

Study Psychology

HELPING YOU ACHIEVE



A-Level Psychology

Practice Paper

This is a practice paper intended for revision following the **AQA** specification.

Paper 3:

Issues and Options in Psychology

2 hours



Section A: Issues & Debates
Answer all questions in this section

1.

Which of the following statements best describes a nomothetic approach in psychology? Shade **one** box only.

Psychologists taking a nomothetic approach...

A study single cases and do not formulate general laws.

☐

B study groups of people and do not formulate general laws.

☐

C study groups of people and formulate general laws.

☐

D study single cases and formulate general laws.

☐

(1)

Table 1

Definition
A Appreciating that behaviour varies between cultures
B Believing that some behaviours are the same for all cultures
C Considering all aspects of experience, including culture
D Emphasising the importance of the behaviour of one's own culture
E Understanding that whole cultures have the same experience

2. Using the information in **Table 1**, identify the correct definition of holism. (1)

Are we all at risk of mental health?

Stress and anxiety is a common experience in society today, and many people struggle to deal with the daily hassles of life.

However, some people are more at risk than others, particularly if mental health runs in the family. In other cases, people who have experienced trauma or life changing events can have an increased risk.

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3. (a) With reference to the scenario above, identify **one** influence of nature on our behaviour and **one** influence of nurture on our behaviour. **(2)**

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(b) Using the scenario above, define what is meant by psychic determinism. (2)

[illegible]

Universality: the tendency to assume that one's personal qualities and characteristics, including attitudes and values, are common in the general social group or culture.

4. Outline **one** limitation of forming conclusions in psychology using the principle of universality. (2)

[illegible]

5. With reference to one topic in psychology, outline what is meant by biological reductionism. (2)

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A psychologist investigated the effect colour on information processing using a list of words. He conducted a controlled laboratory experiment using a sample of 12 students selected at random from a university mathematics class.

Each student took part in two conditions;

(i) 20 words on the list were written in black

(ii) 20 words on the list were written in colours (red/ orange/ yellow/ green/ blue/ purple on repeat)

The conditions were counterbalanced.

The psychologist analysed the results of the study using a Wilcoxon test. The analysis showed that memory recall was greater using the coloured word list.

6. (a) Explain **two** reasons why it was appropriate to use a Wilcoxon test in this situation. Refer to the description of the study in your answer. (2)

(b) Give **one** strength of using counterbalancing in this study. (2)

[illegible][illegible]

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Section B: Relationships/ Gender/ Cognition & Development

Answer questions from one topic only

Relationships

8.

Which **one** of the following best describes social exchange theory?

- A A theory that proposes individuals focus on balancing effort and gain.
- B A theory that proposes individuals focus on cost rather than reward.
- C A theory that proposes individuals focus on getting out more than they put in.
- D A theory that proposes individuals focus on how much has been contributed so far.

☐☐☐☐

(1)

9. (a) Briefly outline what is meant by 'equity' in relation to theories of romantic relationships. (1)

(b) Outline **one** limitation of the equity theory of romantic relationships. (2)

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Gender

12. Bem devised a sex-role inventory to measure characteristics such as masculinity and femininity in gender, outline what is meant by androgyny. **(2)**

13. The psychodynamic explanation of gender development refers to the Oedipus complex, briefly explain what Freud meant by this. **(2)**

Willow's mum says, 'She did better at schoolwork in some ways than other children. But physically, there will always be noticeable differences.'

[illegible]

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Cognition & Development

William and Henry are brothers. William has autism whereas Henry does not have autism. One day they are playing football with their father in the garden.

When their father goes inside to answer the telephone, Henry hides the ball in a bucket.

Henry giggles and says to William, "Where do you think Dad will look for the ball?".

16. Use your knowledge of theory of mind and the Sally-Anne study to explain William's likely response. (4)

[illegible]

17. Briefly outline what Piaget meant by 'class inclusion'. (2)

18. Briefly outline the difference between assimilation and accommodation according to Piaget. (2)

19. Discuss what Baillargeon’s research has told us about early infant abilities. (16)

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Section C: Schizophrenia/ Eating Behaviour/ Stress

Answer questions from one topic only

Schizophrenia

Western culture believes mental illnesses should be diagnosed using classification systems like DSM or ICD.

Each include a series of criteria describing the key characteristics or symptoms for all mental disorders.

20. Briefly explain how gender **and** culture bias might affect the validity of a diagnosis using DSM or ICD. **(2)**

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21. Discuss reliability and/or validity in relation to the diagnosis and classification of schizophrenia. (8)

Mya has been experiencing intrusive thoughts that consume her daily. She is struggling to focus on her work as a data analyst.

22. Outline the cognitive explanation of 'dysfunctional thought processing' and refer to Mya's experiences. **(4)**

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[illegible]

23. Discuss the genetics and neural correlates explanations for schizophrenia. (6)

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24. Briefly outline how cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) is used to treat schizophrenia and explain **one** limitation of using CBT to treat schizophrenia. **(4)**

[illegible]

Eating Behaviour

25. Briefly outline the role of ghrelin in the control of eating behaviour. (2)

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[illegible]

The results are given in Table 2 below:

Group	Mean number of cakes eaten
Restrained eaters	14.6
Unrestrained eaters	6.3

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[illegible]

29. Psychological explanations for obesity include restraint theory and disinhibition. Outline the difference between the two. **(2)**

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30. Discuss social learning theory as an explanation for anorexia nervosa. (8)

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Stress

31. What terms are used by psychologists to describe A and B below? (2)

A: A stage-based process of adapting to a stressor which can end with damage to the immune system.

B: When a person's immune system becomes compromised so that it cannot protect the individual against disease.

A:

B:

32. Evaluate personality type as an explanation for stress. (4)

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(a) Describe how the SRRS measures stress. (4)

(b) Explain one limitation of the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). (2)

Hari worries about work. He lies awake at night worrying that he is not good enough for the job and does not want to go to work in the morning. He thinks that his workmates laugh at him and gets embarrassed when they try to talk to him. He avoids his supervisor because he thinks that his supervisor will tell him off for not working hard enough.

35. Describe stress inoculation therapy as a way of managing stress and explain how Hari's stress could be managed using stress inoculation. (8)

[illegible]

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Section D: Aggression/ Forensic Psychology/ Addiction

Answer questions from one topic only

Aggression

36. Describe what is meant by a fixed action pattern. **(2)**

37. Briefly outline the frustration-aggression hypothesis as an explanation for human aggression. **(2)**

Christopher is a 14-year-old boy who has been feeling moody and low after moving away with his family to a new area. He misses his friends and keeps arguing with his parents, asking to move back.

He recently hit out when a boy at his new school, called him an insulting name. His parents have also noticed a change in his behaviour.

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39. Describe neural **and/or hormonal mechanisms in aggression and refer to the scenario above. (4)**

[illegible]

40. Describe and evaluate the social learning theory of human aggression. (16)

[illegible]

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41. One method of offender profiling involves categorising offenders as either organised or disorganised offenders. Briefly explain **one** limitation of this method of offender profiling. **(2)**

Paul is talking about his offending.

Paul says, “I don’t know why it happens. Sometimes when I hear people telling stupid jokes in a bar, I just get cross and punch them. I get into a rage and feel my pulse racing. If only I had another way of dealing with it. I just need to get used to controlling myself.”

42. Explain how an anger management therapist could help Paul. **(4)**

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45. Discuss neural explanations for offending behaviour. **(8)**

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Addiction

46.

Which **two** of the following statements best describe the effects of tolerance?

- A** Tolerance arises when you have taken the drug for some time
- B** Tolerance decreases the desire for the drug
- C** Tolerance is when you feel bad effects if you stop taking the drug
- D** Tolerance means that more of the drug is needed to have an effect
- E** Tolerance means that you need the drug in order to feel normal

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

(2)

47. Describe how brain neurochemistry is involved in nicotine addiction. (6)

[illegible]

[illegible]

48. Outline one strength and one limitation of covert sensitisation as a way of reducing addiction. (6)

[illegible]

49. Briefly outline the theory of planned behaviour. **(2)**

Researchers studied the role of learning in gambling. Using a computer programme, they manipulated the predictability of ‘wins’ on different machines. For example, some machines were set to pay out after 2 minutes of play and others, on average, after every tenth bet.

The researchers found a link between gambling behaviour and the setting of the machine. They also found that on certain machines, people would carry on betting for a long time after the last win.

50. Describe learning theory as applied to gambling. Refer to the research above in your answer. **(8)**

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END OF PAPER

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