

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/01

Core Studies 1

General comments

As reported in previous years, candidates were reasonably well prepared but some did not follow the rubric, answering too many questions. Again there was the tendency for candidates to write too much for earlier questions in **Section A**, then to make up time write very brief answers for the later questions; other candidates spent too much time on their **Section A** answers which did not leave them enough time to write sufficient answers to the question in **Section B**.

There was evidence that some candidates may have used texts which are lacking in detail or were inaccurate. On this occasion this was most noticeable in **Question 9** when most candidates could not write about the two scanning techniques.

Finally, some candidates continue to confuse the core studies. Often 'Milgram' and 'Haney' were 'swapped' as were 'Hraba and Grant' and 'Baron-Cohen'.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

Every paper has a question on two ethical issues applied to a core study and this session it was the turn of the Loftus and Palmer study. Surprisingly this question was answered poorly by most candidates, many being unable to relate ethical issues to the study. Notably the question is not just about ethical issues that were broken, but issues that were maintained. So, confidentiality was maintained, participants were not really deceived and probably gave their consent. They may have been harmed when they witnessed the accidents, however.

Question 2

Some candidates had no clue about what depth cues are; some had a vague idea, but very few could provide a clear explanation. A depth cue is environmental information which is used by our perceptual processes to allow us to perceive depth. Alternatively they are two dimensional effects that suggest to us three dimensions. For question part **(b)** there were three cues in the elephant, antelope person picture by Hudson. These were overlap (or superimposition), relative size and height in plane. Most candidates could identify two of these three. There was no gradient of texture as some candidates believed.

Question 3

This question asked candidates to describe the procedure of the Sally-Anne test used in the Baron-Cohen et al. study on autism. Some candidates did this very briefly (one long sentence) and some wrote far more than would ever be required for four marks. Whatever the length of answer, it is quite clear that a significant majority know and understand the Sally-Anne test, the procedure of this study.

Question 4

This question asked how two variables were controlled in the Bandura, Ross and Ross study on aggression. There were a number of controls here: the children were matched for pre-existing levels of aggression; the room layout was always the same; the toys were the same for each child; the model has ten minutes with each child; the model repeats the same behaviours in the same order, etc. Most candidates either knew two controls or they did not know any at all.

Question 5

This question on the Oedipus Complex that little Hans was going through is fundamental to this study so it was expected that candidates would perform very well. Indeed many candidates did, but many did not, seemingly not knowing anything about the Oedipus Complex at all. The most common piece of evidence offered was the giraffe episode, followed by many examples relating to little Hans, his widdler and his mother.

Question 6

In the Schachter and Singer study the self report method was used to gather data from participants who had just been exposed to either a euphoric stooge or an angry stooge. Questions were asked about their physiological state and a crucial question asked their feelings of anger and their feelings of happiness. Question part **(b)** asked about observation, the second method used in the Schachter study. Observation was done through a one-way mirror on 4 categories for the euphoric condition and 6 categories for the anger condition. Many candidates provided a partial answer to both these questions, answers mainly lacking detail.

Question 7

Question part **(a)** asked for two features of REM sleep. In addition to the factors identified in the Dement and Kleitman study, during REM sleep the eyes move, the brain is relatively active and the body is relatively paralysed compared to NREM sleep. For question part **(b)** candidates had to give one difference between REM and NREM sleep and for the two full marks this required candidates to say something about REM sleep and then say how it was different in NREM sleep.

Question 8

Candidates have been asked about the term split brain many times before, so it was not surprising that most candidates provided a full and appropriate answer scoring them two marks out of two. Question part **(b)** asked about problems with generalising from split brain studies and most candidates made the appropriate point that those having the commissurotomy were not 'normal' either before the procedure or indeed after it.

Question 9

The pet scan procedure used by Raine et al. is a fundamental component of the study and most candidates were able to provide sufficient correct detail in their answer to score full marks. Briefly, participants begin the continuous performance task and they are injected with FDG, the radioactive marker substance. The participants do the continuous performance task for 32 minutes so the marker has spread throughout the body. They are then scanned to see which areas of the brain metabolise the marker more than others. However, very few candidates answered question part **(b)** correctly. The two *scanning techniques* are the cortical peel technique (for lateral areas) and the box technique (for medial areas). Each technique is described in some detail, supported with diagrams, in the Raine et al. article.

Question 10

This question on the Milgram study asked for two reasons why the participants obeyed authority. A number of candidates merely wrote "it was the university" or that "they were paid" without stating why this was. Such statements earned them one mark, as the answers are correct. However, if they were to write that it was the prestige of the University, or they were paid so felt obliged to continue, then the additional detail would earn the extra mark.

Question 11

In the Haney et al. study the gist of the dispositional hypothesis is that the state of prisons is due to the people who are in the prison. Many candidates did not understand this. In question part **(b)**, where candidates were asked whether the dispositional hypothesis was supported, the lack of understanding continued. The dispositional hypothesis was not supported, because the study involved 'normal' students with no criminal history. In the prison situation, their behaviour changed radically to adapt to the roles. Thus it was the prison situation they were in that was responsible for their behaviour.

Question 12

The diffusion of responsibility hypothesis is that the more people there are, the less likely any one is to help. This was the case in many laboratory studies, but it was not found in the Piliavin et al. study, and so it did not support the hypothesis. One explanation for lack of diffusion of responsibility, asked in question part **(b)**, was that either the participants were face-to-face with the victim, or that the participants made a decision based on the cost-benefit model.

Question 13

This question asked candidates what was meant by the term 'moron'. Surprisingly most candidates scored one mark rather than the expected two. A moron is a person with low intelligence, but specifically, it is one who has a mental age of between 8 and 12 years. This would equate to an IQ of between 60 and 80. An IQ of 12 or 13 is so low it would be impossible to measure it, and candidates stating this only scored one mark. For question part **(b)** the morons were the white middle-class Americans, and not the immigrants or negroes, as some candidates believed.

Question 14

Questions asking for two features with an allocation of two marks require no more than identification. So, if a candidate wrote "the dolls were the same" they scored one mark for one feature. Most candidates were able to give two features that were the same, but for question part **(b)** many candidates struggled to give two features that were different.

Question 15

The answer to question part **(a)** was that the pseudopatients were 'friends' of Rosenhan and they had various occupations. Nearly all candidates answered this question part correctly. In fact most candidates also answered question part **(b)** correctly. The pseudopatients gained access to the mental institutions by telephoning the hospitals for an appointment (1 mark) and claiming that they could hear voices (1 mark).

Section B

Question 16

In question part **(a)** most candidates were able to provide details of the findings of their chosen study as required in question part **(a)**. By far the most popular study chosen was that of Loftus and Palmer and a significant number of candidates were able to provide very impressive answers by quoting all the estimates of speed correctly followed by the exact numbers of participants who 'saw' broken glass.

Question part **(b)** required an outline of the procedure. Those choosing the Samuel and Bryant study often gave full details of the use of materials, the types of question asked as well as aspects of the children. Many answers here were also excellent, achieving top marks.

Question part **(c)** required candidates to have a knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the experimental method, whatever core study was chosen. Again there were many impressive answers which referred to appropriate strengths and weaknesses (such as level of control and lack of ecological validity) in addition to providing examples from the chosen study.

Question part **(d)** as always asked for a different way in which data from the chosen study could be gathered. On the one hand the more able candidates often provided more detailed explanations of how their suggestions would work, and on the other, there were those who could not develop their suggestion beyond a few sentences. The effect on the results was often not addressed and so marks were lost.

Question 17

Question part **(a)** required candidates to outline the main findings of the chosen study. Rather than answer the question specifically, many candidates 'told the story' providing details of the findings of the study and going through procedure details and sometimes, although not always, eventually arriving at the findings. As the question specifically required findings, additional aspects were not required and received no credit.

Question part **(b)** confused many candidates because now they were faced with a question requiring details of procedure – and they had already provided their answer to this in question part **(a)**. Candidates are advised to read all question parts fully and plan their answer before starting to write.

Question part **(c)** required, as always, that candidates consider advantages and disadvantages. Appropriate advantages could be that longitudinal studies gather in-depth detailed data, often utilising a range of methods. On the other hand there are disadvantages, such as participant attrition and that often the number of participants is relatively small.

Question part **(d)** required candidates to consider an alternative method of gathering data and the 'opposite' of a longitudinal study is to gather data over a short period of time in a snapshot study. Most candidates could do this successfully and achieved high marks. However, as always there were those who did not fully address the second part of the question, the effect that the alternative method may have on the results.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/02
Core Studies 2

General comments

The knowledge and understanding shown by many candidates was impressive and many performed very well. Particularly good understanding and application of terminology was displayed. Very few rubric errors were made and candidates seemed to finish the paper in the time given. Some candidates lost marks on **Section A** through failing to distinguish between 'identify' and 'outline' requests. Where candidates are asked to 'identify', one word answers are sufficient but a more detailed answer is required when 'outline', 'describe' or 'explain' is used. Some candidates had obviously had a good amount of practice at the essay questions while other candidates seemed less well versed in structuring the essays in the required format. Studying the mark scheme is beneficial in this respect.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) Candidates showed good knowledge of the little Hans study. This question was answered very well by most candidates who referred to the questioning by Hans's father and the reports sent to Freud.
- (b) Most candidates were able to give a problem of qualitative data including problems such as subjective interpretation. Some candidates gave a problem of the case study method or of Freud's study rather than of qualitative data as requested in the question.

Question 2

Candidates gave very accurate and detailed examples of behaviours that were interpreted as abnormal including queuing early for lunch, writing notes etc.

Question 3

For full marks this question required the candidate to give some detail in their answer as to why the data gathered in the study by Thigpen and Cleckley may not be valid. Some answers were too brief to give full credit to. Good answers referred to the ease with which Eve could have altered her behaviour deliberately and could have answered differently on the IQ and memory tests, researcher bias etc.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates referred to how the participants were deceived in the Schachter and Singer study and made reference to breaking the ethical guideline of deception. A few candidates did not know the study.
- (b) A full explanation was required for full marks. Good answers explained the effect of making the study ethical and referred to issues such as validity.

Question 5

- (a) Some answers were excellent and thoroughly explained. Good answers referred to the visual or tactile tasks and the problems experienced. Weaker answers did not name the two hemispheres and were less accurate.

- (b) Some candidates misinterpreted this question and explained why normal people do not experience these problems rather than why the split brain patients would not experience these problems in everyday life, the answer being that they could see with both visual fields or hear with both ears what is said.

Section B

Question 6

This essay was answered the least often. Part (a) was attempted well by the majority of candidates who referred to methods, conclusions or assumptions in relation to ethnocentric bias for each of the studies. Part (b) raised issues of valid measurements, discrimination, demand characteristics etc. Part (c) produced some very interesting answers in relation to the inevitability of ethnocentrism in today's world. Better answers went beyond the studies and discussed wider issues in society.

Question 7

This was a more popular question than Question 6. In part (a) candidates were very effective in describing how each of the studies support the nature or nurture view. Good answers made reference to findings from the study to support the points they made. In part (b) many answers achieved high marks for focusing on the problems of investigating whether behaviour develops through nature or nurture rather than on the problems of each study. Relevant problems included difficulties in working with children, the difficulty in isolating nature from nurture and ethical issues. Part (c) elicited some interesting points on the usefulness of discovering whether behaviour is the result of nature or nurture. Again answers achieving high marks gave both evidence from the studies and beyond to support the arguments developed.

Question 8

Part (a) was answered well with some good details about how the behaviour of participants was influenced by other people. Problems for part (b) included demand characteristics, ethics, validity etc. Answers to part (c) were again awarded higher mark bands if they developed an argument beyond the studies in to everyday life. Many candidates suggested that social factors were an important influence on a person's behaviour whilst maintaining the relevance of other factors including physiology, cognitions and emotions.

PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9698/03
Specialist Choices

General comments

The quality of answers of a small number of candidates is very impressive and such candidates achieve excellent marks. On the other hand there are many candidates who, despite a number of reports such as this, still fail to realise how marks can be maximised on this paper.

For 9698 papers 1 and 2 (core studies 1 and 2) candidates must have a detailed knowledge of twenty specified psychological studies. This means that when examination questions are asked, candidates answer in psychological terms referring specifically to the core studies. Many candidates do not adopt a similar approach for paper 3, the specialist choices paper. For this paper candidates frequently write answers in very general terms, often based on common sense, as if they have studied very little or no psychology. This means that marks fail to be gained because candidates do not show examiners that they have studied psychology. The most explicit way to demonstrate that psychology has been studied is to quote the name of the psychologist(s) who conducted a piece of research, proposed a theory or model, provided evidence, etc. Such research should be quoted relatively briefly and in significantly less detail than the twenty core studies of papers 1 and 2, but doing this would improve the marks significantly for many candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Psychology and Education

Section A

Question 1

Candidates often know quite a lot about learning styles, but seemingly know less about teaching styles. Perhaps candidates should reflect on what their teachers actually do with them in class! Question part **(b)** was the more familiar learning styles, but whereas many candidates know what they are, fewer know how they are actually measured. Question part **(c)** caused most problems because two ways in which learning effectiveness can be improved were asked for. Any appropriate answer based on student study skills would be acceptable, perhaps the technique(s) candidates used themselves to prepare for this examination. Most commonly mentioned were techniques based on revision programmes or memory techniques e.g. the PQRS. Also appropriate would be McCarthy's 4-mat system or the SPELT approach.

Question 2

This question on 'physical features of learning environments' is a common one, so it was not surprising to see most candidates score maximum marks for question part **(a)**. Question part **(b)** allowed candidates freedom to include any two features from a long list, including: open plan schools versus 'traditional' designs (Rivlin and Rothenberg, 1976); effect of number of windows/light (e.g. Ahrentzen, 1982); effects of temperature (e.g. Pepler, 1972); classroom layout (e.g. Porteus, 1972); seating arrangements: sociofugal v sociopetal (rows v horseshoe v grouped). Question part **(c)** asked how one of these features could be changed, and many candidates provided the obvious answer of improving one of the features mentioned in question part **(b)**.

Section B

Question 3

Special needs can include giftedness and specific learning and behavioural disabilities, and in this question candidates could focus on either or both. As with many **Section B** answers question part (a) was answered in most detail and often question part (b) was lacking in evaluation. Answers to question part (c) were generally disappointing with many candidates simply stating what they would expect teachers to do to a child who was 'normal' in common-sense terms rather than basing their answers on psychological theory and evidence.

Question 4

This question on disruptive behaviour was very popular and some excellent answers were observed in part (a) by candidates who described disruptive behaviours identified by psychologists. There were those who seemed to have studied no psychology at all who could go no further than anecdotal evidence. In part (b) evaluation was reasonable for some, but very poor for others. For part (c) candidates could suggest any preventative style that would modify disruptive behaviour. Many candidates provided corrective strategies and so did not score any marks.

Psychology and Environment

Section A

Question 5

Definitions of terms form the basis of most questions and the well-prepared candidate can score full marks on questions like this. The simplest, and perhaps best, definition of noise is that it is unwanted sound. Question part (b) asked for two studies showing the negative effects of noise on health and the work of Grandjean and Eggersten was commonly quoted as was that of Cohen et al and Evans. Question part (c) saw many interesting answers including the positive effect of music on animals, on stress reduction and also helping people to study in the form of the 'Mozart effect'.

Question 6

Question part (a) required an explanation of urban renewal and its definition is as the term suggests, the upgrading of housing in a relatively densely populated area. For question part (b) candidates could have included studies on pro-social behaviour such as that by Altman (1969) or Amato (1983), or anti-social behaviour and include the study on car theft by Zimbardo. For question part (c) candidates could include several possibilities but not the Pruitt-Igoe USA project. More successful designs are those that build houses with 'parks and open gardens' and increase defensible space.

Section B

Question 7

Environmental cognition is a fascinating area and it is disappointing that it is not very popular. In this essay question candidates could have written about definitions: environmental cognition is the way we acquire, store, organise and recall information about locations, distances and arrangements of the great outdoors (Gifford, 1997). In addition, candidates could have written about the acquisition of maps; ways of measuring cognitive maps, errors in maps and gender differences. Candidates could also legitimately look at 'animals and cognitive maps' and written about bees, squirrels, homing pigeons and rats. Question part (c) required candidates to focus on yet another aspect of this area, that of wayfinding which is, as the question implied, successful navigation.

Question 8

For this question candidates could write entirely about natural disaster, entirely about catastrophe or provide an answer based on a combination of the two. It is legitimate for this question for candidates to describe actual events, and regrettably there are far too many examples to choose from. Good examples to choose would be those matching psychological theory, particularly those of LeBon (contagion) and Schenk and Abelson (cognitive script schemata). A mention of laboratory studies attempting to recreate events would be good for evaluation in question part **(b)**. Question part **(c)** concerned what psychologists could do to help people before an event (rather than after) and this is mainly in the form of evacuation messages and instructions for people to follow to prepare for an event.

Psychology and Health

Section A

Question 9

Pain is studied by psychologists rather than biologists because pain is not just a physical sensation or biological reaction to a stimulus (1 mark) but it is also psychological and involves cognitive processing (1 further mark). Many candidates failed to appreciate this. This distinction was carried through to question part **(b)** when two theories were asked for. The early theories, pattern theory and specificity theory were both purely physiological, but the gate control theory is clearly cognitive. Many candidates scored maximum marks, but there were those who did not know any theory at all. Question part **(c)** required one type of pain, such as acute or chronic, and most candidates were able to answer this successfully.

Question 10

For part **(a)** candidates had to provide an explanation of what is meant by the term 'health promotion'. Most candidates were able to do this successfully. Question part **(b)** focused on one school study and one worksite study. Whilst promotion studies done in candidates' own schools or colleges are legitimate and score some marks, they often lack any scientific basis, such as how the outcomes were measured or whether the study was successful. The quoting of published studies is likely to earn more marks. Question part **(c)** asked for a description of one campaign to promote the health of a specific problem and again, candidates often quoted something they had been involved in (as participants) rather than looking at it from the view of the experimenter or even health authority.

Section B

Question 11

The patient-practitioner relationship is fundamental to health and as such a great deal has been written on the topic area. Although many candidates used the information available there were those who merely wrote about their personal experiences when visiting a practitioner. As is frequently repeated, answers must be psychologically based if they are to achieve more than a few marks. In question part **(c)** candidates were given the opportunity to improve either the patient or practitioner side or to consider both. Again, some candidates wrote legitimately about training courses for practitioners, or making them move toward being more patient-centred. Others did not take the evidence based route and again did not score many marks.

Question 12

The area of lifestyles is all encompassing and in many respects, so were candidates' answers! Generally, there are three areas on which attention should be focused: (i) risk factors (behaviours such as smoking which are known to be contributors to the major causes of death, and what people do to protect their health); (ii) ways of measuring lifestyles and here the studies by Harris and Guten (1979), Turk et al (1984) and Mechanic (1979) are pertinent; (iii) health belief models (the health belief model by Becker and Rosenstock (1984) is most common, followed by Ajzen and Fishbein's (1975) theory of reasoned action, Ajzen's (1985) theory of planned behaviour, and Weinstein et al's (1998) precaution adoption process model).

Psychology and Abnormality

Section A

Question 13

The term 'classifying abnormality' was appropriately explained by some candidates, but many provided vague explanations showing very little understanding. Question part **(b)** asked for one way in which abnormality is classified, and most appropriate would be mention of DSM or ICD. Some candidates thought abnormality could be classified on the basis of an intelligence test. Part **(c)** gave candidates a free choice as to which two abnormalities they chose to answer on. Most common were ADHD and depression.

Question 14

Abnormal avoidance is most typically an abnormal response to an object or 'thing' leading a person to take steps to avoid contact with the object or 'thing'. Usually this is in the form of a phobia, such as agoraphobia. Question part **(b)** asked for two types of avoidance, and by far the most common was agoraphobia, which was generally well explained and secondly social phobia which was generally not well explained. Question part **(c)** asked for treatments and the cognitive behavioural technique of systematic desensitisation was most prominent and very well explained.

Section B

Question 15

This general essay question on cultural, societal and individual differences in abnormality was popular as it allowed candidates to write about quite a wide range of aspects. Whilst there were many impressive answers which quoted psychological knowledge and had clear organisation, there were those candidates who took it as an opportunity to include anything and everything about abnormality; such answers typically lacked focus. Question part **(c)** asked for treatments and perhaps not surprisingly this again resulted in answers at the extremes of the mark range.

Question 16

A much more popular question than Question 15, Question 16 was generally well answered by most candidates. The most common afflictions here are psychogenic fugue, which is leaving one's home, work and life and taking a new identity with loss of memory for the previous identity and psychogenic amnesia, which is losing one's memory because of psychological reasons. PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder) is a stress response caused by events outside the range of normal human experience. Descriptions of these were good in response to part **(a)**, although evaluations were often disappointing. Part **(c)** asked about ways of coping and the most common answer was some form of social support or counselling,

Psychology and Organisations

Section A

Question 17

Performance appraisal is the 'formalised means of assessing worker performance in comparison with established organisational standards'. Part **(b)** asked for two reasons why performance is appraised and for the organisation it assesses productivity, decides on promotions, demotions, bonuses and firing. It gives information on training needs, validates employee selection, and may evaluate the effectiveness of organisational change. For the individual it may be the basis of career advancement and provide feedback on improving performance and recognising weaknesses. Most answers failed to address any of these pertinent features. This meant that part **(c)** was also poorly answered by most candidates.

Question 18

Part **(a)** asked for an explanation of job satisfaction, which is the positive feelings and attitudes about one's job. Part **(b)** wanted two ways in which job satisfaction can be measured, and here there are many approaches (interviews, scales, surveys). More popular (in the United States) are the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) and the Job Descriptive Index (JDI). In Britain Cooper et al's (1987) Occupation Stress Indicator is often used. Part **(c)** asked about improving the quality of working life and sadly most candidates assume that monetary reward is the key to a happy life at work.

Section B

Question 19

Human resource management is the all-encompassing term for performance appraisal, reward systems and personnel selection, and in this question candidates could focus on one or more of these aspects. As has been the case in other questions, some candidates had been well prepared and wrote structured answers showing good understanding. Others wrote answers which contained very little psychological theory and/or evidence. Question part **(c)** led to a range of strategies being suggested, some nothing more than an interview, others referring to 'typically American' acronym-based techniques.

Selecting people for work is perhaps the most important role of any manager as the people employed can 'make or break' the organisation. It is not just a matter of a friendly chat as many candidates believe; there is much psychological evidence underlying complex procedures. On the other hand, there were some excellent answers too, written by candidates who have studied relevant theories and procedures. For informed candidates evaluation was generally detailed and appropriate. Question part **(c)** also distinguished between those who could refer to actual screening/psychometric tests and those who simply guessed.

Question 20

A question on organisational work conditions always attracts those weaker candidates who think they understand what an 'organisational work condition' is, but who then struggle to include appropriate information in their answers. The recommended text by Riggio (1990) divides work conditions into physical conditions such as illumination, temperature, noise, motion, pollution and aesthetic factors such as music and colour; and psychological conditions such as privacy or crowding, status/anonymity and importance/unimportance. Vibration, body movement and posture (e.g. seating or lifting) can also be added. Notably the word temporal relates to time and in organisations this refers to working hours or shift work. Candidates who did not understand this struggled to gain marks for this question part.