduce the reaction of his father.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 3 marks.

The first mark was for the idea of attention and the second for retention, with the final mark being awarded for the reproduction of the father's reaction to the spider.

Question 7 (b)

There were two marks available for a brief explanation of where SLT would sit on the nature-nurture debate. The first mark was for an appropriate decision and the second mark for justification. The majority of candidates were given 1 mark with many gaining full marks here. Where the explanations did not have any link to social learning theory and were generic and vague; candidates only scored 1 out of 2 marks.

Common creditworthy answers included nurture due to the modelling of others. Common errors included lack of justification (2nd mark), the general idea of the environment causing learning (not linked to SLT) and stating that SLT is nature.

(b) Explain where social learning theory as an explanation of a phobia would lie in terms of the nature-nurture debate.

(2)

Social learning theory is on the nurture side of the debate of phobias because the nurture argument suggests we can learn a phobia through observing the behaviour/fear of others so environment can produce fears. SLT also suggests we learn through watching and imitating the behaviour of others, rather than inheriting genes which make us afraid.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark is for the decision regarding nurture and the second is for suitable justification.

Question 7 (c)

There were four marks available for a description of how systematic desensitisation could be used to treat a phobia. Candidate performance was split across the full mark range with the majority of candidates scoring 1-3 marks.

Common creditworthy points included a fear hierarchy, relaxation techniques and gradual exposure to the feared stimuli. Common errors included inaccurate or no use of classical conditioning terminology or vague responses.

> After some time Javinder was too scared to go to school as he was worried a spider might appear. His mother decided to take him to a clinical psychologist to treat him.
>
> (c) Describe how a clinical psychologist could carry out systematic desensitisation to treat a phobia.
>
> (4)
>
> A clinical psychologist would work with Javinder to come up with a hyerarcy of fears. They would teach him relaxation tecniques to manage his fear. starting with the stage whts which causes the least amount of fear, Javinder would place move up the myere hyerarcy of fears. These may included seeing a picture of a spider to holding a spider. He would only move on when the clinical psychologist said so. By the end he would be comfortable with all stages on the irst.

Question 7 (d)

7(d) was very well answered overall with the majority of candidates gaining 3-4 marks across (i) and (ii).

Part (i) had one mark available for identification of an alternate therapy.

The most common answer was flooding. Candidates who did not gain marks gave vague or inaccurate statements.

Part (ii) had three marks available for an explanation of how Javinder could be treated.

Common creditworthy points included being exposed to the spiders, being forced to stay in a room with spiders and having high anxiety at first which would reduce as time went on. Common errors included being generic (max. 1) or having vague or inaccurate statements.

> (d) (i) Identify **one** therapy **other than** systematic desensitisation that could be used to treat a phobia.
>
> (1)
>
> Flooding
>
> (ii) Using the therapy you have identified in (d)(i), explain how Javinder's phobia of spiders could be treated.
>
> (3)
>
> Javinder could also do flooding to treat his fear of spiders. This works by instantly making Javinder face his fear with no build up. He will also be unable to leave and will be forced to stay in with his fear (or phobia) until he calms down. Javinder would initially become very distressed when he sees the spider. However the idea is that Javinder will only be able to maintain a certain level of distress and panic. Javinder will reach his peak anxiety and distress, but should then begin to calm down after some time because he will lose the energy to stay so anxious, distressed and worried. Once Javinder has calmed down, he will begin to associate the spider with being calm so that he is no longer afraid of them and will no longer be distressed when he sees one a spider.

(Total for Question 7 = 14 marks)

TOTAL FOR TOPIC D = 30 MARKS

not enough energy to continue to be distressed

For part (i) the candidate was awarded 1 mark for 'flooding'.

For part (ii) the candidate was awarded 3 marks. The first mark was for forcing Javinder to stay with his fear (the spiders), with the second being given for having high anxiety at first but this reduces over time, and the final mark was awarded for the association of the spider with relaxation/calm.

Question 8 (a)

There were two marks available for outlining the influence of genetics as an explanation of criminality. The majority of candidates gained 1 mark for giving a brief, accurate response which lacked elaboration.

Candidates did not really show knowledge of the MAOA or warrior gene or any real understanding of how this might affect criminality.

Genetic ideas tended to revolve around the family and how the individual may be more likely to be a criminal if other family members (e.g. grandfather and father) were – with the idea it could be inherited. Some candidates used XYY chromosome abnormality which was acceptable.

Common creditworthy answers included the criminal behaviour being passed down from family members, an understanding of twin / adoption study findings, XYY and how this affects aggression and learning. Common errors included the use of SLT or social explanations of criminality, testosterone or hormones.

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8 Sebastian has been convicted of a crime. There are biological and social explanations for Sebastian's criminal behaviour.

(a) Outline the influence of genetics as a biological explanation of criminality.

(2)

There is a theory that there is a gene linked to criminality. When investigating into adoption studies by collecting data on children adopted at a young age and their biological parents, Mednick found that the children were more similar to their biological father than their adopted father in terms of criminality. This suggests that there is something they share within their genetics that causes them to be criminals as they have had completely separate environments.

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Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark was for children being similar to their biological father in terms of criminality (study), which was then elaborated with sharing genetics as they have completely different environments for the second mark.

Question 8 (b)

There were three marks available for comparisons between a biological and social explanation of criminality. Candidates could gain marks in any combination up to a maximum of three marks (1,1,1; 1,2 or 2,2 maxed at 3 marks).

Candidates tended to get 0-2 marks as they either compared with SLT (0 marks), gave two descriptive paragraphs which were credited as implicit comparison (1 mark) or gave one detailed explicit comparison (2 marks). Very few candidates were able to offer two or more explicit comparisons with use of connectives which was surprising given the advice from previous series.

Common creditworthy answers included nature vs. nurture, determined vs. preventable (not determined) or out of control vs. within control. Common errors included the use of social learning theory (not a social explanation), only giving biological or social explanations so no comparison could be credited or only giving one comparison point (limiting themselves to 1-2 marks).

(b) Compare **one** biological and **one** social explanation for criminality. Comparisons include similarities and/or differences.

(3)

> A biological explanation is that ~~there may be~~ we inherit genetics relating to criminality from our parents, while a social explanation is childrearing strategies. A similarity is that in both, the parent has some influence in the child's likelihood of becoming criminal, ~~to~~ A difference is that the biological explanation is out of our control, and is on the nature side of the nature-nurture debate. However, childrearing strategies are due to the independent choice of the parents, and relates to nurture.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 3 marks.

The first mark was for the similarity. The second and third marks were for the elaborated difference between the theories.

Question 8 (c)

There were two marks available for a strength of Theilgaard's study – one for a brief strength, two for a more detailed strength. The vast majority of candidates either knew this and generally gained 2 marks or did not and gave a completely generic or vague, inaccurate response so were given 0 marks.

The response needed to have something about Theilgaard to be credited (social worker, XYY, interviews, blood tests etc.).

Common creditworthy answers included the use of an independent social worker and the variety of tests used. Common errors included generic responses, generalisability, using a weakness, or not giving enough information ('it was non biased').

Theilgaard (1984) carried out a study investigating the role of the XYY gene as a possible biological explanation for criminality.

(c) Outline **one** strength of Theilgaard's (1984) study.

(2)

Theilgaard's (1984) study used an independant social worker interviewer, who did not know the aim of the study. This is a strength as the researcher/interviewer could be completely neutral and unbiased when asking the criminals questions as they didn't know the aim, so couldn't base their questions/answers on the aim.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

It is a more detailed strength regarding the use of an independent social worker (see MS example).

Question 9 (a)

There were two marks available for an explanation of one ethical issue when conducting social research into criminality.

Some candidates misread the question and gave an ethical issue with Madon's study, and as such performance was mixed – although marks were awarded fairly evenly across the mark range.

Common creditworthy answers included self-fulfilling prophecy, parental blaming, pressure to take part and reprisal. Common errors included the use of an ethical issue of Madon's study and not self-fulfilling prophecy in general (see MS suggestion for an appropriate indicative point), too brief responses (e.g. 'it could go against confidentiality and privacy), methodological issues, or practical issues.

9 Madon et al. (2004) carried out a study investigating a social explanation of criminality.

(a) Explain **one** ethical issue when conducting social research into criminality.

(2)

One ethical issue when conducting social research
into criminality is ~~to not blame parents for~~ it isn't ethical to cause someone to
become a criminal by reinforcing a self-fulfilling ~~other~~
~~criminality in youths as there are more factors~~
prophecy and telling them that because of something, such as
~~which influence young people and blaming parents~~
the way they were raised, they will be criminal.
~~could cause them to become stressed.~~

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

It is an elaborated ethical issue regarding self-fulfilling prophecy (similar to the MS example).

Question 10 (a)

There were four marks available for an explanation of one way a forensic psychologist may treat offenders.

Candidates struggled with this question and many did not use treatments for offenders, instead they mistakenly suggested ideas about the forensic psychologist's manner with the offender.

Common creditworthy answers used anger management, personal construct therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, token economy programme, or counselling. Common errors were to suggest medication, put them in jail, or gather evidence on them and give them a harsher sentence.

10 (a) Explain **one** way a forensic psychologist may treat offenders.

(4)

A forensic scienhist may treat offenders using token economy. This means that they establish a behaviour which they want criminals to display (for example good behaviours would include politeness and helping other people). Whenever a staff member sees a criminal demonstrating ~~token economy~~ these good behaviours they can give them a token. This can then be exchanged for a reinforcer. ~~These~~ A typical reinforcer would be extra time with family or a luxury meal. Therefore this method which is enforced by the forensic psychologist would encourage the criminals to behave well, so they can be rewarded with nice things.

This response was awarded 4 marks.

The first mark was for ID of token economy. The second was for establishing the desirable behaviours required. The third mark was given for the token being awarded for displaying a desirable behaviour and the final mark for the primary reinforcer.

Question 10 (b)

There were two marks available for outlining one practical problem with gathering information from convicted offenders. The majority of candidates gained 1-2 marks.

Common creditworthy answers included the offender may lie, glorify their crimes, or rely on old memories which may be false or not fully accurate. Where candidates did not gain credit the most common error was the use of ethical issues.

Forensic psychologists may have to gather information from convicted offenders when treating offenders.

(b) Outline **one** practical problem with gathering information from convicted offenders.

(2)

They could be making up information so they can get out early from Prision.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 1 mark.

There is a brief, yet accurate, practical problem for one mark.

Question 11

There were three marks available for an explanation of how Sharon could use offender profiling to help the police catch those responsible for the burglaries. Performance was generally good with most candidates gaining 1-2 marks and many gaining 3 marks overall.

Candidate needed to refer to the scenario/context at least once or max 1 mark (for generic response).

Common creditworthy ideas included narrowing down the burglary suspects, analysis of the crime scene, features included in the profile (with examples) and suggesting interview techniques. The most common error where candidates did not gain credit was for generic responses (max 1 mark).

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11 Sharon is a forensic psychologist. She has been asked by the local police department to help it catch those responsible for a series of burglaries in the local area.

Explain how Sharon could use offender profiling to help the local police catch those responsible for the burglaries.

She would be able to narrow down the list of suspects to only a few in one area by predicting what the criminal would look/be like. She might predict their gender, age, marital status, interests, etc, all of which would narrow down their suspect list to only a few.

ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response was awarded 2 marks.

The first mark was for the idea of narrowing down the list of suspects (see MS) and the second was for information of the profile (with more than 2 appropriate suggestions given).

Question 12

This essay was for 10 marks and was assessed using the levels based mark schemes. The question asked candidates to 'describe *and* evaluate' so responses should have included both knowledge and understanding of the effects of characteristics such as race, accent, and appearance/attractiveness (AO1) and evaluation of the effects of the characteristics proposed (AO3). Performance did go across the full mark range with a normal distribution, but the mean mark for the cohort was slightly lower than previous series for a 10-mark essay due to the lack of evaluation from candidates.

Candidates commonly gave either all three characteristics in less detail or one or two in more detail. The best responses gave breadth and depth with relevant evidence.

Some candidates just described and evaluated their key study on Sigall and Ostrove – this was ok as it is relevant for the question but it is not directly answering the question so was limited in terms of breadth and depth of the characteristics in the question (there is limited breadth as there is only one of the three stated in the question).

*12 Describe **and** evaluate the effects of characteristics such as race, accent and appearance/attractiveness on jury decision making.

(10)

Sigall and Ostrove done a study with 2 groups and asked participants to say who they thought commited what crime. A photo g 'Barbara' was used (one was attractive and one was unnatractive), and they were also asked to rate their looks. Participants associated the unattractive picture of Barbara to be associated with a crime such as buglary, whereas participant with the attractive picture thought she'd commit a crime such as Fraud. This all depended on appearance. This study suggests that punishment depends on attractiveness. However the jury in real life wouldn't be able to do this although some do,

but they should focus the punishment on the crime rather than looks.

Although I don't, some people associate those with a certain race to commit more crimes than other races. For example some people may think that black people associate commit more crimes than white people. This may affect the decision the jury make because of the stereotype.

The way that people talk can also have an affect on punishments and decision making. So if someone sounds soft and kind, they are more likely to get away with comitting a crime than someone who changes their accent and/or tone to sound cool.

Different accents also mean different places which can also be stereotyped from the jury. If they are from a place with a high crime rate, the jury could think they are more likely to have commited the crime and give a greater punishment than someone from a place with a low crime rate.

Also, the more attractive someone is, the more likely they are to get away with the crime because often people stereotype a criminal to be unattractive.

Paper summary

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

- When evaluating a method for measuring something, such as a questionnaire for phobias, candidates should give specific details, such as the ethical strengths of doing so for phobias compared to real life exposure to the feared stimuli. Without specific detail, the point is generic and will limit the credit candidates can be awarded.

- Centres are once again encouraged to continue to prepare candidates for comparative questions which have appeared as both short and extended open response questions in this examination. There have been signs of improvement but some candidates are still struggling with this skill, so use of connectives and like-for-like similarities and differences are the key to enabling these candidates to further access these questions. This was evident in 2016 and remains an issue for some candidates.

- Reading the question carefully and following the instructions to give only what the question is asking for is important. There are candidates that 'describe' but do not attempt evaluation when the question specifically asks to 'describe *and* evaluate' and as such their performance is limited on these questions. Highlighting and underlining the injunctions (command words) can help candidates gain focus under pressure and they are encouraged to check back to the question when composing their response to ensure they are still focusing on the requirements of the question being asked.

- Once again, it is advised that candidates apply their ideas to the context or scenario to be able to access all of the marks available on this paper. This examination is assessing applications of psychology and as such generic ethical points or methodological points will be limited in the credit candidates will be awarded. Candidates should apply each and every point to the application being assessed where possible, to ensure they gain the maximum credit they are able to for all questions.

- When giving a strength or weakness of a named study that candidates have to cover during their course, they need to contextualise this strength or weakness in terms of the study given in the question. Without this specific detail, the response is generic and could legitimately be about any study – so it needs to be appropriately contextualised to the named study.

Grade Boundaries

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

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

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