

Report on the Components

June 2006

1989/MS/R/06

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The mark schemes are published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by Examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

The reports on the Examinations provide information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the syllabus content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Mark schemes and Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers.

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General Certificate of Secondary Education

Psychology (1989)

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Chief Examiner's Report

General Comments

The specification continues to attract growing support as there was another increase in the number of Centres and candidates this year. The Principal Examiners reported that the tiering system was working well, with the majority of candidates being entered in the appropriate tier.

Source based questions and closed questions with fixed responses, where candidates were required to choose the correct response from a number of options, were answered well by the majority of candidates. Questions which acted as discriminators were those which allowed candidates to evaluate the information they had been given, and examiners the opportunity to award the full range of marks.

Many candidates offered high quality work on all parts of the paper, including the coursework.

INSET attendance was encouraging, providing a valuable opportunity for teachers and examiners to exchange information and ideas about how best to approach the specification, whether delivered over a one year or two year cycle.

To obtain maximum benefit from this report, please read it in conjunction with the questions papers and mark schemes for this session.

Principal Moderator's Report

Coursework continues to be a cornerstone of the Psychology GCSE specification. Candidates are given the opportunity to apply their knowledge of methodology when they choose a topic to investigate. From the coursework sampled by the moderators, it is clear that the thorough grounding in research techniques provided by many teachers is helping candidates to achieve excellent results. Coursework skills also seem to enhance performance on questions on the written papers which deal with research and ethical issues.

In general, Centres are following the guidelines offered by OCR when choosing a research topic to investigate. This ensures that candidates gain maximum benefit from the coursework because they have to apply their research techniques to an appropriate topic based on the specification. This also reinforces their knowledge of the underlying theories that they need to cover for the written papers. It was clear that candidates who had been encouraged to use a conventional format for writing up an investigation were able to gain the marks they deserved for their hard work. Even those candidates who seemed to have struggled with the writing up of their investigation benefited from following the structure of the conventional coursework report. This is probably because the prescriptive structure focuses them on the information that they have to provide in each section.

Memory topics continue to be popular. Candidates seem to be able to apply the general principles of memory in a simple and straightforward fashion, and the results they generate are easy to calculate and understand. There is also a lot of background material available. Gender differences are another popular choice, and are often investigated in tandem with morality, phobias or stress. These investigations are generally well done and provide candidates with an opportunity to discuss reasons for the ethical considerations which have to be applied when investigating such potentially sensitive areas (M2).

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The most successful reports tended to be those which focused on a single simple theme. This enabled the candidate to be selective about the background material used in the introduction, using only information relevant to their aims and hypotheses (I1 and I2). Simple themes led to simple investigations and a subsequent clearer understanding of what was happening in the investigation. Candidates who were able to understand the reasons for their choice of investigation and who offered a description of the methodology which would have enabled replication, gained top band marks for M1.

As in previous years, the discussion sections, particularly D1, were the discriminators between many candidates. Strong candidates were able to summarise their results and link them back to the research and hypotheses that they had provided at the start of their report. Weaker candidates were often only able to state the results without being able to fit them into the context of their investigation. Most candidates were able to make some points about situational variables or a possible sampling bias to gain credit in D2.

Finally, this is an appropriate place to raise awareness of the revisions to the Ethical Guidelines introduced in November 2005. To ensure safety for both candidates and participants, it is suggested that research is carried out in a safe environment and that, as far as possible, the environment should be the Centre itself. With the increase in the number of candidates beginning the course in Year 10, many candidates and participants will be below the BPS recommended minimum age of 16 when they carry out the coursework. In these cases, the under 16 rule can be relaxed if the research is carried out under the supervision of the tutor, and participants are selected only from the candidates' peer group. Of course, Centres can contact OCR if they need any advice or support in applying these revised guidelines.

1989/01 – Paper 1 (Foundation)

GENERAL

The examination paper questions appeared generally to function as in previous years, with a similar spread of performance served by a number of discriminating questions. However, some anxieties still persist, even after a number of years of examining. Examiners commented on what can only have been a poor level of training in some of the technical side of answering examination questions, for example, decoding instruction words and reading the question set. A surprisingly high number of candidates still seemed to be unable to distinguish between “study” and “theory.” Too many candidates fell to the temptation of using the source material when asked questions about research or psychological knowledge. Generally candidates should be trained to “describe” research or a study in terms of Aim, Procedure, and Findings - too many candidate lost marks for making no reference to findings as part of the description this year. Finally, the final high tariff question again found many candidates struggling, and this was disappointing given that the issue of conformity is thoroughly covered in every textbook and learning source.

Section A Social Psychology - Environment and Behaviour

- 1 The great majority of candidates used the Source correctly to identify the gang’s paint spray activities, and how people generally claim territory by coat over chair, towel on sunlounger etc.
- 2 (a) most candidates answered the first line drawing connection question about types of territory well
(b) many also gave good examples of primary territory e.g. bedroom/house secondary e.g. office/classroom, and public e.g. beach/street/pub
- 3 (a) a minority of candidates correctly explained the concept of “personal space” in terms of Hall’s “emotionally charged bubble of space which surrounds each individual”
(b) very few candidates managed to describe known cultural differences regarding personal space e.g. contact v. non-contact cultures, received cultural norms
- 4 Many candidates correctly spotted the question directed towards the research, for example, of Felipe & Sommer in the library and in the grounds of the mental hospital. Many lost marks for not including the outcome or findings.
- 5 Too many candidates lost marks by confusing “personal space” with territory. The question was about a person’s sense of personal space, to be protected from close encounters or intrusion by avoidance of eye contact, switching body alignment etc

Section B Behavioural Psychology – Phobias

- 6 Almost all candidates correctly identified Petra’s problem with rabbits
- 7 Almost all candidates correctly identified Petra’s favourite sweets as the pleasant stimulus in the research
- 8 An impressive number of candidates supplied the correct terms from those on offer to match the three provided definitions
- 9 (a) the great majority of candidates wrote some sort of definition of “phobia”

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For both marks what was looked for was something like “an irrational and persistent fear of an object, experience, or situation”

- (b) marks were awarded for identifying ANY three phobias, either in terms technical names e.g. agoraphobia, or simply fear of open spaces.
- 10 Candidates were awarded marks for both ethical and practical problems in research with children. Many candidates scored well by taking the ethical route e.g. getting parental consent. Many candidates also appeared to see psychologists as research monsters, making too much reference to lifelong damage etc.
- 11 Answers about causes of phobias were disappointing. The most common answers focussed on SLT and children mimicking another person’s phobia. Full marks (4) were awarded for stated referenced to theory.

Section C Developmental Psychology – cognitive development

- 12 The vast majority of candidates correctly identified the age of the sample in the source as 5 year olds
- 13 Most candidates correctly identified the percentage of the children who managed the task in the source i.e. 85%
- 14 A disappointingly high number of candidates were unable to define the three key Piagetian terms. The mark scheme looked for
Object Permanence: a child’s understanding that although it can no longer see an object it knows that it still exists
Conservation: the understanding that something stays the same even though the appearance changes
Egocentrism: the child seeing the world only from its own perspective
- 15 A significant majority of candidates successfully completed the second line drawing/matching question related to Piaget’s theory of cognitive development
- 16 Too many candidates ignored the reference to “research methods” in the question about criticism of Piaget, and chose, wrongly, to describe his research or theory. The mark scheme looked for reference to disembedded tasks, reference to the social world, difficult tasks, repetition of questions, limited sample etc
- 17 In general candidates dealt poorly with describing an actual research study critical of Piaget’s theory. The most commonly mentioned was the Bower& Wishart infra-red light research, a few described Hughes or McGarrigle. Too many referred back to Petra and the source.

Section D Social Psychology – social influence

- 18 The great majority of candidates correctly identified two rules broken by the nurses in Hofling’s research e.g. acting in response to a telephoned instruction, exceeding the recommended medication dosage
- 19 The question about an advantage of real life studies was only moderately answered. Too many candidates failed to see that it was a general question and not about the source. The mark scheme rewarded reference to high ecological validity, low demand characteristics etc.

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- 20 The main ethical question, focussed on “real life settings”, worked only moderately. Too many candidates merely off-loaded their recall of the BPS Ethical guidelines and did not reference them to real life settings e.g. issues of intrusion and privacy, lack of participant consent etc.
- 21 This question on conformity was answered only moderately over the whole candidature, despite its accessibility and treatment in all the text- books. Too many candidates answered with reference to obedience and Milgram and scored no marks, with telling consequences for their total mark.
Too many candidates dealt with Jenness or Sherif or Asch or Crutchfield without attempting any evaluation that the question called for.

1989/02 – Paper 2 (Foundation)

GENERAL COMMENTS

It was encouraging to see more candidates attempting more of the questions this series. This also meant that very few candidates scored very low marks. As with last year, nearly all candidates attempted the questions where they had to fill in tables, match boxes or circle/tick responses but it is disappointing that there are still candidates who will not even attempt this. More positively, a greater number of the open ended questions requiring written answers were tackled this series, although there continues to be a problem with candidates not attempting the final essay question. Lack of time does not seem to be the issue here as a number of incomplete papers included elaborate illustrations and/or commentaries explaining how bored candidates were waiting for the exam to finish!

It is pleasing to report very few examples of candidates who clearly should have been sitting a Higher paper rather than sitting this one, suggesting candidates are being entered more appropriately for the tiered papers. This may also account for the fact that there were fewer very high scoring candidates compared to previous series.

Despite the fact that the distribution of scores was narrower than previous years, there was still enough of a range to differentiate between stronger and weaker candidates. However, a number of Examiners noted that differences in performance was more Centre-specific than in previous years with some Centre's candidates seeming much better prepared than others.

Overall, candidates performed best on the "Sex and Gender" section of the paper and, although less marked, the "Aspects of Morality" section tended to produce the weakest responses.

COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Questions 1(a) & (b) caused no real problems for candidates with nearly everyone scoring both marks. A few candidates got the answers the wrong way around and received no credit.

Question 2 was generally answered well but caused some problems for some candidates. A number of candidates seemed to not know the terms "heteronomous" and "autonomous" and this tended to be Centre-specific. It is important that candidates are familiar with the key terms of any theories that they study. Where candidates knew the terms, they tended to recognise that Nathan was at the heteronomous stage. However very few candidates could accurately spell autonomous (the answer to 2(b)). Nonetheless, Examiners were generous in their marking of this in recognition of the fact there are many complex terms in psychology. However, it is worth encouraging candidates to practise spellings of key terms as they will not receive credit if the word could be possibly read or be interpreted as something else.

Question 3 produced some good responses often focusing on the gender/cultural bias of Piaget's theory of moral development, or on the simplicity of his stages. However, the modal score was 1 here because many candidates were unable to develop on their stated criticism. Another problem was that a number of candidates criticised Piaget's research rather than his *theory* which tended to limit them to 1 mark. A significant minority of candidates appeared to be talking about Piaget's work on cognitive development generally (e.g. he used his own children) and so this was not necessarily relevant to *moral* development.

Question 4 showed that only a few candidates knew the stages of Kohlberg's theory well. However, many candidates got some of the answers right and the question elicited the full range of marks.

Question 5(a) allowed most candidates to score 1. Although most candidates understood that longitudinal studies are carried out over time, few candidates got the second mark by recognising or suggesting that the same participants are used throughout.

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Question 5(b) also saw most candidates scoring 1 mark. Most candidates identified that longitudinal studies are time consuming but then couldn't explain the consequences of that for a second mark. A number of candidates gave problems that were too general and not related specifically to doing a study over time. A common misconception was that it was a problem if people's behaviour changed over time. Candidates need to understand that this may be the rationale behind doing a longitudinal study rather than being its limitation.

Question 6 was well answered by a number of candidates and they were obviously well prepared for questions on SLT. Many candidates used a number of relevant key terms in their responses (e.g. observation, imitation, role models, reinforcement) but stopped themselves from getting full marks by not applying the ideas specifically to *moral* development.

Question 7(a) was answered correctly by most candidates, especially since Examiners were looking for any reference to depth.

Question 7(b) was again answered correctly by most. Inevitably some candidates offered "Fiona" (the other parent) as an answer but some even offered "Charlie" (the child)!

Question 8(a) was answered poorly by most candidates, and it was unusual for Examiners to award both marks. Some candidates demonstrated an implicit understanding of why using infants is advantageous when studying the nature/nurture debate but few expressed it well. A large number of candidates gave general advantages of using infants (e.g. lack of demand characteristics) which were not related to the nature/nurture debate and so received no credit.

Question 8(b) produced a range of responses but very few candidates could describe a relevant study well enough to gain full marks. However it was pleasing that most candidates focused on findings as well as methodology. Gibson & Walk's visual cliff experiment was the most commonly offered study (possibly cued by the Source).

A number of candidates offered studies on infants from other areas of the specification (e.g. Cognitive Development, Attachment) but these could clearly not receive credit.

Question 9 was generally very well answered with nearly all candidates being awarded the full 3 marks.

Question 10 produced a range of responses. Where candidates scored zero it was often because they appeared to have muddled the terms "nature" and "nurture" rather than not answering at all. Human readjustment seemed to be the type of study candidates were least sure about.

Question 11 produced few good answers and was often not attempted, despite having the table in Q.10 as a prompt. It was also relatively common to read responses that focused on studies from other areas of the specification which were loosely associated with the concept of nurture. However, if they were not explicitly about perception they could not receive credit.

Question 12(a) showed that most candidates recognised that Brenda had a masculine gender identity, although not all candidates used that term. Examiners also accepted "male" in reference to gender identity but did not credit terms such as "boy" or "man".

12(b) was answered correctly by virtually every candidate.

Question 13 saw most candidates gaining both marks but there were an interesting range of spellings of "testosterone" with "testrogen" being a favourite. Again, as long as these spellings could not be interpreted as another word they were given credit. A number of candidates mis-read the table and put the right answers in the wrong place.

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Question 14 produced a variety of responses, but it was unusual to award the 2 marks on offer. Many candidates could identify a disadvantage (e.g. samples are small) but could not expand on this for a second mark. Common errors were to offer one *advantage* (rather than a disadvantage), to offer general problems that would apply to many other methods (e.g. participants behaving differently), or to offer ethical problems. With reference to the last error, candidates should be aware that when asked for a disadvantage/problem with a method it has to be a *practical* one. Questions about ethics are asked separately and, on that basis, make explicit reference to ethics.

Question 15 produced a range of scores, although candidates usually scored at least 2 here. The 3rd and 4th statements about sex typing and androgyny produced more incorrect responses.

Question 16 was answered very well by the majority of candidates. Most scored full marks although a significant minority of students mistakenly linked “driving school” with the research question about subject choice rather than space, presumably because they were focusing on the word “school” rather than the concept of driving.

Question 17 was attempted reasonably well. SLT was the most popular theory here. A number of candidates more or less repeated their answer to Q.6 which was acceptable, but they needed to relate the theory specifically to *gender* this time to gain full marks. Freud’s theory was also popular here, and often gained candidates 3 or 4 marks because of the level of detail they could go into. There were a number of common sense responses about boys and girls being treated differently in terms of toys, clothing, etc which were unlikely to score more than 1.

Question 18(a) presented few problems, although some candidates wrote their own aims rather than simply taking from the Source as the question directs them too. They were not necessarily penalised for this but it was clearly unnecessary.

Question 18(b) was answered correctly by most candidates.

Question 19 showed that many candidates have a good understanding of the term “independent variable” and it was pleasing to see so many of them getting it right. Inevitably, some candidates offered the DV. It was also relatively common for “the story” to be offered as an answer.

Question 20 saw many candidates scoring both marks although better responses used appropriate terminology, such as “prediction” and “outcome of research”. Some candidates mistakenly described an aim or a conclusion.

Question 21 was rarely done well. Memory aids/applications continue to cause problems for candidates despite previous questions on the concept and explicit reference to them in the specification. A number of candidates could not even name an aid and used loose terms such as “pictures”, “rhyming” and “repetition”. Better candidates could name a memory aid but few could adequately outline how it worked. There was sometimes a mismatch between the aid identified and what was then described.

Question 22 was answered reasonably well when attempted. Candidates used a wide range of appropriate terminology and demonstrated a good working knowledge of the two-process theory of memory. Candidates seemed to find it useful to use diagrams to support their descriptions of Atkinson & Shiffrin’s model and, in some cases, these did receive credit if they offered something not already in the description. Most candidates received middle or top band AO1 marks. However, AO2 marks were rarely awarded; sometimes because no evaluation was offered but often because evaluation was bland and said little more than this theory is “good” or “too simple” or “too general” and so on. Even better candidates could focus on little more than the model’s over-emphasis on rehearsal and this was unlikely to earn them more than 2 of the 4 AO2 marks.

Most candidates were awarded 3 or 4 marks for the Quality of Written Communication.

1989/03 – Paper 3 (Higher)

GENERAL

The examination paper and questions appeared to function as in previous years, distinguishing effectively between quite a few candidates who did rather poorly overall, and those with high scores revealing excellent content knowledge and good understanding of psychological terms and concepts.

Too many candidates clearly may again not have been adequately briefed about managing the technique of answering the set questions, for example by distinguishing between “describe” and “identify” and “evaluate”, and following the conventional Aim-Procedure-Findings style in describing research.

One area of the syllabus appeared to be seriously confused for many candidates i.e. environmental psychology. Too many were uncertain about the distinction between territory and personal space, for example.

Another concern in Section B was the poor knowledge of operant and classical conditioning, in terms of the main concepts.

Finally, the final high tariff question again found many candidates struggling, and this was surprising at the Higher level given the attention given in textbooks and resources to conformity.

Section A Social Psychology –Environment and Behaviour

- 1 Virtually all candidates used the source correctly to identify a coat over a chair or towel on sunlounger or name on the door as a method for claiming territorial ownership.
- 2 Many candidates successfully explained the basic types of territory e.g. **primary** as an area over which a person has relatively complete control, and so on. Too many candidates lost marks by giving examples rather than explanations.
- 3 Most candidates appeared to recognise the term “defensible space” as “territory centred on the home which has been designed to protect against intruders”
- 4 (a) the majority of candidates clearly had memorised Hall’s and the textbooks’ definition of personal space as “the emotionally charged bubble of space which surrounds a person.”
(b) most candidates wrote awkwardly about cultural differences regarding personal space, content to drop nationalities in – the marks scheme, for 1 mark only, looked for a sense of contact v. no-contact cultural difference.
- 5 Many candidates had clearly been introduced to the work of Fisher & Byrne, Felipe & Sommer et al. There were many good descriptions of the studies into personal space invasion, and some reasonable evaluation. Marks were awarded progressively for correct detail.

Section B Behavioural Psychology – Phobias

- 6 Almost all candidates correctly identified Petra’s problem with rabbits
- 7 Almost all candidates correctly identified Petra’s favourite sweets as the pleasant stimulus in the research

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- 8 There was very good matching of definitions and respective terms – reinforcer which strengthens the behaviour, conditional or unconditional stimulus which causes a response, extinction which leads to a stimulus no longer occurring
- 9 Generally the question on operant conditioning principles was only moderately dealt with – too many candidates did not recognise that the question was a general one about basic things e.g. rewarded behaviour being repeated, punished behaviour being eliminated and so on. Too many candidates answered in terms of classical conditioning and others with reference only to the source
- 10 The methods question, about general problems in research with children, seemed to invite a whole universe of ideas, many of which bizarrely promoted a sadistic image of psychologist at work. The mark was given for ethical and/or practical problems e.g. parental consent, understanding the task etc
- 11 Those candidates who got marks in this question about the limitations of the classical conditioning explanation of phobias wrote in terms of phobias being acquired with no antecedent experience, no weighting given to innate explanations or freewill influences or random experiences etc. Many candidates just could not deal with the question at all.
- 12 The majority of candidates managed to identify a second phobia and to explain it to some extent vis a vis social learning theory and/or behaviourism. The best answers used the SLT jargon e.g. “observe..imitate...reinforced” etc

Section C Developmental Psychology – cognitive development

- 13 (a) almost completely unanimous report of the 85% of the participants who managed the task described in the source
(b) the great majority of candidates were able to define “egocentric” in terms of “seeing the world only from one’s own perspective”
- 14 A large number of candidates showed good accurate knowledge of 2 of the 3 key Piagetian terms i.e. **object permanence**, the continuing existence of an object no longer in view, and **conservation**, something staying the same even though its appearance changes. Very few seemed to understand the concept of **centration** despite its place in texts and glossaries, in terms of the tendency to focus on only one aspect of a situation
- 15 A large number of candidates were awarded full marks for the second line matching question on Piaget’s stages and the respective descriptions: thinking directed to physical objects as **concrete**, understand the world through reflexes and senses as **sensorimotor**, using symbols and signs as **pre-operational**, reasoning abstractly as **formal operational**.
- 16 Many candidates had clearly studied research by, for example, Hughes, Rose & Blank, McGarrigle, et al. as criticism of Piaget’s original research and theory. Descriptions (maximum 4 marks) were quite good and knowledgeable, Evaluation e.g. more child friendly language, style of questioning, real world tasks etc, was less well answered.

Section D Social Psychology – social influence

- 17 Almost all candidates used the source correctly to identify Hofling’s nurses’ “offences” e.g. acting on telephoned instructions, administering incorrect medication
- 18 Many candidates dealt adequately with explaining one advantage of using a real life setting in research – the best answers referred to concepts like high ecological validity

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- 19 The mark scheme called for references to the use of deception, causing potential distress, lack of informed consent etc as ethical problems with research in real life settings. Too many candidates answered in terms of the source. The question was intended as a more general one.
- 20 The high tariff question, inviting candidates to “explain why people conform”, was the usual mix of informed psychology and rather weak non-psychological common sense. Marks were awarded in 3 bands: 1-4 marks for barely recognisable description of research or just common sense statements, 5-8 marks for reasonable description of research with some attempt to explain or a good list of reasons for conformity, 9-12 marks for good description of research with reasons for conforming or well developed explanations and psychological jargon e.g. informational social influence, normative social influence, “power of the situation” etc.
- Psychological referencing was mainly directed at Jenness, Sherif, and Asch. Sadly in this important question too many candidates committed the cardinal psychological sin of confusing conformity with obedience e.g. Milgram, and lost marks heavily.

1989/04 – Paper 4 (Higher)

GENERAL COMMENTS

Candidates performed well in this series, with virtually everyone gaining marks on each section. A significant number of candidates provided very sophisticated and knowledgeable responses to high scoring questions, and showed an impressive understanding of topics. There appeared to be fewer anecdotal and non-psychological answers than in previous series, and it was evident that many Centres are preparing their candidates well for the examination. Candidates were notably better at interpreting the demands of different types of questioning.

It was encouraging to see that nearly every candidate attempted the final essay question, and indeed the majority of candidates tackled it well. Indeed, no question, with the exception of Q.21, proved problematic for the well-prepared candidate.

Unfortunately, there continued to be examples of candidates who did not seem to have the ability nor the knowledge to be successful on the Higher paper. However, this problem often occurred within Centres rather than across Centres. Indeed, a number of Examiners noted that differences in performance were more Centre-specific than in previous years, with some Centres' candidates performing much better than others.

Overall, candidates performed best on the "Sex and Gender" section of the paper and, although less marked, the "Aspects of Morality" section tended to produce the weakest responses.

COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

Question 1(a) & (b) caused no real problems for candidates with nearly everyone scoring both marks. However, some candidates felt the need to re-interpret the Source which did not necessarily lose them marks but made the question more demanding. Candidates should understand that "From the Source" questions nearly always require answers that are directly quoted from the Source. A few candidates got the answers the wrong way around and received no credit.

Question 2 was generally answered well but caused some problems for some candidates. A number of candidates seemed to not know the terms "heteronomous" and "autonomous" and this tended to be Centre-specific. In these cases, candidates often offered Kohlberg's stages or the stages from Piaget's cognitive developmental research. It is important that candidates are familiar with the key terms of any theories that they study. Where candidates knew the terms they tended to apply them correctly to Nathan and Tom. However, there were some problems with the spelling of the terms. Nonetheless, Examiners were generous in their marking of this, in recognition of the fact there are many complex terms in psychology. However, it is worth encouraging candidates to practise spellings of key terms as they will not receive credit if the word could be possibly read or be interpreted as something else.

Question 3 produced some good response often focusing on the gender/cultural bias of Piaget's theory of moral development, or on the simplicity of his stages. However, the modal score was 2 here because many candidates were unable to fully develop on their stated criticism. A number of candidates tried to compensate by offering another criticism but this did not get credit unless it was linked in some way with the first. When one criticism is asked for only one criticism can be credited. Another problem was that a number of candidates criticised Piaget's research rather than his theory which tended to limit them to 2 marks. For the third mark, candidates would have had to explain how a methodological flaw impacts on the actual theory.

Question 4 showed that only a few candidates knew the stages of Kohlberg's theory really well. However, many candidates got some of the answers right and the question elicited the full range of marks.

Question 5 saw most candidates scoring 1 mark. Most candidates identified that longitudinal studies are time consuming, or at least that they were carried out over a period of time. However, not many candidates could go beyond this and relate it to problems such as participants dropping out or cost. A number of candidates gave problems that were too general and not related to specifically to doing a study over time. A common misconception was that it was a problem if people's behaviour changed over time. Candidates need to understand that this may be the rationale behind doing a longitudinal study rather than being its limitation.

Question 6 divided candidates, quite significantly, into those that were obviously familiar with Gilligan's work and those that were not. There was often a Centre-effect here. Where candidates had knowledge and understanding of Gilligan's work, they often scored 3 or 4 marks.

Question 7(a) was answered correctly by most candidates, especially since Examiners were looking for any reference to depth.

Question 7(b) was again answered correctly by most. Inevitably some candidates offered "Fiona" (the other parent) as an answer but some even offered "Charlie" (the child)!

Question 8 was generally very well answered. Nearly all candidates gained the full 4 marks.

Question 9(a) normally saw candidates scoring 1 mark, usually for some reference to "testing" or "control". However, few candidates could give an adequate definition of an experiment. The best answers made reference to concepts such as "variables" and "cause and effect".

Question 9(b) was generally well answered even if (a) was not. The notions of "lack of ecological validity" and "demand characteristics" were popular here but obviously needed explaining for the second mark. Some candidates made the mistake of describing the *ethical* problems of experimentation. Candidates should be aware that when asked for a disadvantage/problem with a method it has to be a *practical* one. Questions about ethics are asked separately and, on that basis, make explicit reference to ethics.

Question 10 produced some very good responses. Candidates often focused on neonate studies, and especially Gibson & Walk's visual cliff experiment (possibly cued by the Source). However, the question was a good discriminator as a number of candidates struggled to describe studies well often leaving the Examiner to "fill in the gaps". On a positive note, it was pleasing to see candidates giving coverage to findings and conclusions as well as methodology. Inevitably, some candidates offered studies better known for supporting the nurture side of the debate. Such studies could still gain some marks on the basis that their findings may be disputable but it was up to candidates to make that point to gain full marks, otherwise they tended to just earn marks for their description of methodology. A significant minority of candidates did not attempt this question, and this generally Centre-specific. Given that the bulk of the "Perception" topic is about studies into the nature/nurture debate it seemed unlikely they had not been taught any, but they clearly had problems interpreting what the question was asking for. In some cases, candidates even offered studies not within the area of "Perception".

Question 11 produced some very good responses as well. Candidates often focused on cross-cultural studies and readjustment studies, but some managed to make deprivation studies relevant by explaining what subjects could *not* perceive. However, as with Q.10, this question was a good discriminator. Again, it was pleasing to see candidates giving coverage to findings and conclusions as well as methodology. Inevitably, some candidates offered studies better known for supporting the nature side of the debate. Such studies could still gain some marks on the basis that their findings may be disputable. For example, a number of candidates offered

Gibson & Walk here but made the point that 6-month old babies had had time to *learn* about depth and therefore had related it to nurture. On this basis, some candidates still earned the full 4 marks. A significant minority of candidates did not attempt this question, and it was generally the same candidates who had not attempted Q.10. In some cases, candidates offered studies not within the area of "Perception".

12(a) showed that most candidates recognised that Brenda had a masculine gender identity, although not all candidates used that term. Examiners also accepted "male" in reference to gender identity but did not credit terms such as "boy" or "man".

12(b) was answered correctly by virtually every candidate.

13 saw most candidates gaining full marks but there were an interesting range of spellings of the different hormones. Again, as long as these spellings could not be interpreted as another word they were given credit.

14 produced a variety of responses, but generally showed that the case study is not a well understood method. A common error was to assume that case studies always takes place over a long period of time. A number of candidates also mistakenly offered a disadvantage rather than an advantage. Even where candidates gave appropriate responses (e.g. it studies people in-depth) they often struggled to elaborate on the point they were making.

15 produced a range of scores, although candidates usually scored at least 2 here. The 3rd statement about androgyny produced more incorrect responses.

16 was answered correctly by nearly every candidate.

17(a) was attempted reasonably well. SLT was the most popular theory here.

Many candidates used a number of relevant key terms in their responses (e.g. observation, imitation, role models, reinforcement) but some stopped themselves from getting full marks by not applying the ideas specifically to *gender*.

Freud's theory was also popular here, and often gained candidates 4 marks because of the level of detail they could go into. There were a few common sense responses about boys and girls being socialised differently which were unlikely to score more than 1.

17(b) was generally well done if Freud was being criticised. It was good to see candidates giving strong criticisms about gender role development in single parent families or the problems of testing Freud's ideas rather than just accusing him of being "weird", etc.

Where SLT was used in (a), criticisms were often weak or irrelevant. The most worrying trend is the vast numbers of candidates who believe that SLT cannot account for normal gender development in single parent families. Candidates need to be clear that SLT proposes there are other role models besides the parents.

18(a) presented few problems, although some candidates wrote their own aims rather than simply taking from the Source as the question directs them too. They were not necessarily penalised for this but it was clearly not expected of them.

18(b) was answered correctly by the vast majority of candidates.

19 showed that many candidates have a good understanding of the term "independent variable" and it was pleasing to see so many of them getting it right. Inevitably, some candidates offered the DV. It was also relatively common for "the story" to be offered as an answer.

20 saw many candidates score the 1 mark available although better responses used appropriate terminology, such as "prediction" and "outcome of research".

21 was rarely done well. *Applications* of memory research continue to cause problems for candidates despite previous questions on the concept and explicit reference to them in the specification. Too many candidates simply re-iterated the findings from the Source, rather than applying them more widely. Having said this, there were some very good responses focusing on education/learning/assessment, as well as more straightforward responses about “retracing footsteps”.

22 was done reasonably well, but fewer candidates than expected actually offered correct terms such as “decay”, “motivated forgetting”, “displacement”, etc. A number of candidates relied on an outline instead, which could gain credit but was an inefficient way of answering the question. Weaker candidates offered explanations such as “stress”, “being tired”, or “lack of concentration” which did not receive credit.

23 produced many clear and detailed responses. Candidates used a wide range of appropriate terminology and demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of the two-process theory of memory. Candidates seemed to find it useful to use diagrams to support their descriptions of Atkinson & Shiffrin's model and, in some cases, these did receive credit if they offered something not already in the description. Most candidates received middle or top band AO1 marks. However, AO2 marks were awarded less often; sometimes because no evaluation was offered but often because evaluation was bland and said nothing substantial about the theory. Many candidates could focus on little more than the model's over-emphasis on rehearsal and this was unlikely to earn them more than 2 of the 4 AO2 marks. However, better candidates also focused on issues such as the validity of research, individual differences, and possible improvements to the model.

Most candidates were awarded 4 or 5 marks for the Quality of Written Communication.

1989/05 - Coursework

Principal Moderator's Report :

Coursework continues to be a cornerstone of the Psychology GCSE specification. Candidates are given the opportunity to apply their knowledge of methodology when they choose a topic to investigate. From the coursework sampled by the moderators, it is clear that the thorough grounding in research techniques provided by many teachers is helping candidates to achieve excellent results. Coursework skills also seem to enhance performance on questions on the written papers which deal with research and ethical issues.

In general, Centres are following the guidelines offered by OCR when choosing a research topic to investigate. This ensures that candidates gain maximum benefit from the coursework because they have to apply their research techniques to an appropriate topic based on the specification. This also reinforces their knowledge of the underlying theories that they need to cover for the written papers. It was clear that candidates who had been encouraged to use a conventional format for writing up an investigation were able to gain the marks they deserved for their hard work. Even those candidates who seemed to have struggled with the writing up of their investigation benefited from following the structure of the conventional coursework report. This is probably because the prescriptive structure focuses them on the information that they have to provide in each section.

Memory topics continue to be popular. Candidates seem to be able to apply the general principles of memory in a simple and straightforward fashion, and the results they generate are easy to calculate and understand. There is also a lot of background material available. Gender differences are another popular choice, and are often investigated in tandem with morality, phobias or stress. These investigations are generally well done and provide candidates with an opportunity to discuss reasons for the ethical considerations which have to be applied when investigating such potentially sensitive areas (**M2**).

The most successful reports tended to be those which focused on a single simple theme. This enabled the candidate to be selective about the background material used in the introduction, using only information relevant to their aims and hypotheses (**I1** and **I2**). Simple themes led to simple investigations and a subsequent clearer understanding of what was happening in the investigation. Candidates who were able to understand the reasons for their choice of investigation and who offered a description of the methodology which would have enabled replication, gained top band marks for **M1**.

As in previous years, the discussion sections, particularly **D1**, were the discriminators between many candidates. Strong candidates were able to summarise their results and link them back to the research and hypotheses that they had provided at the start of their report. Weaker candidates were often only able to state the results without being able to fit them into the context of their investigation. Most candidates were able to make some points about situational variables or a possible sampling bias to gain credit in **D2**.

Finally, this is an appropriate place to raise awareness of the revisions to the Ethical Guidelines introduced in November 2005. To ensure safety for both candidates and participants, it is suggested that research is carried out in a safe environment and that, as far as possible, the environment should be the Centre itself. With the increase in the number of candidates beginning the course in Year 10, many candidates and participants will be below the BPS recommended minimum age of 16 when they carry out the coursework. In these cases, the under 16 rule can be relaxed if the research is carried out under the supervision of the tutor, and participants are selected only from the candidates' peer group. Of course, Centres can contact OCR if they need any advice or support in applying these revised guidelines.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education Psychology
June 2006 Assessment Series**

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
01	80	-	-	47	40	33	26	19
02	80	-	-	42	36	30	24	18
03	80	65	54	44	32	-	-	-
04	80	65	54	43	32	-	-	-
05	40	34	28	23	19	15	12	9
85	40	34	28	23	19	15	12	9

Syllabus Options

Foundation Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	-	-	-	111	94	78	62	46
Percentage in Grade		-	-	-	44.0	22.2	21.0	9.3	2.8
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		-	-	-	44.0	66.2	87.2	96.5	99.3

The total entry for the examination was 1297

Higher Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	182	158	134	110	83	69	-	-
Percentage in Grade		3.2	18.5	25.6	25.8	19.4	4.7	-	-
Cumulative Percentage in Grade		3.2	21.7	47.3	73.1	92.5	97.2		

The total entry for the examination was 2026

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage in Grade	2.0	11.6	16.2	32.5	20.4	10.8	3.5	1.0
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	2.0	13.6	29.8	62.3	82.7	93.5	97.0	98.0

The total entry for the examination was 3323

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