

L3 Lead Examiner Report 1906

Summer 2019

**L3 Qualification in Applied
Psychology**

**Unit 1: Psychological Approaches
and Applications**

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What is a grade boundary?

A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

When our experts set the grade boundaries, they make sure that learners receive grades which reflect their ability. Awarding grade boundaries is conducted to ensure learners achieve the grade they deserve to achieve, irrespective of variation in the external assessment.

Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

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Unit 1: Psychological Approaches and Applications (21331L)

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	18	28	38	49

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

The learners' answers exhibited a range of abilities with most students showing an inconsistent standard across the whole paper.

Learners typically applied their knowledge and understanding to the context within the question, however, this was not always consistent.

The majority of the learners showed a competent literacy skill - the overall quality of written communication was good and subsequently only a minority of responses were difficult to read. There were very few cases of poor handwriting for markers to follow which was very positive. Some learners found it more difficult to structure their extended writing.

Learners typically found state and describe questions more accessible. With explain questions being the most challenging.

Some responses indicated good preparation of learners by centres; good understanding of the questions; good application and a good degree of literacy.

Questions have been chosen for this report where there may be learning points to support centres to prepare learners for future series.

Individual Questions

Question 2

Learners were generally able to provide a definition of a schema drawing on their knowledge of reconstructive memory. Learners should be aware that as an applied qualification it is advised to link responses to the stem explicitly to enable them to access all available marks.

In the response below the learner has provided has described a schema in relation to Jack with an appropriate elaboration. They have scored 2 out of 2 available marks.

2 Describe the role of schemas in shaping Jack's understanding of the world.

(2) 2 Q02

A schema is a template of knowledge based on a certain thing. So Jack would create a schema on the world around him and add new knowledge ^{to that} to that schema, increasing his understanding and the way he perceives the world.

Whereas, the below learner has not linked their response to Jack and scored 1 mark.

Schemas are mental 'units' of knowledge, and schemas are made when we are young. Schemas help clarify and understand certain things, for example: boys are meant to be tough, aggressive and masculine and not show weakness such as crying.

Question 4a

This question was not answered as well as expected. It is important that learners have an understanding of the key terms within a psychological theory or concept. Learners were expected to be able to state what vicarious reinforcement was, succinctly and clearly. Many learners gave a definition of modelling and did not include 'reward' or they were confused and included punishment or other aspects of reinforcement.

The below response has shown a lack of understanding of the types of reinforcement scoring 0.

4 (a) State what is meant by 'vicarious reinforcement'. (10) Q04a

Vicarious reinforcement is when there is no pleasant or negative consequences.

Whereas this learner has provided an appropriate response scoring 1 mark out of 1 available mark.

4 (a) State what is meant by 'vicarious reinforcement'. (11) Q04a

Watching someone being rewarded for a certain behaviour.

Question 4b

Learners performed well on this question and some consideration was given to this being the first series when setting the indicative content. Learners who did not score full marks tended to confuse negative reinforcement and punishment. Most learners were able to identify and describe positive reinforcement. Some learners considered social learning theory and described use of positive role models. The variety of answers on this question was pleasing.

The below response has given two appropriate strategies with good elaboration and gains full marks.

(b) Gemma has recently noticed that Jack has become more aggressive when playing in a group.

Describe **two** strategies Gemma could use to promote good behaviour.

(14) Q04b

1. Gemma could observe whether Jack's friends show aggressive behaviour or non-aggressive. Jack could see his friends as role models, which he wants to follow. Therefore Jack spending time around non-aggressive behaviour would influence him positively.
2. Gemma could use positive reinforcement to promote good behaviour. This could be done by whenever he behaves in a good way, he faces positive consequences - a reward, such as giving him a sweet. This would result in more frequent good behaviour.

Question 5

A large number of learners were able to score 1-2 marks on this question with higher performing learners gaining 3 marks. This was a clear differentiator on this paper. Overall, learners found it more difficult to gain justification marks and this may indicate that centres need to undertake some additional preparation on explain question. Learners are finding it difficult to provide reasoning/justification or exemplification points. The range of questions available through the SAM, ADSAM and this series paper will support the preparation of future learners.

This response scored one mark. The learner was able to identify a reason that children may be more susceptible, however, they did not provide appropriate justification/exemplification or reasoning to access additional marks.

- 5 Harris, Bargh and Brownell (2009) demonstrated the priming effects of television food advertising on eating behaviour.

Explain why children such as Jack are susceptible to priming effects from food advertising.

(4) 1 Q05

As seen in the study, children will come under the influence because of priming as the advertisement will make children associate a stimulus with the act of eating. This means when the child sees the television, they will begin to feel hungry.

Whereas, this learner was able to explain why children may be susceptible to priming effects and provided good justification and examples. They scored full marks – 4/4.

Children such as Jack are more susceptible to priming effects as their schemas are still developing. If a food advertising uses repetition priming Jack may feel more familiar with a product and therefore grow an attachment to it and want the product. Food advertising may also use associative priming where they use certain words such as 'hmm' and 'love' that associates with other words such as 'delicious' and remind Jack of the time he ate something that he enjoyed, and form an attachment which would make Jack want the product.

Question 7

This essay was overall the highest performing essay with clear differentiation between pass and distinction level learners. Learners generally provided some accurate knowledge in relation to social determinism in relation to gender. There was consistent application to Jack and his mother throughout the majority of responses. Learners tended to use material from elsewhere within the paper, which is acceptable, however, this scaffolding may not always be available to them in future series, therefore, they should be prepared to answer questions of this type without this. An area of some confusion was the use of the gender schema theory, which when linked well was credit worthy, it sometimes was not linked clearly enough to meet the requirements of this question. Learners should have an understanding of where theoretical concepts fit in terms of approaches, so they do not use their time focusing on an inappropriate approach.

The below response is at Level 1 – 2 marks. It shows isolated elements of knowledge and understanding and no application to the context of the question. It therefore cannot access Level 2.

7 Gemma would say that Jack is very much a boy, and loves his rough and tumble.

Discuss how Jack's gender is socially determined.

(9) 2 Q07

Jack's gender is determined ^{due} to gender stereotypes and how boys are seen to be more aggressive and dirty while girls are thought of being more elegant and clean. However, there are also some boys who don't like to fight and who would rather be calm and caring and the same for girls. This may have been influenced by primitive times as the men were seen as aggressive as they had to go and hunt for food while the women had to be caring and look after the children.

In comparison the learner below has accessed the bottom of Level 3 (7 marks). This learner has considered a range of factors that may have contributed to Jack's gender being socially determined – when they have considered a different approach (cognitive) they have attempted to link back to stereotypes. If this had been elaborated and developed further, they may have accessed a higher mark in the band. Overall, there are good links with accurate knowledge and understanding with a development of discussion that is good.

7 Gemma would say that Jack is very much a boy, and loves his rough and tumble.

Discuss how Jack's gender is socially determined.

(9) 7 Q07

^{said}
One reason why Jack's gender is socially determined is through the concept of stereotypes and social integration. Male stereotypes provide the idea of being mainly aggressive and rough. In the case of Jack it is seen that he has been becoming more aggressive.

This could then mean that Jack is socially integrated in a group of males. He then socially identifies himself as a mainly aggressive boy with the group. As stated in the scenario it is seen that Jack becomes more aggressive when playing in a group. This could suggest the idea of social comparison, meaning Jack will see himself and as being more superior and therefore acting more aggressive towards the rest of the group.

From a ~~social~~ ^{social} learning approach it can be argued social learning theory can be used to explain Jack's gender as being socially determined. ~~This is done this~~ The social learning approach argues behaviour is learnt through observation and imitation. In Jack's case Gemma has noticed a link ^{link between} ~~with~~ aggression and how spent on games and watching TV. The social learning theory would argue Jack has observed behaviour ^{portrayed by male role models} on TV and games and he now imitates this behaviour. It is seen as socially ~~then~~ appropriate for a man to be aggressive therefore forming a masculine gender.

identity is seen as socially determined. A study that links to this is Bandura, who found ^{boys} children are more likely to observe and imitate aggressive ~~role~~ behaviour if the role model is a male.

Another cognitive explanation for Jack's gender being socially determined is through schemas. Jack ~~may have developed~~ is actively developing a schema based around stereotypically male behaviour. He learns this schema and then acts accordingly. As schemas are based around our environment, this makes Jack's identity ~~as~~ socially determined.

Question 11

A large number of learners were able to score 1 mark on this question with common correct answers stating the use of hidden messages or the role of sub-conscious messages. Where learners gave incorrect answers, they tended to use the term 'unconscious' or provided a vague, generic answer.

This response scored no marks. The answer provided does not demonstrate psychological understanding or use of terminology.

11 State what is meant by the term 'subliminal messaging'.

0 (10 Q11

when a buisness uses a litte message so
the consumer can remember their name and
what they do easier.

This learner scored one mark. They have correctly identified the role of the sub-conscious.

11 State what is meant by the term 'subliminal messaging'.

(1 Q11

Subliminal messaging is when your brain
or instinet.
subconsciously picks up messages priming you.

Question 12

Learners found this a difficult question to answer with the majority of learners scoring 0 marks. Learners needed to show an understanding of neuromarketing within context, for example, the effect on consumer behaviour. Many learners provided a general response relating to the use of brain scans and this was not differentiated to marketing. Where learners provided a correct response, it was similar to those on the mark scheme. A number of learners left this question blank.

It would be helpful for centres to prepare students to understand the effect of neuromarketing and how and why the knowledge of the brain is used.

This learner scored one mark. They were able to link the concept of using knowledge of the brain to use a technique to increase the sale of products.

12 State what is meant by the term 'neuromarketing'.

advertising
~~selling~~ products that subconsciously affect the way you
feel about them using techniques such as brighter colours
so you want to buy it.

Question 13

This was a challenging question for learners and provided differentiation between pass and distinction learners. Although distinction level learners also found it difficult to access all of the marks. Centres may need to prepare learners to approach questions on neuromarketing. This question was asking learners to describe how neuromarketing may influence consumer spending. Where marks were given they tended to be in relation to the use of brain scans/eye tracking/stimuli of different colours. However, learners then found this difficult to apply to the impact of these, in terms of finding a product more appealing/appeal to specific emotions etc. They then did not go on to describe the outcome of this e.g. consumers spend more/buy more/increase likelihood of purchase.

This learner scored three marks. They were able to provide the intention of neuromarketing (influence consumer spending) and examples of how it is used. This learner scored 3 marks, although it would have been good to see them describe the outcome more clearly.

13 Describe how the concept of neuromarketing may influence consumer spending.

13 Q13

A business could use certain neuromarketing techniques to influence consumer spending, for example, the use of certain colours triggering certain thoughts. An example of this would be Coca Cola using their renowned red colour to make customers instantly recognise and think of Coca Cola when the colour is shown.

Question 15

This essay provided clear differentiation between pass and distinction level learners. Learners generally provided some accurate knowledge in relation to influence on social norms. Typically, stronger learners provided very good examples, usually multiple examples. It would have been positive to see more knowledge and understanding of social norms and how they are influenced. This was often implicit and would benefit from being explicit. Where students only provided examples without clear psychological knowledge and understanding they found it difficult to move out of Level 1.

This learner has accessed Level 3. The learner has provided clear psychological understanding alongside examples to explain how celebrities influence social norms. They have integrated studies in to their response and provided a range of approaches that could contribute e.g. social learning; classical conditioning etc. They have shown a clear structure to their work and given the time constraints has done well.

15 Discuss how the use of celebrities in advertising may influence social norms.

Advertising
Celebrities may influence social norms by using celebrities to sell more products to a consumer/consumers. This could be done through imitation (social learning theory) and association (classical conditioning).

By including a celebrity in an advertisement, businesses know consumers will see the product being used by this role model. The consumer would then see the role model being vicariously reinforced, ^{drawing attention to the product} ~~making them want~~. They would then ^{retain} ~~remember~~ this information and want to reproduce it to be included with this celebrity. An example of this would be Daniel Craig promoting Omega watches. Consumers would notice the attention ^{wearing} Daniel Craig is getting from females when wearing this watch, making them want to buy the product. This would increase sales as they want the same reinforcement.

Albert Bandura's study shows evidence of this. Bandura made children observe aggressive behaviour performed on a doll in his experiment. Once the children observed the aggressive behaviours, they were left alone to play with the doll. The children imitated the aggressive behaviour shown by the models. This shows people have a tendency to

imitate behaviours shown by someone they look up to.

Celebrities could also be included in adverts to make consumers associate the product with the celebrity.

For example, in sports car adverts, super models are used to grab the attention of the consumer. They would then associate the attractive women with the car, making the consumer want the car to attract super models.

Ivan Pavlov showed this to be a behaviour when ~~testing~~ with dogs. Dogs would salivate at the sight of food but make no response when a bell was rung.

Pavlov then made the dogs see food while the bell was ringing, conditioning the bell to have the same response as the food. Therefore ^{whenever} ~~whenever~~ the bell was rung, the dog started salivating.

In this case, when the consumer sees the car, they will instantly think of and associate it with super models.

In addition to this, using popular figures will instantly increase popularity of a product with fans recognising their role models as using a particular product, causing them to buy it as well.

D

Question 18

Learners were generally able to access some marks on this question with higher performing learners gaining 3 marks. This was a clear differentiator on this paper. Many learners remain confused about the difference between punishment and negative reinforcement. This is typical across psychology papers and qualifications. Centres may find it useful to support learners to differentiate between these concepts.

Similar to other explain questions, learners found it more difficult to gain justification marks and this may indicate that centres need to undertake some additional preparation on explain question. Learners are finding it difficult to provide reasoning/justification or exemplification points. The range of questions available through the SAM, ADSAM and this series paper will support the preparation of future learners.

This learner scored three marks. They were able to identify how operant conditioning may be used and provide appropriate justification/exemplification or reasoning to access the additional marks. This learner could have accessed 4 marks had this been a 4 mark question.

18 Part of Tommy's rehabilitation is focused on learning and relearning skills.

Explain how operant conditioning may be used as part of Tommy's rehabilitation.

(3) 3 Q18

Operant conditioning would help Tommy relearn skills through reinforcement and punishment. For example, when Tommy does something well, his carer could reward him, making that behaviour and similar behaviours more likely. As well as this, if Tommy does something bad, his carer could punish him to make the behaviour less likely.

In addition to this, negative reinforcement would increase chances of positive behaviour. When Tommy does something well, his carer could take away something he doesn't like.

Question 20

Learners were generally able to access some marks on this question with higher performing learners gaining 3 marks. The most common area was learners appropriately writing about hostile attribution bias without articulating that the perception of the behaviour was wrong. Instead they described as Person A acts aggressively, person B responds aggressively. Centres may find it useful to support learners to have a clearer understanding of this concept.

This learner scored three marks. They were able to identify how hostile attribution bias and describe it correctly. This learner scored 3 marks.

20 Describe ~~one~~ cognitive approach to understanding aggression. 13/3 Q20

One approach to understand aggression is hostile attribution error as this is where someone thinks someone is being aggressive towards them so they be aggressive back. However, the person wasn't being aggressive in the first place.

Question 21

This question performed well at the pass level, with stronger learners occasionally accessing additional marks. Many learners showed good understanding of survival of the fittest, genome lag and sexual selection. There were considerable errors where learners wrote about genetic and biological reasons without linking to evolutionary theory, for example, the role of testosterone.

This learner has scored 2 marks, for Point 2. Identifying and linking to survival of the fittest (although this is quite weak). The top mark is not creditworthy.

21 Explain two features of evolutionary theory that may explain Tommy's aggression.

1	TOMMY may have high levels of testosterone, a hormone found in men the if men have high levels, we see them become more aggressive.
2	Tommy may have more aggressive genes as evolution has passed down certain aggressiveness in order to survive.

In comparison, this learner provides a good explanation of survival of the fittest and provides another creditworthy example of sexual selection. However, this needed further elaboration for the second mark, for example, genome lag link. This learner scored 3 marks.

- 1 Dawkins theory of survival of the fittest can link to tommy's aggression because over time ~~the~~ evolution changes however traits still get passed on. for example men needed to be aggressive and violent to live as they needed to kill animals to live but they don't need to now.
- 2 Footner example could be sexual selection as ~~you~~ before evolution you used to have to look for a big muscley man who can protect your offspring but now evolution has changed and you don't need a big strong man.

Question 22

This essay performed as a discriminator with clear differentiation between pass and distinction level learners. Learners generally provided some accurate knowledge about how the biological approach can contribute to understanding aggression. Generally, learners were able to provide knowledge relating to brain structures, with less learners having an understanding of neurochemistry. Knowledge provided in relation to genes tended to be superficial and generic. Many learners tried to replicate their response to Question 21 which did not always allow them to coherently apply their understanding to the context of the question and impact on their overall mark.

Higher performing learners were able to form a judgement, although this area would benefit from further support from centres. Learners may have begun to run out of time on this response as the structure of answers appeared to be a lower quality than those observed in the other essay questions.

The below response is at Level 1 – 3 marks. It shows isolated elements of knowledge and understanding and generic assertions. It therefore cannot access Level 2.

22 Analyse how the biological approach can be used to contribute to our understanding of aggression.

In your answer you should consider:

- brain structures
- neurochemistry
- genes.

In a brain structure the males brain is more grey matter than a women's brain in which is white matter. And also the verbal speech is only on the left hemisphere of the males brain.

~~In the genes~~ aggression is more likely to be shown and produced in a male than it is in a female and this is because of testosterone -

In the brain it is the frontal cortex in which produces all the emotion and how someone is to behave. If this part of the brain is to get damaged then someone could become to act aggressive, ~~and~~ and violent.

~~Aggr~~

There is a link between testosterone and aggression so if someone has too much and excess testosterone then they could start to become aggressive. A man is more likely to be aggressive because testosterone is held in the Y chromosome which is only in males.

This learner has accessed the top of Level 2. The learner has demonstrated some accurate knowledge and understanding and applied them to the context. However, due to the brevity and/or minor errors in neurochemistry and genetics explanations they have only provided a partially developed discussion and are therefore limited to Level 2.

The biological approach would argue that brain structures control different aspects of us such as our personalities, the localisation of functions, and damage to certain areas can cause aggressive behaviour. A prime example of this would be Phineas Gage, who had an iron rod go through his pre-frontal cortex, he recovered, however his personality changed dramatically. He became anti-social, aggressive, he rambled etc. His friends stated that he was no longer Gage. However critics argue that this one case study can't be generalised to everyone, therefore Charles Whitman is another example. Charles Whitman had a tumour growing on his amygdala which caused him to murder his wife, mother and several other people. Damage to his amygdala caused him to be extremely aggressive.

Another explanation is neurochemistry which is where chemicals effect aggression. For example too much adrenaline can cause aggression in a fight or flight response. Also a lack of serotonin can cause an frustrated mood which could result in aggression. Also too much testosterone could lead to aggression.

Genes such as the warrior gene, MAOA gene can cause severe aggression in certain situations. This is evident in various studies in psychology looking at families with the MAOA gene.

Summary

Based on their performance of this paper, learners should:

- Read the question carefully, including all the requirements, to ensure they provide a response that means they are able to access all available marks
- Learners should have a clear understanding of the different approaches covered in the specification and the differences between them so that they are able to respond appropriately to the questions set
- Learners should be supported to develop their discussion skills enabling them to access all the marks available on the essay questions
- Learners should be encouraged to use psychology terminology and concepts rather than lay person assumptions to help them maximise their marks.
- Learners should focus on ensuring application of their knowledge and understanding to the context when responding to questions.
- Learners should have a clear understanding of command verbs, in particular, 'explain'
- Manage their time effectively. The paper is worth 72 marks. Learners should have a clear understanding of the structure of the paper and the need to plan their time accordingly

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