



MARKSCHEME

MAY 2006

PSYCHOLOGY

Standard Level

Paper 1

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SECTION A

Biological Perspective

1. Assess *one* application of theories or findings of empirical studies from the biological perspective. *[8 marks]*

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section A when marking this question.

‘Assess’ requires that answers contain judgments on the merits and quality of a concept or argument. In this question, it is one application, or the research that underpins it, that should be ‘assessed’. There should be an explicit identification of the application. If the application is not made clear then few marks should be awarded. Where the application is clear it should be based upon the biological perspective, although examiners should interpret the notion of ‘biological’ in fairly broad manner.

Given the time constraints on this paper (15 minutes for each section A question), brief assessment is expected and the application’s advantages and disadvantages should be reasonably balanced. Examples could be drawn from areas such as, but not restricted to, work (*e.g.* shift patterns and stress) or treatment (*e.g.* drug therapy for dysfunctional behaviours). Responses should address just one application, and where more than one application is presented they should not be awarded further marks.

Examiners are reminded that however impressive and relevant the theories or findings described, the total mark awarded should **not** be in the top band *[6 to 8 marks]* unless assessment of application is made explicit.

Award *[0 marks]* for an application not based on the biological perspective.

Award *[1 to 5 marks]* for applications that are appropriate but where assessment is lacking.

Award *[6 to 8 marks]* for an assessment of an appropriate application supported by empirical evidence.

Cognitive Perspective

2. Identify *one* study from the cognitive perspective, and explain *one* strength and *one* limitation of the research method used in the study. **[8 marks]**

Refer to the paper 1 section A markbands when marking this question.

- The experimental method is most likely to be chosen, but other research methods may be relevant.
- Any explicitly cognitive study is appropriate as long as it uses the method chosen.
- Examples of strengths of experimental method: strictly controlled (laboratory) experiments; cause and effect relationships indicated.
- Examples of limitations of experimental method: ecological validity; results may be biased by sampling, demand characteristics or experimenter expectancy.

It is important that candidates focus on the research method used in the identified study. If the study is from the cognitive perspective but the research method given is incorrect or omitted then **[1 mark]** should be awarded.

Obedience and conformity studies are not regarded as coming from the cognitive perspective and answers that use these should not be awarded marks for this particular question.

Marks should be awarded for evaluation of the research method itself, but not for evaluation of the findings.

Award **[1 mark]** for identification of a study from the cognitive perspective.

Award **[1 mark]** for identification of the relevant method used in the study identified.

Award **[1 to 3 marks]** for a strength and **[1 to 3 marks]** for a limitation. Within this range of marks there should be inclusion of description and explanation.

Learning Perspective

3. “The influence of biological factors has extended traditional behaviourist explanations of behaviour within the learning perspective”.

Explain this statement making reference to *one* relevant study from the learning perspective. [8 marks]

Refer to the paper 1 section A markbands when marking this question.

The explanation should focus on a relevant study from the learning perspective in which biological factors have been found to influence learning. Some examples of relevant studies might include Lorenz’s studies of ducklings which showed that biological factors such as imprinting influenced the behaviour of some animals, and Seligman who showed that animals might be biologically prepared to learn behaviour that helps them to survive.

Award **[1 to 2 marks]** for limited descriptive accounts.

Award **[3 to 6 marks]** for responses that are overly descriptive of an appropriate study without fully developing the links to biological factors that may affect behaviour.

Award **[7 to 8 marks]** where the responses have accurately explained how the study demonstrates the influence of biological factors and how these factors go beyond the claims made by traditional behaviourists.

Award a maximum of **[2 marks]** where the study is described without explicit reference to the influence of biological factors.

*Examiners are reminded that when two or more studies are offered in a question that requires just one study, only the **first study** offered by the candidate should attract marks.*

SECTION B

4. Discuss *two* theoretical explanations of behaviour, *one* from the biological perspective and *one* from another perspective that you have studied for this paper. *[20 marks]*

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B when marking this question.

A balanced discussion is called for in which opinions should be expressed and are supported by empirical evidence and sound argument. The biological perspective part of the syllabus notes that use of drugs, surgical procedures, physiological impairment, physiological factors invoked in emotion, brain injuries or the influence of hormones, may be considered here. There can be many other examples. Although the empirical evidence that is offered may well need to have some description, the main thrust of answers should be on discussion where discussive points are based upon evidence. Opinions are called for and examiners are reminded not to be biased in how they receive opinions that differ from their own. Provided that the opinion is reasonably justified it should be accepted.

There is also a need for the theories chosen to be explanatory in their use, and the writing offered should show some understanding of the explanations involved. The discussion that should then ensue will earn marks based upon its effectiveness and quality.

Award *[0 marks]* for essays that contain no theory or no relevant theory.

Award *[1 to 7 marks]* to answers that contain two theories but offer little explanation.

Award *[8 to 13 marks]* for answers that contain two relevant theories and offer limited explanation together with some discussion of the theories.

Award *[14 to 20 marks]* for two relevant theories, explanations and effective use of evidence to support the discussion presented.

Where only one theoretical explanation is offered then a maximum of *[10 marks]* should be awarded.

It is likely that some answers may take a very general approach to theoretical explanations of behaviour. This approach is legitimate and provided that it is coherent and incorporates empirical research evidence it can be awarded the full range of marks. However experience suggests that this general approach does not always provide evidence, or is not sufficiently explanatory or evaluative to earn high marks. Examiners will need to judge the quality of such answers on their merits and to consult the markbands for Paper 1 Section B before awarding marks.

5. Evaluate the contribution of the cognitive perspective to the scientific study of behaviour. **[20 marks]**

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B when marking this question.

Examiners should interpret the term ‘contribution’ in a flexible manner, provided that an explicit link is made to the cognitive perspective. The term ‘scientific study’ may not necessarily be linked to the experimental method since several methods can rightly claim to be associated with scientific study, *e.g.* observational method. It is also acceptable if a response focuses on studies rather than research methods, given the wording of the question that is taken from the syllabus. There are many contributions from which to choose.

Possible content:

Strengths:

- Innovative methods for exploring the ‘black box’ of the mind — focus on inference and testable research methods (*e.g.* clinical interviews, verbal protocols)
An understanding of the influence of cognition on behaviour and emotion — biases and also normal processes and their impact on behaviour — emphasis on systematic study and ability to generalize findings to predict behaviours
- Empirical research findings — the use of the theoretical framework (*e.g.* schema theory, memory models) to investigate human behaviour
- Understanding of cognitive abilities across the lifespan — systematic research

Limitations:

- Cognitive reductionism — danger of
- Errors of cause and effect — does negative thinking cause depression or vice versa?
- Cognitive relativism — assumption that all ideas, thoughts or memories are equally valid

Marking guidance:

Lowest band **[0 to 7 marks]** – limited references to relevant contributions to the ‘scientific study of behaviour’.

Mid band **[8 to 13 marks]** – identification of relevant content but more description of material than explicit debate. Imbalanced evaluation - only strengths or weaknesses.

Top band **[14 to 20 marks]** – balanced consideration of both strengths and limitations clearly illustrated with specific and relevant research.

Award a maximum of **[5 marks]** for responses that lack focus on the ‘scientific study of behaviour’, merely listing some general evaluation of the cognitive perspective.

6. Assess the effectiveness of learning perspective explanations for either *one* psychological or *one* social question. [20 marks]

Refer to the markbands for paper 1 section B when marking this question.

At least two explanations are required. Two distinct explanations such as SLT and operant conditioning may be assessed effectively *or* two related explanations such as operant and classical conditioning. The concept of effectiveness could be addressed in a variety of ways, such as by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the learning perspective's view on a psychological or social question, comparing the learning perspective's views to those of at least one other perspective, or by addressing cultural, ethical, methodological or gender considerations that might have an impact upon the explanations. The effectiveness of this perspective's view of psychological questions such as dysfunctional behaviour might be addressed by considering the resultant therapies and their success rates. Among other psychological question, examples could include developmental issues or gender-roles. Social questions could include educational systems, urban violence, or other equally acceptable examples. Responses do not need to make clear whether the question chosen is psychological or social in nature.

The lowest band [*0 to 7 marks*] should be used where the focus is on relevant descriptions of learning perspective explanations but these are limited, and there is little or no attention given to the 'effectiveness' element of the question.

Mid-range answers [*8 to 13 marks*] might not clearly assess the effectiveness of learning perspective explanations or be more descriptive yet still have an evaluative element.

Award [*14 to 20 marks*] where responses make a clear assessment of effectiveness regarding the explanation of one psychological or social question. Essays in this range might be characterized by a well reasoned and balanced approach. Essays could weigh available evidence in reaching their conclusion.
