

Report on the Components

June 2007

1989/MS/R/07

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This report on the Examination provides 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.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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Psychology (1989)

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GCSE Psychology 1989

Chief Examiner's Report

The specification again attracted growing support as there was another increase in both 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 offered examiners the opportunity to award the full range of marks.

A pleasing number of 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 question papers and mark schemes for this session.

1989/01 – Paper 1 (Foundation)

General Comments

The examination paper and questions appeared to function as in previous years, but the general impression shared by examiners was that overall performance was disappointing in a number of respects. Some examiners felt that the performance of many candidates appeared to be Centre specific. There were some strikingly good candidates, but perhaps too many candidates did less well. The “mechanical” questions (matching lines and boxes and word insertion) worked well for practically all candidates. What was notable, given their prominence in Psychology and textbooks, was the inadequate grasp of Bowlby and Piaget. Many candidates seemed confused eg between Bowlby and Ainsworth, Piaget and Hughes and Wishart. A surprising number of candidates made the mistake of confusing conformity and obedience.

In technical terms, candidates need to be reminded that it is not acceptable to use the Source to answer a question on “other study” or “one study”; describing a study should also include details of results or outcome. “From the Source” questions require just that, quoting directly from the source rather than paraphrasing. Command words are not interchangeable eg “identify” is not the same as “outline”. Finally, the high tariff question again damaged many candidates’ overall score, and many missed key Quality of Written Communication marks because of an absence of Psychological terminology.

Comments on individual questions

Section A

Social Psychology – Social influence

- Q1 (a) Virtually all candidates correctly identified the range of estimates as 1-18cm, some as 17.
(b) Many candidates failed to define “convergence” as changing or merging to a common agreed point.
- Q2 Many candidates were able to identify and explain two factors affecting conformity, example, normative and informational social influence, low self-esteem, social norms, ambiguity etc.
- Q3 The vast majority of candidates correctly identified each of the descriptions as either conformity (chanting songs on the terrace, buying the latest fashion in clothes) and obedience (drivers stopping at “GIVE WAY” signs, and turning up on time for the examination).
- Q4 Most candidates chose to describe Asch’s three-line experiment as a study into conformity, usually identifying confederates from naïve participants. Many candidates, however, failed to describe the findings in terms of results, percentages etc. in part (b), choosing to make bald, bland statements. The third section, (c), on criticism was usually answered in terms of low ecological validity and deception.

Section B

Behavioural Psychology – Aggression

- Q5 The majority of candidates used the Source well to (a) identify Freud’s explanation of aggression in terms of instinct and (b) Bandura’s in terms of copying people behaving badly.

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- Q6 Many candidates failed to describe a case study thoroughly in terms of both the study of an individual or small group of individuals over a period of time.
- Q7 The vast majority of candidates managed the line drawing question on Social Learning correctly (linking the two references to *imitation*, *observation* as noticing what others do, a *model* as anyone whose behaviour is copied, *reinforcement* as anything that strengthens a behaviour).
- Q8 The question about one gender difference in aggression was answered erratically, with reference to socialisation or media modelling or the testosterone effect. Many answers read like common sense observations rather than Psychology.
- Q9 Many candidates had clearly been drilled with mnemonics to remember the main concepts of Social Learning Theory (e.g. observation, model, imitation, reinforcement) and answered the question by producing lists of these terms, often with no reference to aggression as mentioned in the question. They lost marks in the process.

Section C

Developmental Psychology – Attachment

- Q10 A high percentage of candidates correctly identified the 60 babies involved in the research described in the Source and used the text to define “sensitive responsiveness” as understanding and responding appropriately to the needs of the baby.
- Q11 Most candidates made a reasonable effort at defining attachment in terms of the first important bond a baby develops with a caregiver.
- Q12 Many candidates completed the passage on attachment and separation by inserting the correct word from the list provided, to make the passage read “As an infant develops she shows distress when the caregiver leaves, this distress is called separation protest. When infants use their caregiver as a safe base they are said to be securely attached. Infants who avoid the caregiver or are confused about them are said to be insecurely attached. An infant who never develops attachment is experiencing privation.”
- Q13 Many candidates did not deal correctly with the question about longitudinal research. The mark scheme looked for something like “research with the same individuals over a significant period of time”. Answers about advantages and disadvantages of this method were expected to include high quality developmental data and evidence of change, the problems of subject loss, high funding charges and high time commitment.
- Q14 (a) A disappointing number of candidates clearly had a very sketchy grasp of Bowlby’s theory of attachment and tended to wander well away from concepts like critical period, innate mechanism, imprinting, mother preference etc.
- (b) The lack of focused description of the basic Bowlby theory of attachment resulted in many candidates having nothing to write in terms of criticism. Some candidates recalled Bowlby’s use of his own children and his style of interrogation.

Section D

Developmental Psychology –Cognitive development

- Q15 Almost all candidates used the Source accurately to identify young babies as the participants in the study and an infra-red camera as the device for recording their behaviour.

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- Q16 Many candidates showed good knowledge of the BPS ethical guidelines, and answered the question correctly on child participants in terms of parental consent, avoidance of distress etc.
- Q17 Most candidates were successful in the second line drawing question on Piaget's cognitive stages, linking *sensori-motor* to the child exploring its world using its developing senses, *formal operational* with the child reasoning in abstract terms, *concrete operational* linked with the child being able to think logically about physical objects, *pre-operational* linked with the child beginning to use symbols, signs, words.
- Q18 Knowledge of Piaget's original research, the expected Three Mountain Task and Conservation Tasks was disappointing. Many answered merely in terms of stages, many confused Piaget with Wishart or Hughes and some wrote about moral development rather than cognitive development.

Marks for Quality of Written Communication were divided into three bands focused on literacy, accuracy and Psychological relevance.

1989/02 – Paper 2 (Foundation)

General Comments

Paper 2 elicited a large number of reasonable responses this year, with few candidates scoring very poorly. Once again, it was encouraging to see candidates attempting more of the questions this series. As with previous years, virtually all candidates attempted the questions where they had to fill in tables, match boxes or circle/tick responses. Therefore, the open ended questions tended to discriminate between candidates in terms of whether they answered them or not, and also how well they addressed the demands of these questions. Although more candidates appeared to attempt the last question this year, there was still a significant number who did not. Candidates should be aware that even if the content of their last answer does not score well, then can still earn full marks for the quality of written communication as long as their response contains some Psychology.

Pleasingly, there were very few examples of candidates who clearly should have been sitting a Higher paper rather than this one. This may also account for the fact that there were only a few very high scoring candidates compared to previous series.

Overall, candidates performed best on the “Stress” section of the paper with some very good marks being achieved.

Comments on individual questions

Source A: Attitudes of Prejudice

- Q1 (a) Most candidates correctly identified the method used in the study. However, there was still a significant number of candidates who did not seem to know that the term ‘method’ refers to a specific technique for collecting data, and instead simply described a procedure from the research (e.g. ‘he invited participants along to his Psychology department’) or stated the aim.
- (b) Nearly all candidates could state what the participants had in common. Some made the mistake of saying they all stopped to help the confederate in the Manchester United shirt when the source showed this was not true of all participants.
- Q2 Most candidates knew to select the terms ‘independent’ and ‘dependent’ to fill in the gaps. However, a significant number got these the wrong way around.
- Q3 Virtually all candidates got this right and ticked the ‘participant’.
- Q4 There were some good answers to this question and it was answered in a variety of different ways with some candidates focusing on issues such as isolation of the IV, reliability, and control. Others explained what would change if the confederate was not the same person by focusing on the effects of age, race, sex, etc. on prejudice. Others considered the practicalities of using one confederate. Each of these – or a combination – was creditworthy, and it meant that most candidates scored at least one mark.
- Q5 Most candidates could identify an ethical problem, normally focusing on consent, deception or distress. They did not always explicitly identify the problem, which normally limited them to one mark. Similarly, if candidates just identified the problem, without illustrating it using the study or going on to describe it, they were limited to one mark. There were some very original responses to this question which focused on the harm that might come to the confederate from trying to fall over or even from being attacked by rival fans! Such answers were worthy of credit as the researcher has responsibilities to

everyone involved in the investigation. Surprisingly, there were still a number of candidates who seemed to not understand what is meant by an *ethical* problem as they offered practical problems instead.

- Q6 Most candidates recognised that all the statements were true. Where candidates made errors it was normally on the last statement about racism.
- Q7 This question elicited the full range of marks, with zero being awarded almost as much as full marks. Where candidates scored one mark, it was normally for matching the cognitive component to stereotyping. However, a large number of candidates mistakenly thought the definition of conformity matched the behavioural component of prejudice.
- Q8 This question is commonly asked in the examination and it was hoped that candidates would be better prepared for it. Responses were generally disappointing, with only a small minority of candidates being able to give an adequate description of a theory of prejudice. This was despite the fact that they were given the 'beginnings' of Social Identity Theory in the source. However, theories such as Adorno's authoritarian personality or Sherif's competition theory would also have received credit. Social Learning Theory was credited when offered, but candidates were generally unable to apply it adequately to the development of prejudice. However, many candidates scored no more than one for a number of reasons; they responded with common sense statements (e.g. people are brought up to be prejudiced); they described a study of prejudice rather than a theory; they defined prejudice; they gave an example of prejudice; they described the components of prejudice (e.g. people are prejudiced because they discriminate against others) which had already been given in Q7.

Source B: Memory

- Q9 (a) Nearly every candidate was able to state that Caitlin had forgotten many of the French words she had learnt, or something similar.
- (b) This question was not answered as well as (a). Despite the fact that this was a 'From the source' question, a worrying number of candidates still offered psychological explanations not in the source (e.g. amnesia, displacement). Some candidates also actually described why Caitlin may be experiencing forgetting rather than simply naming a theory. Candidates need to be aware that the questions that immediately follow a source are generally straightforward comprehension questions.
- Q10 (a) Few candidates scored highly on this question. Although a large number of candidates knew a theory of forgetting, they often did not know enough detail to earn the marks. Weaker candidates muddled various theories together, or just offered 'common sense' explanations of forgetting (e.g. people get distracted from remembering, people forget as they get older). The latter response was particularly disappointing given the fact that four theories were listed in the source. There was also a problem with some candidates writing about how we remember things rather than explicitly why we forget things. Candidates need to be aware that a question on 'theories of forgetting' requires a detailed and technical response.
- (b) Not surprisingly, given the poor standard of answers to (a), the responses to (b) were also disappointing. Full marks were awarded very rarely and, where they were, it often followed a decent answer to (a). Too many answers were bland statements (e.g. sometimes we remember information, this theory is not always correct) or completely missed the point of the question. It is very common for questions to ask for a criticism of a theory so it is useful if candidates have at least one and preferably two criticisms for each theory they learn about. They should also be able to explain or elaborate on this criticism.

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- Q11 The 'stages of memory' diagram has appeared in a number of papers in various forms over the years so it is surprising that more candidates are not familiar with it. Although a number of candidates did score two marks here, large numbers did not. Many answers were offered instead of 'encoding' (including some that did not even begin with E!) but 'enter/entry' was the most common mistake. 'Recall' and 'rehearsal' were the most common mistakes for the answer that should have read 'retrieval'.
- Q12 There were some good scores on this question, with most candidates gaining three or four marks, thus suggesting that many of them have a sound knowledge of the key concepts associated with Atkinson & Shiffrin's model.
- Q13 It was encouraging to see more candidates attempting the question on applications of memory research than in previous years. Better still, more candidates seem to have a good idea of what is meant by *application* and there were only a few examples of candidates describing studies or theories instead. Nearly all candidates decided to describe memory aids. Although they were good at naming them, they were less successful at explaining how they work. It was necessary to be able to do this with at least one application to earn full marks. There was also some muddling of memory aids, or mis-naming techniques. Overall though, this question was tackled much better than similar questions in previous years.

Source C: Stress

- Q14 (a) This question was answered incorrectly almost as often as it was answered correctly. Large numbers of candidates offered a factor affecting stress (from the source), rather than a symptom of it. The symptoms were labelled as such in the source so candidates should be encouraged to read sources carefully.
- (b) Virtually every candidate gave the correct percentage.
- Q15 Most candidates knew a scattergram is used to display a correlation.
- Q16 (a) Many candidates scored both marks here. Those that did not tended not to go beyond stating that a questionnaire is made up of questions.
- (b) Although not all answers were true of questionnaires generally, if they applied to features of questionnaires (e.g. using closed questions, being posted out) then they still received credit where appropriate. There were some good answers, but some candidates need to understand that a two mark answer needs to be elaborated in some way e.g. it is not enough to just say that respondents may lie on a questionnaire, they also have to explain why that can, or is likely to, happen. Candidates also needed to avoid making statements which are true of all or most methods (e.g. it may not be valid) as well as bland statements (e.g. it's not always accurate).
- Q17 This was answered really well with the majority of candidates getting all three marks. It was good to see there was little muddling of the concepts of physiological and psychological as in previous years, although the examples already in the table may have helped here.
- Q18 This question tested whether candidates were aware of the applications associated with research into stress and their responses demonstrated that they definitely were, with nearly every candidate scoring the full four marks.

Q19 Like Q8, this is a commonly asked question and it is expected candidates will be well prepared for it. Indeed, there were some very good and detailed responses but these were outweighed by candidates who had 'patchy' or confused knowledge of a study, or had no knowledge of a study. In the latter case, research was clearly being made up or, instead, examples of stressful situations were being given. Worse still, a number of candidates just left it blank.

Source D: Aspects of Morality

Q20 (a) As with Q1 (a) not all candidates seemed clear on what is meant by a method in Psychology. However, most candidates got this right.
(b) Few candidates had problems identifying the age of the children in the source.

Q21 (a) Candidates struggled with this question. Some seemed to have little awareness of Kohlberg's stages let alone the details of them. It was common for candidates to offer descriptions of Piagetian stages. Where there is some overlap between Piaget and Kohlberg (self-centeredness), some credit was given. Overall, marks were low despite a wide range of responses being accepted.
(b) Two marks were rarely awarded here. It was surprising how many candidates knew the name of one stage but not the other. Most candidates did attempt this question but offered terms from elsewhere on the specification e.g. Piaget's cognitive stages.

Q22 Most candidates made a fair effort to address this question. Many scored a mark for recognising the nature of cross-cultural research, but few were able to outline adequately how the research might be done. They were too many vague statements about doing the 'same experiment', for example, without being clear what the experiment might be.

Q23 (a) & (b) Occasionally there were some excellent responses to this question, particularly in terms of description. They were more often than not answers that focused on Piaget's theory of moral development. It was clear that these candidates were well prepared as they could describe numerous details associated with Piaget's stages, as well as associated evidence. The quality of evaluation in these responses was more variable but the best candidates could explain a number of criticisms of Piaget's theory. Weaker candidates could often extract some of the details of Piaget's theory, and although there was some confusion and mis-labelling of concepts, they received credit through positive marking.

Candidates, who chose to describe Social Learning Theory, on average, did less well than candidates who chose Piaget. One of the main problems was poor application to moral development, with some candidates even relating it to gender development. Candidates were also weaker at evaluating Social Learning Theory, with many offering commentary with no substance. A significant number of candidates thought that 'bad parenting' is a criticism of social learning rather than something it can explain. It was encouraging to see few common sense responses as most answers contained some Psychology. Almost inevitably, there was some muddling of Piaget and Kohlberg and, unfortunately, a small number of candidates simply offered (often weak) descriptions of Kohlberg despite the question precluding this. Worse still, some candidates even described Piaget's theory of cognitive development which does not even feature on this paper.

Most candidates scored three or four for the quality of their written communication.

1989/03 – Paper 3 (Higher)

General Comments

The overall impression of the candidates' performance was that, in general, most candidates had been appropriately entered for the higher tier paper. Many candidates showed both excellent knowledge and understanding of psychological terms and concepts although a few others showed little understanding of the subject or the course content. It is perhaps a bit disappointing after five years that many candidates still seemed unfamiliar with key studies and concepts.

In technical terms, it is important that candidates are drilled in the simple exercise of using the source to answer the "From the Source" question, rather than paraphrasing or generalising from their knowledge. At the Higher level it is also vital that candidates offer some relevant evaluation when that is part of the instruction in the higher tariff final question in each Section. It is also important for candidates to pay close attention to the question instructions in full. For example, outline the Social Learning Theory of aggression, not just the Social Learning Theory per se - that final focus is crucial for high marks. Finally, candidates need to be trained in the skill of time management so they can attend thoroughly to the final high tariff question.

Comments on individual questions

Section A

Social Psychology - Social influence

- Q1 (a) Virtually all candidates correctly identified the range of estimates as 1-18cm, some as 17.
(b) too many candidates failed to define "convergence" as changing or merging to a common agreed point
- Q2 Many candidates were able to identify and explain 2 factors affecting conformity, for example, normative and informational social influence, low self-esteem, social norms, ambiguity etc.
- Q3 Marks were awarded to all reasonable everyday examples of conformity (e.g. with friends) and obedience (sadly, mostly with reference to teachers).
- Q4 The majority of candidates were able to give the predictable difference between conformity ("going along with" or fitting in) and obedience (following an instruction or order).
- Q5 Most candidates described Asch's three line experiment as another study into conformity; many descriptions were clear and precise. A few dealt with Jenness or Crutchfield; none chose to describe Zimbardo's research. Too many candidates squandered the two evaluation marks.

Section B

Behavioural Psychology – Aggression

- Q6 The majority of candidates used the Source correctly to (a) identify Freud's explanation of aggression in terms of instinct and (b) Bandura's in terms of copying people behaving badly.

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- Q7 (a) Many candidates failed to describe a case study in terms of both the study of an individual or small group of individuals, and over a period of time. (b) The most commonly suggested examples of a known case study were Little Hans, Little Albert, and Genie.
- Q8 Candidates who scored well in the question about one study into the media and aggression knew and described the Williams' Canadian research, often very well. Many were content to describe Bandura's Bobo doll experiment.
- Q9 The question on cultural differences in the level of aggression was poorly answered. The mark scheme looked for reference to Bronfenbrenner or Mead or Ebbeson but too many answers wandered vaguely into the contemporary world political scene.
- Q10 Many candidates clearly had rehearsed, sometimes with mnemonics, the key Social Learning concepts eg observation, imitation, role modelling, reinforcement, and duly delivered them in shopping list style in answer to the question about describing and evaluating the Social Learning Theory of aggression. Too many delivered the conceptual ideas with no reference to aggression and lost marks. For full marks, the answer had to remain focused on aggression. Many candidates also offered no evaluation e.g. alternative biological or psychoanalytic explanations.

Section C

Developmental Psychology – Attachment

- Q11 A high percentage of candidates correctly identified the 60 babies involved in the research described in the Source, and used the text to define "sensitive responsiveness" as understanding and responding appropriately to the needs of the baby.
- Q12 On the whole, too many candidates did not deal correctly with the question about longitudinal research. The mark scheme looked for something like "research with the same individuals over a significant period of time". Answers about advantages and disadvantages of this method were expected to include high quality developmental data and evidence of change, the problems of subject loss, high funding costs and high time commitment.
- Q13 Most candidates made a reasonable effort at defining attachment in terms of the first important bond that a baby develops with a caregiver.
- Q14 The majority of candidates correctly distinguished between deprivation, as the breaking of an established bond, and privation as never having formed a bond in the first place.
- Q15 Some candidates clearly knew Bowlby's theory of attachment (first bond, innate, critical period, mother exclusivity, essential for mental health etc). Evaluation tended to focus on the role of fathers and others as attachment figures and late attachment etc. Many candidates confused Bowlby with Ainsworth.

Section D

Developmental Psychology – Cognitive development

- Q16 Almost every candidate used the Source accurately to identify young babies as the participants in the study, and an infra-red camera as the device for recording their behaviour.
- Q17 A large majority of candidates had clearly learned the key Piagetian terms - inology, egocentrism as seeing the world only through their own eyes, conservation as knowing

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that something is the same despite changes in its appearance, and object permanence as knowing that, despite not being able to see an object, it still exists.

- Q18 Best answers to the final high tariff question on Piaget's research into cognitive development centred on well known research such as the Three Mountain Test and conservation tasks, and offered references to Hughes and McGarrigle and Donaldson and Piaget's methodology (e.g. using his own children), as evaluation. Marks awarded depended on the detail offered.

Marks for Quality of Written Communication were divided into three bands focused on literacy, accuracy and psychological relevance.

1989/04 – Paper 4 (Higher)

General Comments

Candidates performed well again in this series. A significant number of candidates demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding of the topics assessed. Most answers demonstrated that candidates had a good grounding in Psychology and that many Centres are preparing their candidates well for the examination. Candidates continued to interpret the demands of different types of question well. It was encouraging to see that nearly every candidate attempted the final essay question, with a large number of candidates doing so effectively.

As with previous years, there was the on-going problem of candidates sitting the paper who did not seem to have the knowledge or understanding to be successful on the Higher tier. As noted before, this problem often occurred within particular Centres rather than across Centres. Although candidates can achieve a grade C or D on the Higher Paper, they can do so on the Foundation paper as well and careful thought should be given to making an appropriate entry in each case. Candidates who have no realistic prospect of achieving beyond a C or D are more likely to benefit from a Foundation entry since the papers will match their attainment more effectively and may solicit a better response than taking Higher papers where some questions may prove largely inaccessible.

Comments on individual questions

Source A: Attitudes of Prejudice

- Q1 (a) Most candidates correctly identified the method used in the study. However, there were some candidates who did not seem to know that the term 'method' refers to a specific technique for collecting data, and instead simply described a procedure from the research e.g. 'the psychologist had arranged for the confederate to fall over outside', or stated the aim.
- (b) Nearly all candidates could state what the participants had in common. Some made the mistake of saying they all stopped to help the confederate in the Manchester United shirt which the source showed was not true of all participants.
- Q2 This question was done reasonably well. A pleasing number of candidates scored both marks on this question. A number of candidates identified the two variables but got them the wrong way around when answering the question. A common mistake was to suggest that the IV or the DV was the 'confederate falling over'.
- Q3 Nearly all candidates had the gist of what is meant by a confederate but some described it too generally so it could have also been the psychologist (e.g. he knew the aim of the study) or the participant (e.g. someone who takes part in an experiment). If candidates demonstrated an underlying understanding they were awarded one mark but only clear answers got two.
- Q4 There were some good answers to this question and it was answered in a variety of different ways with some candidates focusing on issues such as isolation of the IV, reliability, and control. Others explained what would change if the confederate was not the same person by focusing on the effects of age, race, sex, etc on prejudice. Others considered the practicalities of using one confederate. Each of these – or a combination – was creditworthy, and it meant that many candidates earned both marks.
- Q5 Most candidates could identify an ethical problem, normally focusing on consent, deception or distress. If all they did was identify the problem, then this limited them to one mark. However, if candidates illustrated it using the study or went on to describe it, then

they got two marks. There were some very original responses to this question which focused on the harm that might come to the confederate from trying to fall over or even from being attacked by rival fans! Such answers were worthy of credit as the researcher has responsibilities to everyone involved in the investigation. Surprisingly, there were still a small number of candidates who seemed not to understand what is meant by an *ethical* problem as they offered practical problems instead.

- Q6 Nearly all candidates recognised that both statements were true.
- Q7 This question elicited the full range of marks. Where, candidates scored one mark it was normally for matching the cognitive component to stereotyping. However, a significant number of candidates mistakenly thought the definition of conformity matched the behavioural component of prejudice.
- Q8 This question is commonly asked in the exam, so it was good to see that some candidates were well prepared for it. However, this tended to be Centre specific.

Good responses were well detailed and showed sound understanding of the possible origins of prejudice. Adorno's theory of the authoritarian personality was done particularly well, although there were some reasonable responses using Sherif's competitive theory. Social Learning Theory was credited when offered, but candidates were generally unable to apply it adequately to the development of prejudice. A number of candidates offered Social Identity Theory even though it was precluded by the question. It may be possible that it was the only theory they knew but the specification does require that Centres teach more than one. Too many candidates scored no more than one for a number of reasons; they responded with common sense statements (e.g. people are socialised to be prejudiced); they described a study of prejudice rather than a theory; they defined prejudice; they gave an example of prejudice; they described the components of prejudice (e.g. people are prejudiced because they discriminate against others) which had already been given in Q7.

Source B: Memory

- Q9 (a) Nearly every candidate was able to state that Caitlin had forgotten many of the French words she had learnt, or something similar.
- (b) This question was not answered as well as (a). Despite the fact that this was a well-established 'From the source' question, some candidates still offered psychological explanations not in the source (e.g. amnesia, displacement). Some candidates also actually described why Caitlin may be experiencing forgetting rather than simply naming a theory. Candidates need to be aware that the questions that immediately follow a source are generally straightforward comprehension questions.
- Q10 (a) A few candidates did very well on this question showing detailed knowledge and clear understanding of a theory. Motivated forgetting and trace decay were especially well done. Although most candidates knew a theory of forgetting, they often did not know enough detail to earn all of the marks. Weaker candidates muddled various theories together, and some even offered 'common sense' explanations of forgetting (e.g. people forget as they get older, people forget if don't re-learn things). The latter response was particularly disappointing given the fact that four theories were listed in the source. There was also a problem with some candidates writing about how we remember things rather than explicitly why we forget things. Candidates need to be aware that a question on 'theories of forgetting' requires a technical response with some level of explanation.

- (b) This was generally well done, and it was pleasing to see that candidates could apply their learning to the stimulus in the source. Some candidates became unstuck because they could not adequately apply their theory from 10(a) – this was particularly the case where they had chosen a theory not listed in the source (e.g. brain damage) and indeed it was an impossible task with some theories (e.g. displacement). Some candidates therefore reverted to another theory which could still earn them one of the two marks available. However, it did illustrate the point that it is important to read all sections of a question on the basis that they may relate to one another (as they did in Q10).

Q11 Most candidates were able to correctly identify the terms associated with the two-process model.

- Q12 (a) Compared to responses to previous questions on applications of memory research, this year's responses were much better. Most candidates did describe memory aids rather than studies or theories (as in previous years). Although studies and theories were still evident this series, it was much less marked. Where applications were described, a range of marks were offered. Some candidates could do little more than identify a memory aid whereas others could give detailed descriptions (including examples of use) as well as explanations of how and why they work. There was some overlap between the two applications (e.g. mind-mapping and hierarchical organisation) which could only be credited once. There was also some muddling of techniques and mis-labelling of concepts. Overall though, responses were good.
- (b) Candidates found this question more challenging than (a) and there were very few good responses. The best answers focused on factors such as evidence of effectiveness of memory aids, the need for imagination/creativity with some memory aids, the problems of 'doubling' what needs to be learnt, etc. However, too many candidates made bland statements about memory aids helping memory or not working all the time, which were too general to receive credit. Many candidates seemed to have no understanding of what it means to evaluate an application, but the more able ones were able to generate some ideas. This question therefore served as a good discriminator.

Source C: Stress

Q13 (a) This question was answered incorrectly by a significant number of candidates because they offered a factor affecting stress from the source, rather than a symptom of it. The symptoms were labelled as such in the source so candidates should be encouraged to read sources carefully.

- (b) Virtually every candidate gave the correct percentage.

Q14 Most candidates correctly identified the statement signifying a positive correlation.

Q15 (a) Many candidates scored both marks here. Those that did not often did not go beyond stating that a questionnaire is made up of questions.

- (b) Although not all answers were true of questionnaires generally, if they applied to features of questionnaires (e.g. using closed questions, being posted out) then they still received credit, where appropriate. There were some good answers, but more candidates need to understand that a two mark answer needs to be elaborated on in some way e.g. it is not enough to just say that respondents may lie on a questionnaire, they also have to explain why that can, or is likely to, happen.

- Q16 This was answered really well with the majority of candidates getting all three marks. It was good to see there was little muddling of the concepts of physiological and psychological as in previous years, although the examples already in the table may have helped here.
- Q17 Candidates generally responded well to this question which was used to test their ability to consider applications arising from research into stress. Although many were relying on common sense, it generally worked here. However, some candidates did not go into enough detail for the two marks available.
- Q18 Like Q8, this is a commonly asked question and it is expected that candidates will be well prepared for it. Indeed, there were some very good, detailed responses where studies were well described and evaluation was clear and relevant, but it tended to be Centre-specific again. Unfortunately, there were still candidates who had 'patchy' or confused knowledge of a study, or had no knowledge of a study. In the latter case, research was clearly being made up or, instead, examples of stressful situations were being given. There are numerous key studies into factors such as noise, crowding, stressful life events, heat, etc. and candidates need only be familiar with two or three of these.

Source D: Aspects of Morality

- Q19 (a) Most candidates got this right and identified the correct method from the source.
(b) Few candidates had problems identifying the age of the children in the source.
- Q20 (a) Many candidates struggled with this question. Descriptions tended to lack clarity and although some candidates could use the correct terminology (e.g. personal gain, avoidance of punishment) they struggled to put it into a coherent sentence. It was common for candidates to offer descriptions of Piagetian stages. Where there is some overlap between Piaget and Kohlberg (self-centeredness), some credit was given. In general, marks were low despite a wide range of responses being accepted.
(b) Some candidates had begun addressing this part of the question in (a), again showing the need to read all sections of questions before answering. Weaker responses just reiterated lines from the source or discussed the children's behaviour in very broad terms (e.g. they couldn't take turns) rather than explicitly relating aspects of the source to the features of Kohlberg's pre-conventional stage. Not surprisingly, those candidates who struggled with (a) tended not to be successful in (b) even though it was possible to gain marks in one section without the other. The best responses noted that Child 1's moral decisions were based on the reward of getting a sweet and on avoiding the punishment of Child 2 abandoning the game.
- Q21 Most candidates made a fair effort to address this question. Many scored a mark for recognising the nature of cross-cultural research, but fewer candidates were able to outline adequately how the research might be done. They were many vague statements about doing the 'same experiment', for example, without being clear what the experiment might be.
- Q22 There was a number of very good responses to this question, both in terms of description and evaluation. Candidates choosing Piaget's theory of moral development tended to produce better essays on average, with well prepared candidates covering a broad range of features in some depth. There were also some decent responses centred on Social Learning Theory but they sometimes failed to address the area of moral development sufficiently and ended up being good general descriptions of the theory. Some candidates described the theories of Gilligan and even Freud in some cases, but did not tend to have the level of knowledge and understanding to score well. Disappointingly, there were some

Report on the Components taken in June 2007

common sense responses about the development of morality despite the fact that, if the specification is adhered to, candidates should have three to choose from. There was some muddling of Piaget and Kohlberg and, unfortunately, a small number of candidates simply offered descriptions of Kohlberg despite the question precluding this. The requirement to evaluate proved to be a good discriminator. Some candidates, especially those who had described Piaget's theory, offered a plethora of well-explained evaluative points whereas others were limited to one or two brief criticisms. Candidates' describing Social Learning Theory found the evaluation more challenging and many could not go beyond the point that social learning ignores the effects of nature. Strong answers drew some useful comparisons with Piaget's or Kohlberg's stage theories. There were a number of candidates who mistakenly evaluated the use of learning rather than the theory itself e.g. suggesting that a criticism of SLT was the fact that parents who did not punish immoral behaviour were raising immoral children. Where possible, this was credited as AO1 but often it was AO2 that candidates needed. Although most candidates did attempt some evaluation, some only offered description which limits them to eight or nine marks on an essay.

The average mark for quality of written communication was four or five marks.

1989/05 - Coursework

It is good to be able to write another positive report about the Coursework component. As in previous years, the Coursework component asked candidates to investigate an aspect of the GCSE Psychology specification that particularly interested them. The general standard of the investigations was good. The moderating team reported that candidates were able to apply their knowledge and understanding of psychological principles to their Coursework. Teaching candidates about the basic principles of methodology enables them to take an analytical approach to their work, and to develop their thinking skills. By observing the variables they study, candidates are able to work their way through to a conclusion. All candidates were able to observe and record what happened to the variables under investigation, but not all candidates were able to think through what the observations meant in psychological terms. Therefore, the Discussion, particularly **D1** where the candidates are expected to discuss their findings, remains a good discriminator.

The range of topics that was investigated was very broad. Memory, gender differences and stress were all popular and the standard of reports produced was generally of good quality. There was evidence which suggested that candidates who produced a successful report had investigated a topic which had caught their interest. This has dual benefits; it engages and then sustains their interest throughout the course of the investigation, and it reinforces their knowledge of underlying theories which may also be tested in the written papers. Some teachers still favour the class practical, with all candidates working through the same investigation in the same way. This approach definitely helps the less confident candidate, but can stifle the interest of other candidates. The most popular approach is for the candidates to work together in pairs or small groups to design and run an investigation. When writing up their investigations, candidates who had been encouraged to use a conventional format for their Coursework reports produced well-written accounts of what they had done and what they had found out. This is probably because the prescriptive structure of the conventional format directed them to the information that they had to provide for each section.

Throughout the specification, candidates study what psychologists have found out about behaviour, and what methods the psychologists used to make their discoveries. Coursework provides candidates with an opportunity to investigate topics of their own, and to make their own discoveries. Inevitably, this brings them into contact with Participants, and so Ethical Guidelines have been introduced to protect themselves and their participants from any harm. Candidates have to demonstrate an awareness of the ethical issues that have affected their research in order to gain marks in **M2**. It is most important that candidates should do this. All research should be carried out in a safe environment and OCR strongly recommends that this should be the Centre itself. Also, participants should be at least 16 years of age. 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 **only** if the research is carried out under the supervision of the teacher and participants are selected only from the candidates' peer group. If a teacher has any doubt about the suitability of a topic for investigation, or needs advice or support in setting up a coursework investigation, they should contact OCR.

**General Certificate of Secondary Education
Psychology 1989**

June 2007 Assessment Series

Component Threshold Marks

Component	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	80	-	-	41	35	29	22	16
2	80	-	-	45	39	33	27	21
3	80	67	55	43	29	-	-	-
4	80	63	54	45	35	-	-	-
5	40	34	28	23	19	15	12	9

Specification Options

Foundation Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	-	-	-	109	93	77	61	45
Percentage in Grade	200	-	-	-	39.1	22.0	15.8	11.5	6.2
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	200				39.1	61.1	76.9	88.4	94.5

The total entry for the examination was 1794

Higher Tier

	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Overall Threshold Marks	200	182	158	134	111	83	69	-	-
Percentage in Grade	200	2.9	14.6	22.8	19.6	23.5	8.1	-	-
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	200	2.9	17.5	40.3	59.9	83.4	91.5	-	-

The total entry for the examination was 2531

Overall

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage in Grade	1.7	8.7	13.6	27.5	22.9	11.2	4.6	2.5
Cumulative Percentage in Grade	1.7	10.5	24.1	51.5	74.4	85.6	90.2	92.7

The total entry for the examination was 4325
Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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