

PSYCHOLOGY

<p>Paper 9773/01 Key Studies and Theories</p>

Key messages

It is evident that candidates have been very well prepared for this examination. The key message for Centres would be to encourage candidates to include a specific account of how the research they design would extend our understanding of the topic area in **Section B** part (c) questions. It should be noted that the following comments are based on a very small number of candidates.

General comments

Overall the standard of answers was good and candidates have been well prepared for this examination. The level of detail provided in some answers was high and most candidates used a wide range of well selected evaluation issues in their **Section B** answers, although there were some scripts that relied too heavily on a very narrow range of evaluation issues. There were no specific questions that caused problems for any candidate although it should be noted that candidates sometimes give far more information than is required, and would have benefitted from selecting the appropriate key points.

No rubric errors were noted for this paper.

Readers of this report should note that the comments are based on a very small group of candidates.

Section A

Question 1

This was generally answered very well by all candidates who were able to explain both the confirming feedback and the disconfirming feedback conditions.

Question 2

Candidates generally answered this by identifying that the images were black and white and offered the use of colour images as a solution. In some cases, there was insufficient explanation of either why black and white images could be seen as a problem or why the use of colour images would be an improvement. Centres should note that there were several other possible answers that could be offered here, including the fact that images were static and that they showed only the eyes rather than the whole face.

Question 3

This question allowed most candidates to demonstrate their understanding of the effect of the 'naughty teddy'.

Question 4

Most candidates were able to give at least two relevant pieces of information in relation to the recruitment of participants in the Milgram study. They were also able to suggest appropriate problems with this method of recruiting participants although a small number of candidates focused more on the sample itself rather than the sampling method.

Question 5

Candidates were well prepared for this question and were able to demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of this study.

Question 6

This question was generally answered well, although in some cases a more explicit link to Social Learning Theory could have been given.

Question 7

Candidates clearly knew the answer to this question although in some cases they gave a 'problem' without fully explaining why this was a problem.

Question 8

Candidates were able to explain Freud's explanation of little Han's phobia of horses very well.

Question 9

Candidates were able to give an advantage of the use of participation observation. The inclusion of 'in this study' in the question means that the answer should be contextualised, which was not the case in all responses.

Question 10

Candidates were able to identify a conclusion from the study on gambling by Parke and Griffiths with the frequency of verbal aggression directed at the gaming machines being the most common focus.

Question 11

The link between symmetry and genetic superiority was well understood and well explained by most candidates.

Question 12

Candidates showed good understanding of the study by Wang et al and were able to identify the manipulation of stress as well as a physiological measure of stress.

Section B

Both questions were selected but given the very small number of candidates, the comments that follow refer to **Section B** in general.

Candidates generally gave detailed answers to part **(a)** questions which reflected good understanding, although more answers than usual described only the key study. Centres are reminded that 'research' in this section may include background, key study, further research and 'explore more'. Answers to part **(b)** questions were more varied with an overly narrow range of evaluation issues relied on by some candidates. Candidates should be encouraged to consider a range of issues. Suggestions for part **(c)** were often thoughtful and well explained. Answers could be improved by encouraging candidates to offer an explicit explanation of *how* this study would extend our understanding of this area.

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<p>Paper 9773/02 Methods, Issues and Applications</p>

General comments

In **Question 1 (b)**, candidates were not always able to clearly demonstrate their understanding of reliability but provided suggestions and improvements that were more relevant to explaining validity.

Candidates are advised to read each question carefully. This was particularly an issue in relation to **Question 3(b)** in which some candidates described psychological evidence instead of applying their knowledge to the scenario provided.

Some of the answers provided were not proportionate to the marks available, with candidates providing either lengthy answers for questions that carried a few marks or not providing enough detail for answers with higher marks. This was especially the case with regard to questions **1(a)**, **1(c)** and **2(c)**.

Overall, candidates attempted to answer all questions on the paper and used their time effectively. Readers of this report should note that the comments are based on a very small group of candidates.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) This question was answered well on the whole, with many candidates able to describe two examples of qualitative data collected in Freud's study of little Hans. The most commonly cited examples were the 'giraffe fantasy' and the bath incident. Weaker responses provided only one example of qualitative data or merely identified examples without providing the required elaboration for full marks. References to the Oedipus complex or castration anxiety were not creditworthy as these were Freud's interpretations and not qualitative data collected in the study.
- (b) Candidates needed an understanding of the term 'reliability' for this question, which was not always evident. A large number of candidates made reference to ways that the study lacked validity, such as 'experimenter bias' and sampling limitations without explaining the relevance of these points to reliability. Improvements were often affected by the suggestions made and again did not always clearly show that reliability was fully understood.
- (c) This question was generally answered well. Most candidates debated well the use of the case study method when investigating development in children. Candidates made reference to the use of small samples and researcher subjectivity and also the depth of detail that can be collected when employing the case study method. The choice of research evidence was not always as effective and was often limited to Freud's study. Candidates are reminded that research evidence has to be closely linked to both elements of the question, in this case both the case study method and development in children. A small number of candidates debated the use of the case study method with no reference to the development in children and as a result failed to achieve all available marks. It is acceptable for candidates to use evidence from only one study to support all of their strengths and weaknesses where appropriate. Centres are reminded that the choice of research evidence can come from any area of the syllabus given the synoptic nature of this paper. It was acceptable to choose evidence that utilised methods other than the case study method to support points made. For example, making reference to study of Samuel and Bryant to argue that the use of the experimental method would have been more effective was a creative and acceptable way of answering this question.

Question 2

- (a) This question was generally answered well. Candidates were able to outline the nature-nurture debate and provide evidence from research to support their points. Evidence was generally used well and was apposite to the points made. Research evidence was selected from a wide range of the syllabus.
- (b) Most candidates made basic links between the nature-nurture debate and intelligence, often with reference to effect of genes or environment. A very small number of candidates offered elaborated responses or utilised evidence to further support their points. Comparisons were not always apposite and the application of knowledge to this area was not always coherent.
- (c) There was great variation in the quality of responses to this question. Stronger answers were able to provide sophisticated responses that made effective use of supporting evidence. Candidates made reference to the difficulty in isolating explanations into nature or nurture as much of behaviour is a combination of both or made reference to methodological difficulties in studying behaviour such as confounding variables and small samples. Some candidates went beyond their syllabus and demonstrated wider reading by using research evidence from the 'explore more' section as well as other recent psychological research. Weaker answers provided superficial responses that did not always demonstrate the required elaboration, supporting examples and overall structure and organisation required for higher marks.

Question 3

- (a) This question was answered well overall. Better answers described a wide range of research evidence and had a consistent focus on the question. Answers made reference to explanations of gambling behaviour, the study by Parke and Griffiths on the aggressive behaviours in adult slot machine gamblers and also the study by Hazan and Shaver. Candidates are reminded that although the scenario in this section will always lend itself to the content of the key studies, all relevant research and/or theory is creditworthy. Candidates are also reminded that this question requires the detailed description of a range of evidence relevant to the scenario rather than application of knowledge, which is the requirement of part (b). Candidates can receive full marks in this question by demonstrating either depth or breath.
- (b) This question was answered well and most candidates were able to effectively use the evidence described in part (a) and often combine evidence to provide thoughtful explanations. Weaker answers made less effective links and just reiterated the research outlined in (a) without elaborating further. Candidates are reminded that only research described in part (a) can be used to explain the events outlined in the scenario and the links have to be apparent.

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Paper 9773/03
Key Applications

Key messages

Candidates should be encouraged to select appropriate evaluation issues for the **Section B**, part **(b)** questions and to apply these issues explicitly to the research that is being evaluated.

General comments

Please note that this report is based on a very small number of candidates and so it very difficult to make general comments on candidate performance. There were no responses for Psychology and Abnormality, Psychology and Health or for Psychology and Sport. There were no rubric errors. Overall candidates have been very well prepared although there was a wide range of responses, with some evidence of under-preparation especially in the longer answers.

Psychology and Crime

Section A questions were generally answered very well and candidates appeared to have been very well prepared for this section. They demonstrated excellent knowledge of the study conducted by Mann et al. on suspects, lies and videotape and of inter-rater reliability. They also demonstrated good understanding of the juror bias scale developed by Kassin and offered a range of appropriate suggestions for testing the validity of this scale. Answers were generally clear and well-constructed, although some candidates wrote far more information that was required for 3 marks.

In **Section B**, **Question 8** on the key study conducted by Pinizzotto and Finkel on criminal personality profiling was much more popular than **Question 9** on the key study conducted by Cann on cognitive skills programmes. Whichever question was selected, candidates generally gave a significant amount of detail for part **(a)** (description) and had prepared this material well. Part **(b)** (evaluation) showed more of a range of answers. There were some very strong answers which showed an excellent grasp of a range of themes and issues and a marked ability to select and apply highly apposite issues. However, some answers were far more generic and did not show the same careful application of the chosen theme/issue to the material selected in part **(a)**. There were also some answers which considered a narrow range of evaluation issues (for example, laboratory methods, quantitative data and control) which were dealt with relatively superficially.

Answers to **Section C** displayed good understanding of research methods as well as understanding of the evidence on which studies were based. This was primarily the study by Rubin although stronger answers also made reference to other studies.

Psychology and Environment

Answers to **Section A** were clear and detailed and candidates had clearly been well prepared for this section. Candidates were able to display detailed knowledge of both the study by Little on cultural differences in personal space and the study by Evans et al. on crowding on trains. Answers to **Question 12** on the study by Evans et al. also demonstrated good understanding of the concepts of reliability and validity.

Question 14 on theory and research on noise was far more popular than **Question 13** on the key study by Aginsky et al. on strategies for learning a route in a simulator. Part **(a)** answers were detailed and accurate and some part **(b)** answers were excellent, showing a very good grasp of a range of evaluation issues which were applied effectively to the topics. As with the Psychology and Crime option, there were some answers to part **(b)** which did not do this effectively or which focused on an overly narrow range of issues.

Responses to **Section C** were very good, with candidates suggesting some excellent ways of investigating the different ways in which people may deindividuate themselves.

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Paper 9773/04
Personal Investigation

There were too few candidates for us to be able to produce a meaningful report.