

Exam Questions

Practise your exam skills using
past exam questions

EDEXCEL Psychology





TAKE 5

EDEXCEL Psychology.

Here are a batch of past exam paper questions to develop your skills in response writing to help maximise your marks in the exam.

Each topic has only **five** questions.

Try them once you have revised a topic under timed, controlled conditions.

Check your answers against the mark scheme suggestions.



TAKE 5

Topics:

Social

Cognitive

Biological

Learning Theory

Issues & Debates

Exam Skills



EDEXCEL PSYCHOLOGY COMMAND WORDS

'Command Words' are words and phrases used in exam questions that tell you how you should answer the question. They are instructions dictating what the examiner wants from you.

Analyse

Break something down into its components/parts. Examine each part methodically and in detail in order to discover the meaning or essential features of a theme, topic or situation. Explore the relationship between the features and how each one contributes to the topic.

Assess

Give careful consideration to all the factors or events that apply and identify which are the most important or relevant. Make a judgement on the importance of something, and come to a conclusion where needed.

Calculate

Obtain a numerical answer, showing relevant working. If the answer has a unit, this must be included.

Compare

Looking for the similarities and differences of two (or more) things. This should not require the drawing of a conclusion. The answer must relate to both (or all) things mentioned in the question. The answer must include at least one similarity and one difference.

Complete

To fill in/write all the details asked for.

Convert

Express a quantity in alternative units.

Define

Provide a definition of something.

Describe

To give an account of something. Statements in the response need to be developed as they are often linked but do not need to include a justification or reason.

Determine

The answer must have an element that is quantitative from the stimulus provided, or must show how the answer can be reached quantitatively. To gain maximum marks there must be a quantitative element to the answer.

Discuss

Explore the issue/situation/problem/argument that is being presented within the question, articulating different or contrasting viewpoints.

Draw

Produce an output, either by freehand or using a ruler (e.g. graph).

Evaluate

Review information then bring it together to form a conclusion, drawing on evidence including strengths, weaknesses, alternative actions, relevant data or information. Come to a supported judgement of a subject's qualities and relation to its context.

Explain

An explanation that requires a justification/exemplification of a point. The answer must contain some element of reasoning/justification. This can include mathematical explanations.

Give

Generally involves the recall of one or more pieces of information; when used in relation to a context, it is used to determine a candidate's grasp of the factual information presented.

Identify

This requires some key information to be selected from a given stimulus/resource.

Interpret

Recognise a trend or pattern(s) within a given stimulus/resource.

Justify

Rationalise a decision or action.

Name

Synonymous with 'Give'.

Plot

Produce, or add detail to, a graph/chart by marking points accurately (e.g. line of best fit).

Predict

Articulate an expected result.

State

Synonymous with 'Give'.



Suggest

Make a proposal/propose an idea in written form.

To what extent

Review information then bring it together to form a judgement conclusion, following the provision of a balanced and reasoned argument.

Some of these command words are used in **AO1** questions, whereas others are used in **AO2** or **AO3** questions. Look at exam papers and mark schemes to get an idea of which are which. This will help you maximise your marks in the exam.

Exam Skills



EDEXCEL PSYCHOLOGY

The **Command Words** in each exam question have been **highlighted** to help you focus on the instruction. Make sure you understand what is being asked of you.

Use this as a guide and tailor your answer accordingly.

Consider the marks allocated to each question and whether this is an **AO1, AO2 or AO3** assessment objective.



Paper 1

EDEXCEL Psychology



Social Approach Questions

1.

Mr Jennings is a teacher who was instructing a group of 15 students to line up quietly in a queue during lunchtime in the school canteen. All of the students, except one, did as they were asked.

Using social impact theory, state two reasons why 14 out of 15 of the students followed Mr Jennings' instruction.

(2)

2.

In your studies of social psychology, you will have learned about the classic study by Sherif et al. (1954/1961).

(a) Describe the sample of participants used in the study by Sherif et al. (1954/1961).

(2)

(b) In stage three of the experiment, Sherif et al. (1954/1961) attempted to reduce inter-group conflict.

Describe one way that Sherif et al. (1954/1961) attempted to reduce inter-group conflict.

(2)

3.

Milgram carried out some valuable research into obedience, including a number of variation studies.

Describe the procedure of the Rundown Office Block (Experiment 10) variation study.

(3)

4.

Francis has recently joined a new dance team. His friend Jason is in a different dance team. The regional semi-final of a major dance competition is taking place at the weekend, and both teams are taking part.

Francis has started making disrespectful comments about Jason on social media and in college. Jason retaliated and told students at the college that Francis's team would never win the competition as Francis cannot dance.

Using realistic conflict theory, describe the behaviour of Francis and Jason.

(4)

5.

Evaluate agency theory as an explanation of obedience.

(8)



Cognitive Approach Questions

1.

Tulving (1972) proposed an explanation of long-term memory.

Describe what Tulving (1972) meant by 'semantic memory'.

(2)

2.

During your course you will have learned about the classic study by Baddeley (1966b).

State two findings of Baddeley (1966b).

(2)

3.

There are many models used within psychology to explain how memory works.

Describe the multi-store model of memory.

(4)

4.

Mo and Akeem witness a man steal a bag in a restaurant.

Using schema theory, suggest why Mo and Akeem may recall the scene in the restaurant differently.

(4)

5.

Milo and Betty had watched a film together and were talking to their friends about the film. Milo described a scene where the main character had travelled by train to a big city where there were yellow taxis and really tall buildings. Betty said that the taxis were black, not yellow.

Betty also described how the main character had arrived at a train station but said it was in a town. She said that the main character had a large suitcase, but Milo claimed there was no suitcase, just a bag. Betty disagreed with Milo, she said because the main character was staying in the town for several weeks, it must have been a suitcase.

Discuss, using reconstructive memory (Bartlett, 1932), including schema theory, Milo's and Betty's recall of the film.

(8)



Biological Approach Questions

1.

Describe how recreational drugs change the way neurotransmitters operate within the brain.

(2)

2.

Describe the process of synaptic transmission.

(3)

3.

Charles is 14 years old and has been displaying aggressive behaviour.

Recently he has shouted insults at other students and broken classroom equipment in his science lessons. Charles has also been in a fight with the football captain after Charles let in an important goal during the last match of the season.

Describe how hormones could account for Charles's behaviour.

(3)

4.

During the course you will have learned about the classic study by Raine et al. (1997).

Evaluate the classic study by Raine et al. (1997).

(8)

5.

Assess how both biological and psychodynamic theories have been used to explain aggression.

(8)



Learning Theory Questions

1.

Explain one strength of Bandura et al's (1961) Bobo doll experiment.

(2)

2.

Ruhee receives reward points at school when she behaves extremely well, helps other students, and does extra research for her homework tasks. When she has 25 points, she can get a free snack at break time from the canteen. Ruhee always works hard to receive the points.

Using operant conditioning, describe why Ruhee works hard to receive the points.

(2)

3.

Spencer is 12 years old, and his brother Mark is 16 years old. Spencer watched Mark wash their mum's car and receive £5.00. The next time Mark was asked to wash his mum's car, Spencer asked if he could help Mark. Mark showed Spencer how to wash one of the wheels with the sponge and soapy water, and then Spencer washed the other three wheels of the car.

Spencer helped Mark wash the car several times. One day, Spencer was asked by his mum if he would like to wash the car on his own. Spencer washed the car and received £5.00.

Describe how social learning theory could account for Spencer learning to wash the car.

(4)

4.

Jodi attended a number of birthday parties when she was younger. At all of the parties there was a clown who burst a balloon which scared Jodi. Jodi is now fearful of clowns.

Using your knowledge of classical conditioning, explain how Jodi developed a fear of clowns.

(4)

5.

Evaluate Pavlov's (1927) experiment with salivation in dogs.

(8)



Issues & Debates Questions

1.

Cognitive psychology is about the role of cognition/cognitive processes in human behaviour.

Assess whether cognitive psychology is reductionist.

(8)

2.

Assess how far learning theories have developed over time.

(8)

3.

Evaluate issues of social control from social and biological psychology.

(12)

4.

Matt is 16 years old and has been getting into fights when he goes out with his friends. His mother blames his friends, however Matt denies this and says he cannot control his own behaviour.

Evaluate how far social and biological psychology can explain Matt's behaviour. You must make reference to the context in your answer.

(12)

5.

Evaluate whether social and cognitive psychology can be considered scientific.

(12)



Exam Skills



EDEXCEL PSYCHOLOGY

Check your answers against the
mark scheme suggestions
in the next booklet.

