

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9773/01
Key Studies and Theories

General comments

Candidates performed very well indeed throughout this paper and demonstrated extremely good levels of both knowledge and evaluation. They gave a range of different (correct) answers throughout this paper and most notably used a wide variety of evaluative issues in **Section B**.

There were no questions on this paper which appeared to cause any problems to candidates and the standard of answers was extremely high throughout. It is possible to suggest however that candidates often gave more information that was required particularly in **Section A** and although there were no candidates who did not complete the paper this may be useful guidance for Centres preparing candidates for future examinations.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 was well answered with candidates suggesting a range of problems and modifications. The most common answer was the one suggested by the authors of the key study: that pictures are static and not dynamic as looking at eyes in real life would be, but other answers were also acceptable. Answers suggested a good knowledge of the study.

In **Question 2** candidates were able to explain the importance of accidental transformation and its relevance for children's understanding of conservation tasks.

Question 3 was on the study by Milgram. In this study Milgram uses the phrase 'two surprising findings' at the start of his discussion. He identifies these as the 'sheer strength of obedient tendencies' and the 'extraordinary tension generated by the procedures'. Most candidates were able to identify these findings and gave a variety of appropriate explanations. Occasionally candidates gave more than one explanation although only one was required.

Question 4 was answered extremely well indeed. All candidates were able to explain that the use of a real prison would not allow the situational / dispositional hypothesis to be tested. Answers demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the study as more than a test of prison life.

Question 5 was well answered with all candidates being able to explain that where emergencies can be quickly recognised help is more likely to be given.

Question 6 was mostly answered very well with candidates only having to identify two of the three response measures (imitation of physical aggression, imitation of verbal aggression and imitative non-aggressive verbal responses) to achieve full marks.

Question 7 was well answered. Candidates were able to identify the differences between Study 1 (the 'love quiz' in a newspaper) and study 2 (using psychology candidates).

There were some very good answers to **Question 8**, displaying a sophisticated understanding of this study. Candidates used a range of evidence including Hans' desire to get into bed with his mother, his fear of horses, the giraffe fantasy and the fantasy about being married to his mother and having his father in the role of grandfather. Evidence was well described and it was clear that candidates understood Freud's interpretation of this evidence as supporting his notion of the Oedipus complex.

Question 9 was well answered with candidates suggesting either frustration – aggression or excitation transfer.



Question 10 was well answered. Candidates were able to explain the relationship between facial symmetry and health / genetic quality very clearly indeed.

In **Question 11** candidates gave detailed answers to this question which simply required the identification of two conditions; low stress in which participants had to count backwards from 1000 and high stress in which they had to count backwards in 13s from a 4 digit start number.

Question 12 was clearly answered with all candidates able to identify that Gale and Martyn's findings did not support the maxim as their results suggested owls having the largest mean income and no difference in cognitive functioning or health.

Section B

Question 14 was chosen more frequently than **Question 13**.

Question 13

- (a) This was well answered with candidates covering a range of material including the work of Schank and Abelson on scripts and schemata and the work of Bartlett on reconstructive memory. However some candidates included material that was later than the key study and this was not credited as Examiners agreed that this was not appropriate material in a question that had asked explicitly for the background to the study. Centres are advised that when the question asks for background, the answer should be restricted to material (theories and/or studies) published prior to the key study. It should also be noted that material relating to the key study should not be included in this answer.
- (b) This was very well answered and candidates covered a wide range of issues in their answers including usefulness, ecological validity, sampling issues and ethics.
- (c) This was also well answered with candidates suggesting a range of alternative studies that could be conducted and included some very good explanations of how such studies would extend our understanding of eye witness testimony.

Question 14

- (a) This was very well answered with candidates including a wealth of information from the key study.
- (b) This was very well answered with candidates including a range of evaluative issues in their answers including the use of participant observation, the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, ecological validity, ethics and the usefulness of the study.
- (c) As with **Question 13**, this section was very well answered and candidates suggested a range of alternative studies that could be conducted and included good explanations of how such studies would extend our understanding of diagnosing abnormality.

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Paper 9773/02

Methods, Issues and Applications

General Comments

This was the first examination for this subject and it was pleasing to see that the majority of candidates performed well and produced answers that not only demonstrated excellent understanding throughout, but also in many cases displayed knowledge that went beyond the syllabus. Candidates were able to complete the paper in the time allowed, and all candidates followed the instructions about question choice successfully. The quality of written communication was generally of a very high level.

Candidates excelled on those questions that either required them to apply their knowledge to an unfamiliar issue such as in **Question 2(b)** or to an unfamiliar source such as **Question 3**. Understanding and depth of argument was generally impressive.

Surprisingly, candidates found the evaluation **Questions 1(c)** and **2(c)** more challenging than other questions, with a large number of candidates failing to provide the quality and depth of argument required for achieving the higher marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) The vast majority of candidates answered this question successfully and achieved the full marks available. Common conclusions included that 'in the cane condition there was a slight same race effect' and that 'participants were more likely to help the cane victim than the drunk victim'. These conclusions were either supported with data from the table or included some elaboration. All candidates were able to identify the two required conclusions. Those who failed to achieve the full marks available either did not elaborate or simply reiterated the conclusions without further explanation.
- (b) The majority of candidates were able to identify two confounding variables and suggest how they could be controlled. Stronger candidates provided competent answers that were well explained and demonstrated understanding throughout. Some candidates made use of research from their studies for Paper 3 to support their claims as to how variables can be controlled. For example, some made reference to the study by Matthews and Cannon (1975) on the effects of noise on helping behaviour to justify why noise was a confounding variable. Although such detail was not required for full marks, it allowed the more able candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, which in some cases extended beyond the syllabus. Weaker answers did not fully elaborate on the suggestions made as to how the identified confounding variables could have been controlled and as a result did not achieve all available marks. Answers that merely identified the controls that the experimenters already applied in this study did not receive any credit.
- (c) The question required candidates to 'debate the use of controls when investigating bystander behaviour'. Surprisingly, candidates found this question relatively challenging in comparison to the other questions in the paper and did not offer the discussion or evidence required to achieve full marks. Some candidates offered generic strengths and weaknesses of controls without making the links to bystander behaviour obvious, while others concentrated more on relevant research but did not present a competent argument. Better answers were able to offer a selection and range of arguments that were organized into issues/debates, methods, or approaches. They also made use of effective and appropriate supporting examples that were explicitly related to the question. This question was a good discriminator overall.

Question 2

- (a) This question was answered very well by most candidates. They were able not only to describe suitable assumptions of the social approach in psychology but also to select evidence from different parts of the syllabus to support these assumptions, highlighting the synoptic nature of this paper. Selected research included Le Bon's social contagion theory, the Diener et al (1976) study as to the effects of deindividuation variables on stealing, Smith and Knowles' (1978) study on personal space invasion, in addition to research from the key studies such as that by Milgram (1963) and Piliavin and Piliavin (1969). When candidates did not achieve full marks it was either because they only offered one assumption or they did not relate their examples explicitly to their suggested assumptions.
- (b) This was a question aiming to challenge and stretch candidates given that they were required to apply their knowledge of the social and physiological perspectives to the psychology of the unfamiliar area of shyness. Most candidates excelled in this question, being able not only to apply their understanding of these perspectives successfully to explain the topic of shyness but also creatively to use knowledge gained throughout the syllabus to provide some truly outstanding answers. There were a few instances where candidates chose to contrast different methods used by the two approaches to investigate shyness rather than describe how these different approaches explain shyness. Although these answers were acceptable in this examination session, candidates should be reminded that there is a difference between 'explain' and 'investigate'. Although methods of investigation are used to research hypotheses they can only provide explanations after the data collected has been fully analysed.
- (c) This is another question that was a good discriminator in the examination. Candidates were required to explain why ethics might be an issue when adopting the social approach in psychology, using examples from research. The question therefore required not only knowledge of ethics as a general issue in psychology but more specifically knowledge as to why ethics is an issue in social psychology, from which all research examples should have been derived. Candidates often offered short answers that were not elaborated or explained and others seemed to be offering generic strengths and weaknesses of ethics without explaining why ethics might be an issue when adopting the social approach in psychology. Others concentrated more on evaluating the ethics of specific studies from the social approach in psychology and thus failed fully to answer the question.

Question 3

- (a) The vast majority of candidates were able to identify and describe relevant research and/or theories concerning the issues raised in the source, with many producing excellent answers. Most commonly used research were the study by Phillips et al on body dysmorphic disorder, the further research by Veale (2000) and the Rhodes, Proffitt, Grady and Sumich (1998) study on facial symmetry. Others studies included Rosenhan (1973) on the reliability of psychiatric assessment and Wang's (2005) study on stress. When candidates did not achieve full marks it was mainly because the range of evidence needed was not there or because the selected evidence was not described in the required detail.
- (b) Most candidates achieved full marks in this question and they were able to offer some truly competent answers when applying research/theory to explain the issues raised in the source. Weaker answers did not always describe the events clearly, or justify them, usually because the evidence described in part (a) was not always used appropriately. Common answers included that 'Frieda was suffering from BDD' with many candidates commenting on Veale's reports of a large number of sufferers conducting DIY surgeries as a result of being refused cosmetic surgery. Other candidates commented that the fact that she was married and had a job contradicted suggested evidence provided by Phillips et al that most BDD sufferers are unmarried and unemployed. Candidates also commented that 'Frieda's preoccupation with having a symmetrical jaw was linked to her desire to be attractive' and this is supported by the Rhodes et al study on the link between facial symmetry and attractiveness. Most competent answers went on to say that this preoccupation was not justified as although symmetrical faces are linked to attractiveness, Rhodes et al commented that some asymmetry is seen as more attractive than perfect symmetry. Many candidates made reference to the two different diagnoses made by the doctors as characteristic of the inability to diagnose psychiatric disorders, as reported by Rosenhan.

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<p>Paper 9773/03 Key Applications</p>

General comments

This was the first year of this examination and candidates taking the examination in this session had all prepared for the Psychology and Crime option and the Psychology and Environment option. This report is only able to comment on candidate performance for these options.

The standard of answers was excellent with many candidates achieving full marks on questions. The standard of answers for the evaluation questions in **Section B** was particularly high with candidates showing the ability to apply a wide range of sophisticated evaluation issues to the studies and theories.

Comments on specific questions

Psychology and Crime

Question 6

- (a) There were several categories of behaviour that could be described and candidates used a range of these. Full marks were given where there was a brief description of each behaviour rather than simply an identification of the category.
- (b) Most candidates did this very well. To achieve full marks it was necessary to contrast the expected behaviours (e.g. fidgeting) with the reality (a decrease in movement). Candidates drew this contrast clearly and succinctly.
- (c) As with the previous questions candidates were able to discuss one difference clearly and succinctly and most achieved full marks.

Question 7

- (a) Most candidates achieved full marks here by identifying the telephone survey using a random digit dialling method and were also able to describe the use of quota sampling.
- (b) Again this was well answered with most candidates able to explain one weakness. This was most commonly the fact that just over 10% of the eligible respondents actually completed the survey.
- (c) Again most candidates achieved full marks on this question by providing a clear example of a question including the assessment via a 6 point scale.

Question 8

- (a) **Question 8** was not answered as frequently as **Question 9** but those candidates that chose this question provided an impressive amount of detail about this study and achieved top band marks.
- (b) This was answered very well with candidates using a range of issues to evaluate the study.

Question 9

- (a) The answers to this question were often impressive in both their depth and breadth. Many candidates gave far more than was required to achieve full marks with answers that covered biological theories, social theories, personality theories and cognitive theories. These answers showed not only an impressive knowledge of the material but an impressive command of the material in such a short time.



- (b) As with **Question 9(a)**, many candidates achieved full marks here and several went far beyond what had been expected of a full mark answer. Candidates used an impressive range of issues in their evaluations including methodological issues, comparisons and contrasts and discussions of the theories in the contexts of debates such as nature-nurture, reductionism – holism and free will – determinism.

Question 10

- (a) The answers to this question were often very impressive indeed. Candidates brought together a wide range of material in their answers including observations of aggressive behaviour conducted by prison staff, self reports, investigations of stress levels, crowding and density measures and type of crimes committed.
- (b) Candidates gave very good explanations of the evidence on which their answers to part (a) were based and many achieved full marks.

Psychology and Environment

Question 11

- (a) This was well answered and many candidates achieved full marks.
- (b) This was also well answered with the majority of candidates using the 1903 Chicago Fire example, although any other appropriate example could achieve full marks.
- (c) As with **Question 6(c)** the answers were succinct and clearly focused on one contrast. Many candidates achieved full marks here.

Question 12

- (a) This was well answered with most candidates describing the study by Donnerstein and Wilson.
- (b) This was very well answered with candidates showing a good understanding of the issues surrounding cause and effect: manipulation of variables in experimental situations, free will, individual differences and so on.
- (c) Well answered with a range of suggestions including controlling pre-existing levels of aggression, mood and volume.

Question 13

- (a) This was a much more popular choice than **Question 14**. This was very well answered with candidates describing an impressive range of material and many answers going beyond what was necessary to achieve full marks.
- (b) Again this was very well answered with answers going beyond what was expected. Candidates used a range of issues in their answers which included ethics, sampling issues, ecological validity, task validity, reductionism – holism, qualitative and quantitative data and the use of self report data.

Question 14

- (a) Very few candidates attempted this question but answers gave a good description of a range of studies in this area.
- (b) This was less well answered than **Question 13(b)** with candidates tending to concentrate solely on ethical issues and issues of generalisability to humans rather than the wide ranging debates seen in answers to **Question 13(b)**.

Question 15

- (a) This was answered very well indeed with candidates making some very impressive suggestions as to how the existence of magnetite could be investigated. Answers were frequently worth full marks and displayed a very high level of understanding of work in this area.
- (b) As with **Question 10(b)** candidates were able to explain the evidence on which their suggestions were based very clearly indeed and frequently achieved full marks.

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Paper 9773/04

Personal Investigation

General Comments

The standard of work produced in this, the first, examination series was very high. A variety of topics were investigated and it was pleasing to see that a number of candidates opted for topics from the 'explore more' part of the syllabus. All reports displayed high levels of independence that led to the production of excellent work. Reports for the Personal Investigation always followed the standard format and the level of written communication was generally impressive with all reports staying within the required word limit.

All investigations conformed to the ethical guidelines and it was apparent that an appropriate level of supervision was offered when carrying out the investigations.

Given that this is moderated coursework it would be helpful if Centres annotate the marked scripts in order to enable Moderators to identify the rationale behind their application of the mark scheme.

Comments on individual parts of the report

The Abstracts were clear and concise and, in the majority of cases, included most relevant aspects. Candidates should be reminded that to receive the full marks available in this section both the results **and** the conclusions of the Personal Investigation need to be provided.

The Introductions were generally described concisely and included a range of appropriate evidence that in most cases was apposite to the research topic being investigated. There was a very good logical progression from the literature review to the rationale of candidates' investigations. In most cases the research question was clearly stated, although there were a few instances in which clarity was absent, especially when there was a discrepancy between the method used in the investigation and the one reported in the research hypothesis.

The Hypotheses were in most cases fully operationalised and testable. A number of candidates, however, did not achieve the full marks available in this section as they did not include a measurable dependent variable and/or did not include both conditions of the independent variable in their hypotheses. In all cases the direction/tail of the hypothesis was included and was correct.

In the Method: Design section most candidates correctly identified and operationalised the variables in their investigations, identified possible extraneous variables and suggested ways of controlling them. The standard in this section was generally high and understanding of methodological terms and concepts was evident throughout. In the few cases where full marks were not awarded, this was either because the justification for choice of experimental design was absent or the IV and DV were not always present.

The Method: Participants and Apparatus section was again well attempted by the majority of candidates. The target population and sampling technique with its justification were present in most cases, although it should be noted that the identified target population needs to be geographically located as well. For example, stating that 'the target population consists of sixth form candidates from a secondary school' cannot be seen as detailed enough as this could involve all sixth form candidates from all schools in the country. This would especially be problematic if the sampling method selected was that of 'random sampling' as it would imply that all sixth formers in the country were given an equal chance of being selected, whereas in most cases candidates did not sample from the entire population. Stating the geographical location therefore is necessary in order to allow for both clarity and also sufficient replication. Full participant details were given by most but in some cases the number of participants and/or the way that the participants were selected was absent.

The Apparatus was almost always described in detail and all evidence was included in the appendices. Justification for the choice of materials was not always present.

The Method: Procedure section was generally clear, well described and allowed full replication. Evidence of standardised instructions and ethical treatment of participants was almost always present. Candidates should be reminded, however, that they need to make appropriate reference to all controls described in previous sections of their report. For example, if candidates mentioned that 'counterbalancing' was used as a way of controlling order effects, details needed to be given in the procedure as to how counterbalancing was carried out. In addition, candidates should be reminded that for a procedure to be fully replicable all details need to be included, such as how participants were allocated in the two conditions of the experiment when an independent measures design was used. Equally, candidates are reminded that for the procedure to be fully replicable all materials used need to be included in the appendices or referenced where applicable. Failure to do so renders the procedure difficult to replicate.

The Method: Data Analysis section was not as well attempted as other sections, with a large number of candidates failing to comment on why they chose to analyse their data using the selected descriptive statistics, visual displays and inferential statistics. When this was attempted it was in some cases rather brief and did not show the level of understanding required. Some candidates only commented on their choice of inferential statistics. Candidates are reminded that in order to achieve the full marks available in this section they will need to report on all three required elements, that is, choice of descriptive statistics, choice of visual displays and choice of inferential statistics.

The Results section was better answered than the data analysis section although a large number of candidates did not achieve the full marks available. In a few cases graphs and tables were not fully labelled and headings were not always informative, for instance not including units of measurement that made reference to both conditions. Most candidates who chose to conduct a correlation in their investigation seemed to struggle in this section. Although it is acceptable to use a correlation and achieve the full marks available in the absence of any descriptive statistics (if this absence is well justified) some work was not clear. For example, some candidates displayed the raw data of their investigations under the heading of descriptive statistics, while others mentioned that no descriptive statistics were used and then displayed descriptive statistics without any evidence of calculations.

In most cases evidence of calculations was present in the appendices. Candidates are reminded that if evidence of calculations is absent, it is hard to judge whether the results provided are correct and thus the full marks available cannot be awarded.

In most cases an appropriate conclusion was reached and its relation to the hypothesis was clear.

The Discussion section was successfully undertaken by most candidates and in many instances discussions were impressive, showing understanding and competent knowledge of methodology. Evaluation was usually thorough and the depth of argument reflected good analysis. Suggestions for improvement and further research were evident and thoughtful. When candidates did not achieve the higher bands, that was either because the results were not fully explained and appropriately related to the introduction or because the evaluation was not balanced and lacked the level of understanding required for higher marks.

The Conduct, Presentation, References and Appendices section was very well attempted with most candidates achieving full marks. All candidates stayed within the suggested word limit and appendices were in most cases complete. Candidates are reminded that the standard referencing format is required and that they are also required to reference the source of their statistical test or the computer program used.