

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9773/01
Key Studies and Theories

Key Messages

- Extended answers to questions asking for a description of a key study should focus on that study. There is no need for candidates to provide background material or additional studies in such answers.
- Evaluation should always be explicitly linked to the material (theories and/or research) being evaluated rather than a broad discussion of generic evaluation.

General Comments

Overall the standard of answers was extremely good and candidates have clearly been very well prepared for this examination. The level of detail provided was consistently impressive and candidates were able to use a wide range of evaluation issues in **Section B**. No questions appeared to cause problems to candidates although candidates do sometimes struggle to select the correct information and give more information than is required. This was particularly evident in **Section B** answers.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1 was generally very well answered with most candidates selecting either certainty or willingness to testify from a range of possible answers (quality of view, clarity of memory, speed of identification and level of trust in the eye witness process would all have been acceptable answers). To achieve full marks it was necessary to identify an appropriate variable (such as certainty) and then briefly outline the way in which feedback distorted the witnesses' reports (for example, by stating that feedback made the witnesses more certain).

Question 2 asked candidates to draw a conclusion from a table of data drawn from the key study by Samuel and Bryant. The most common responses identified the conclusion that children make fewer errors as they get older or that children make fewer errors in the one judgement condition compared to the other conditions. However any appropriate conclusion was creditworthy.

Although candidates clearly understood **Question 3** and gave a wide range of appropriate answers, weaker candidates tended to give general reasons (such as simply stating that the research took place in a laboratory) whereas stronger candidates gave much more focused answers either by selecting specific details of Milgram's study or by relating their answers to obedience.

Question 4 discriminated well between candidates with some very strong answers showing a sophisticated understanding of the way in which the 'collapse' of the prisoners as a group allowed guards to misuse their power. However any answer making a connection between the powerlessness of the prisoners and the behaviour of the guards was given credit.

Question 5 was generally very well answered with the majority of candidates explaining that the model did not need to intervene because in most trials of the cane condition help was given by bystanders well within the time period that the experimenters had allowed before the model was to act. Specific reference to the cane condition was required for full marks.

In **Question 6** candidates generally showed good levels of understanding of this study and most were able to explain that Bandura needed to ensure that the children had some motivation to behave aggressively before the final observation stage of the experiment.

Question 7 was generally well answered although a small proportion of candidates did not describe the categories proposed by Ainsworth. Where candidates selected the correct categories they were able to give an impressive level of detail, often beyond what was required for full marks.

There were some excellent answers to **Question 8**. All candidates were able to describe a finding from Anderson and Green's study and it was acceptable to conclude that the findings from this study either did or not support the Freudian notion of repression with marks being awarded for the explanation. Some candidates concluded that the study did support the Freudian notion of repression (as it demonstrates the existence of repression) and some argued that it did not (as the Freudian notion of trauma being necessary for repression was not shown). Whichever way the candidates chose to answer they gave clear explanations and demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of the research.

Candidates answered **Question 9** very well and showed very good understanding of the study. Several arguments could have been presented both for and against this study and candidates' answers showed a wide range of these. Answers achieving fewer than full marks tended only to identify appropriate issues (such as lack of consent) without any contextualisation.

Question 10 was generally very well answered with candidates simply needing to identify any two behaviours with no further elaboration to achieve full marks. Appropriate answers included excessive checking of appearance, avoidance of mirrors, avoiding magazines or TV commercials focussing on appearance, repeated questioning of others about their appearance, camouflaging defects etc.

Question 11 was generally very well answered and again only required candidates to identify the four conditions (low symmetry, normal symmetry, high symmetry and perfect symmetry) for full marks. Where candidates did not achieve full marks they had simply omitted one or more of the conditions.

Question 12 was generally very well answered with most candidates being able to describe a self report measure used by Wang et al. These included self reports of stress and anxiety taken after subjects entered the scanner and after each scan and self reports of frustration, effort and task difficulty taken after the high and low stress tasks. Candidates were awarded one mark for identifying the variable being measured (e.g. task difficulty) and one mark for any further detail such as the use of 1-9 scales or information about when the self report was used (as outlined above).

Section B

Question 14 was chosen by candidates far more frequently than **Question 13** although answers to both were of a very high standard.

Question 13

- (a) The relatively small numbers of candidates who chose this question answered it well and displayed a wide range of knowledge about autism. Any appropriate information was credited with candidates tending to include information about the characteristics and/or diagnosis of autism, the concept of theory of mind and how this applies to autism and previous research into this area (most commonly, studies using the Sally-Anne test). Most answers were focused and detailed and it was rare for inappropriate information to be included here.
- (b) Candidates gave a range of evaluation issues and most were able to link the issues they discussed to the question although some offered a more generic evaluation of the study with no clear focus on how this study has helped our understanding of autism. Answers that did not make this link explicit were unable to achieve top band marks. Many issues would have been appropriate here although the most commonly used included usefulness and practical applications, issues of sampling and generalisability, replication and reliability and validity, as well as limitations of the procedure used in the study.
- (c) Candidates were able to suggest a range of appropriate alternative studies and to explain how this alternative would extend our understanding of autism. Answers generally showed good understanding of research methods as well as clear explanations about how their suggested alternative would extend our understanding of autism.

Question 14

- (a) Candidates showed detailed knowledge of this study and there were some exceptional answers. However many candidates provided a great deal of information at the beginning of their answers about gambling in general, which although accurate, was not able to achieve any marks. Whilst candidates are not penalised for this they are using time which could have been more profitably utilised. Centres should ensure that their candidates are well prepared for questions which ask only for details of the key study and that they understand that there is no need to give additional background information before describing the study.
- (b) This was very well answered with candidates showing the ability to apply a wide range of evaluation issues to this study. These included the strengths and weaknesses of the way observations were collected, the limited nature of the sample as well as ethical issues and issues relating to the usefulness of the research. As with **Question 13(b)** there were some very focused answers whereas others were more generic and did not explicitly link the evaluation issues selected to the key study.
- (c) This was again well answered and candidates were able to suggest appropriate, well designed alternative studies and to explain how their alternative would extend our understanding of gambling.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9773/02

Methods, Issues and Applications

Key Message

- Candidates should ensure that their answers are of a length proportionate to the number of marks available for the question. This will help them to manage their time during the examination.

General Comments

This paper produced a good range of responses from the candidates, achieving differentiation between the highly able and the weaker candidates. Surprisingly, although the challenge in this paper is built into **Question 2(b)** and **Question 3** due to their unfamiliar elements, these were the questions in which candidates performed best.

Some candidates did not write answers proportionate to the marks available. This was observed at both ends of the mark range with candidates providing either lengthy answers for questions that carried few marks or not providing enough detail for answers with higher marks.

Overall, candidates attempted most questions and, even where answers lacked detail, knowledge or explicit contextualisation, they seemed relevant which suggests that candidates understood the questions/rubric. The exception to this was **Question 2(a)** that produced a range of responses which were not always relevant.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This question required candidates to look at a table of data and then describe and explain the results. Almost all candidates provided a good description of the results, which in many cases was detailed and in which understanding was evident. To gain full marks candidates needed to provide an explanation which was explicitly linked to the table of results.
- (b) Almost all candidates were able to identify two controls that were used while awakening participants. The most commonly identified controls were the use of a doorbell and participants reporting their dream to a tape recorder. The question required candidates to *describe* and not just identify these controls. To gain full marks candidates needed to provide a description with sufficient detail.

The second part of this question required candidates to explain the usefulness of the controls described. This was attempted well by most and some sophisticated answers were provided that demonstrated excellent understanding throughout. Weaker candidates offered generic answers in relation to the usefulness of controls that were not specific to the ones described. Others made comments that were not relevant to controls or misread the question and commented on limitations.

- (c) There was a surprising range in performance, given the straightforward nature of this question. Candidates were asked to debate the use of scientific method when investigating sleep and dreaming. A number of candidates provided excellent answers and were awarded the full available marks. To gain full marks candidates needed to give answers that were either linked to sleep and dreaming, or were relevant to scientific equipment. It seemed that most candidates were not prepared for this question, which can explain the variation in performance, with the most able

providing thoughtful answers and the weaker ones finding the demands of the question difficult to meet.

Question 2

- (a) Candidates were required to describe two practical applications of the cognitive approach in psychology. These applications could have come from any area of the specification, or the 'explore more' section. The majority of candidates struggled to answer this question successfully. Some simply described studies without pointing out what the practical applications were. Others offered generic descriptions of what the cognitive approach in psychology investigates or even gave anecdotal descriptions that were not based on any psychological knowledge. It seemed that many candidates did not fully understand what is meant by a practical application. This is surprising given that it is a clear requirement of the specification and that candidates have come across a number of applications in the Key Applications paper.
- (b) This was a question aiming to challenge and stretch candidates given that they were required to apply their knowledge of the behaviourist and cognitive approaches to the unfamiliar area of how a language is learnt. Most candidates were able to describe the two approaches and link their theoretical viewpoints to how a language is learnt. The more able ones provided some outstanding answers that were creative and demonstrated insight. To gain high marks, candidates should make clear the links between the perspectives and how a language is learnt.
- (c) This question was answered well by most candidates, with a large number achieving the full available marks. Some candidates did not read the question properly, offering weaknesses of the experimental method instead of benefits; others did not link the benefits described to cognitive psychology. In both cases this meant that they were limited in the number of marks that they could achieve. There was also some confusion as to which studies adopt the cognitive approach, with some candidates referring to Milgram when using examples from research.

Question 3

- (a) Most candidates achieved full marks in this question and a wide range of research and theory was provided concerning the issues raised in the source, with many producing excellent answers. Most commonly used research were the Piliavin, Rodin and Piliavin study on helping behaviour, the Loftus and Palmer study on the reliability of eyewitness testimony, Darley and Latane's experiment on diffusion of responsibility, and Wells and Bradfield's study into witness identification. When candidates did not achieve full marks it was mainly because the range of evidence needed was limited or because the selected evidence was not described in the required detail.
- (b) This question was answered very well, with many candidates achieving full marks and providing some truly outstanding answers. Even weaker candidates performed well in this question although they were not always able to describe the events clearly, or justify them, usually because the evidence described in part (a) was not always used appropriately. Common answers included that 'bystanders in the busy street experienced diffusion of responsibility', that 'the person responsible for the hit and run accident might never be identified due to the unreliability of eyewitness testimony' and that 'bystanders were weighing up the costs and benefits of helping'.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9773/03 Key Applications

Key Messages

- Extended answers to questions asking for a description of a key study should focus on that study. There is no need for candidates to provide background material or additional studies in such answers.
- Evaluation should always be explicitly linked to the material (theories and/or research) being evaluated rather than a broad discussion of generic evaluation.

General Comments

The overall standard of scripts was very good with some candidates achieving close to full marks. The level of detail provided for all questions was impressive, as was the consistently high performance across the three hours of the examination. In several questions, but most notably in **Section B**, part **(b)** questions, the responses produced by some candidates far exceeded both the expectations of the examiners and the requirements for full marks. Centres are to be congratulated on the performance of their candidates.

The total entry is relatively small and it is only possible to comment on questions from the Crime option and the Environment. For the other options, there were either no candidates at all or such small numbers that it is not possible to draw general conclusions on performance from these.

Comments on specific questions

Psychology and Crime

Question 6

Overall this question was very well answered with candidates providing detailed answers.

- (a) Candidates were able to describe Eysenck's explanation of crime very clearly, scoring high marks.
- (b) Candidates were able to offer several reasons and examples to support the notion that this theory is deterministic.
- (c) Although many answers identified three specific weaknesses of the EPQ/EPI, some weaker responses focused on weaknesses of the theory / explanation as a whole rather than focussing on weaknesses with the EPQ /EPI and these could not be credited.

Question 7

Overall the standard of answers was very good. Parts **(a)** and **(c)** were particularly well answered with some weaker responses to part **(b)**.

- (a) Candidates gave detailed explanations of expressive and instrumental behaviours with appropriate examples.
- (b) This question showed more discrimination between candidates with some candidates being unable to describe Smallest Space Analysis (SSA) at all and some giving very clear and detailed responses.
- (c) Answers to this part in particular (holism versus reductionism) showed sophisticated understanding both of the debate and of the research. Answers agreeing with the viewpoint were as common as those disagreeing and the level of argument was impressive.

Question 8

This was a more popular choice than **Question 9**.

- (a) Candidates produced very detailed responses to this part of this question and their answers showed detailed understanding of the study by Rubin et al.
- (b) Again candidates produced very detailed responses. This part of the question showed more discrimination than part (a) with stronger candidates demonstrating a more focused evaluation of the study whereas slightly weaker candidates offered more generic evaluation issues. However the standard of answers, and in particular the amount of detail offered by candidates, was consistently impressive. Many went far beyond what was required for full marks.

Question 9

- (a) As with **Question 8**, candidates produced very detailed answers to this part of the question and their answers showed both depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the psychology of investigation.
- (b) As with **Question 8**, responses to part (b) often went far beyond what was required for full marks.

Question 10

Answers to this question were of a slightly lower standard than the answers to the other questions in the Psychology and Crime section as a whole.

- (a) It appeared that candidates were often unsure about exactly what constituted a behavioural technique with no candidate using the examples given in the specification. In spite of this, candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of research methods and design in their answers to this part.
- (b) Candidates gave clear descriptions of evidence in part (b).

Psychology and Environment

Question 11

All parts of this question were very well answered.

- (a) Candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of theory and research into personal space.
- (b) Most selected the study by Little (1968) for part (b) and often gave far more than required for full marks.
- (c) Candidates had little trouble identifying three differences between the simulation and the stop-distance method and these were well described.

Question 12

All parts of this question were very well answered.

- (a) Candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of research into catastrophes.
- (b) This was very well answered, most candidates being able to suggest one advantage and one disadvantage of the laboratory study.
- (c) In particular the answers to part (c) demonstrated a wide range of opinions as to which of the three main methods were the more appropriate and answers were consistently well argued and explained.

Question 13

- (a) This was very well answered with candidates showing detailed knowledge of the study.
- (b) Candidates were able to apply a wide range of evaluation issues to this study with the very strong candidates selecting focused issues as opposed to generic ones. As with the **Section B** questions on Psychology and Crime many candidates gave responses that went well beyond the requirements for full marks.

Question 14

- (a) This was also very well answered with candidates showing a wide range of knowledge of both theory and research on crowd behaviour.
- (b) Evaluation was particularly good and the amount of detail candidates were able to produce in the time allowed was impressive. Again, several candidates produced responses that exceeded the requirements for full marks.

Question 15

- (a) Candidates suggested a range of appropriate alternative studies here and these were well designed.
- (b) Candidates were able to support their suggestions in part (a) with evidence that was well thought through. The answers to this question were markedly better than the answers given to **Question 10** strengthening the conclusion that candidates were unclear about the appropriate psychological content for **Question 10** as opposed to struggling with the design element of the question.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9773/04

Personal Investigation

The standard of coursework produced in this examination session was again very high and comparable to that of last year. A variety of topics were investigated and at the top end of the range some outstanding pieces of work were produced that went above and beyond the requirements of the syllabus.

The majority of investigations adhered to the ethical guidelines and there was clear evidence of the ethical treatment of participants throughout the investigations.

Centres are reminded that all Personal Investigation titles should be submitted to CIE for approval before work has commenced, so as to ensure that the Personal Investigation complies with the syllabus regulations and meets the criteria for internal assessment. Centres that choose to investigate participants under the age of 16 will need to make sure that written parental consent has been obtained for each participant and that evidence of this is included in the investigation without infringing confidentiality.

It would be helpful if Centres annotated the marked scripts in order to enable Moderators to identify the rationale behind the application of the mark scheme.

Comments on individual parts of the report

The majority of **Abstracts** were clear and well written but not always concise. In a few cases full marks were awarded for an abstract that did not include all required elements. Centres are reminded that information on the aim, method, results and conclusions should be provided to achieve the full available marks.

The **Introductions** were relevant and contained carefully selected material that in most cases was apposite and coherently and logically organised. The rationale, however, did not always follow logically from the literature review and it was not always clear how the described research led to the proposed research question. For full marks the link between the presented literature and the rationale of the investigation needs to be explicit. A statement clearly linking the described research with the proposed investigation will be helpful in achieving this.

The **Hypotheses** were clear and concise and included most relevant aspects. There were a few cases in which the dependent variable was not clearly measurable or the two conditions of the independent variable were not clearly identified and yet full marks were still awarded. For example, stating that participants will have a 'better memory' cannot be considered measurable. Centres are also advised that the null hypothesis needs to denote 'no difference' between the two conditions of the independent variable rather than a negative outcome.

In the **Method: Design** section most candidates successfully identified and operationalized the independent and dependent variables, identified extraneous variables and suggested how these could be appropriately controlled. In a number of cases, however, the choice of experimental design was not justified, i.e. it was not clear why the candidate decided to choose an independent measures design instead of a repeated or matched pairs design. Simply stating that the independent measures design was used because 'it is more practical' is not enough as a justification.

In addition, this section requires candidates to explain how at least **two** extraneous variables can be controlled. In some cases information on only one extraneous variable was present and in others information on how the variables were controlled was present in other sections of the investigation. Although the latter is acceptable and candidates have not been penalised for it, it compromises the report by preventing it from appearing in the correct format.

The **Method: Participants and Apparatus** section was well attempted by most candidates. However, as with the previous examination session the characteristics of the target population were not always fully identified. A number of candidates made no reference to what the geographical location of the target population was and merely stated that the target population consisted 'of sixth form candidates from a secondary school'. Others made no reference to a target population at all and simply described the sample. Centres are advised that the description of participant details and the identification of the characteristics of the target population are two distinct criteria and both need to be addressed for full marks in this section. In a number of instances the sampling method was not justified. Candidates simply identified the sampling method used and went on to describe how this was carried out. It is important that a justification for the selection of the sampling method is provided that shows clear understanding of that selection.

The **Apparatus** was described in detail and a comprehensive list was almost always provided. In some cases, however, the evidence was absent from the appendices. This is a concern as absence of evidence will make the procedure non-replicable. Justification for the choice of materials was again frequently absent.

The **Procedures** were relevant, well described, and allowed full replication. A verbatim description of the standardised instructions and ethical treatment of participants in the form of consent and debriefing forms were almost always present in the appendices.

As with the last examination session there were a few cases where full marks were awarded despite a number of omissions that rendered the procedure non-replicable. For example, the absence of evidence of materials in the Method/Apparatus section cannot allow for full replication of the procedure. Equally, the omission of how participants were allocated in the conditions of the experiment when an independent measures design was used does not allow full replication. As with the previous examination session appropriate details of the controls described earlier were not always present in the procedure. 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.

The **Method: Data Analysis** section was generally well answered. Appropriate descriptive statistics were almost always selected and in many cases justified. The choice of inferential statistics was almost always appropriate although the justifications as with previous sessions were rather brief and did not make full reference to the data collected. As with the previous examination session Centres are reminded that in order to achieve the full marks available in this section they will need to select and **justify** this selection of all **three** required elements, that is, choice of descriptive statistics, choice of visual displays and choice of inferential statistics. Just stating that the statistical test was chosen before the data was 'ordinal' is not a complete justification.

The **Results** section was generally well attempted, with correctly stated descriptive statistics and correctly calculated inferential statistics. In a few cases graphs and tables were not fully labelled and headings were not always informative. For example 'mean total scores for groups' is not informative enough as a title. The verbal summaries were also rather brief in some cases.

In most cases evidence of calculations was present in the appendices and these were correct. 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.

The **Discussion** section was usually impressive and reflected the calibre of candidates taking part in this examination session. Understanding, insight and a thorough knowledge of methodology were evident throughout. The results were explained thoroughly and clearly related to the introduction. In certain cases the choice of improvements did not always show the required understanding and insight. For example, a suggestion such as 'I will be using more participants' is not always relevant especially when a significant difference has already been found. Suggestions such as 'I will be replicating the research in other cultures' without further expansion or explanation as to how this will enhance the research does not show the required understanding and insight.

The **Conduct, Presentation, References and Appendices** section was very well attempted with most candidates achieving full marks. The quality of written communication was generally impressive. All of the reports stayed within the recommended word limit and followed the correct format.

Centres are reminded that candidates are required to include all references in alphabetical order, not just a bibliography. The source of their statistical test or the computer program used needs also to be referenced.