

[C263/SQP338]

Psychology
Higher

Course Assessment Pack valid
from session 2009/2010

NATIONAL
QUALIFICATIONS

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Course Assessment Specification

Psychology Higher

The purpose of this document is to provide:

- details of the structure of the Question Paper in this Course
- details of the structure of the Research Investigation that contributes to this Course
- guidance to centres on how to use information gathered from the Question Paper and the Research Investigation in this Course to estimate candidate performance.

PART 1

This part of the Course Assessment Specification details the structure of the Question Paper in this Course.

The Question Paper

- consists of 3 sections – A, B and C
- has a mark allocation of 100 and a time allocation of 2 hours 30 minutes
- will assess approximately 60% knowledge and understanding and 40% analysis and evaluation
- will assess integration of knowledge and understanding and analysis and evaluation across the Units and topics within the Units.

Section A – Understanding the Individual –Total marks 40

This section consists of 3 questions – 1 question on each of the Unit topics; each question is worth 20 marks.

Each question should have two parts, with a mark allocation of 10/10 or 12/8.

Candidates should answer **two** from the three questions.

Section B – Investigating Behaviour – Total marks 20

- A research scenario (100–200 words) is provided in this section.
- A structured question, worth 20 marks, will be based on the research scenario. This question will consist of a set of 5–8 related parts, each part with a possible mark range of 1–8 marks.
- Candidates are required to answer all parts of this question.
- The research scenario may be of an experimental or a non-experimental study. Candidates may be asked to suggest/evaluate a non-experimental or experimental alternative.
- Although no numerical calculations will be required in the exam, interpretation of given numerical or graphical data may be required.
- The scenario may be taken from any area of Psychology: candidates are expected to be able to apply their knowledge of research methods in unfamiliar contexts.

Section C – The Individual in the Social Context – Total marks 40

- This section is divided into 2 parts.
- Candidates answer two questions, one question from each part.
- All questions are extended response. Guidance will be provided for each question.
- In part 1, there are three questions, one on each of the topics from the *Social Psychology* domain. Each question is worth 20 marks. All questions within this part will be extended response.
- In part 2, there are two questions, one on each of the topics from the *Individual Differences* domain. Each question is worth 20 marks. All questions within this part will be extended response.

PART 2

This part of the Course Assessment Specification details the structure of the Research Investigation.

- Candidates are required to plan, implement and report on a Research Investigation. The planning and implementation form part of the Unit assessment. The report on the Research Investigation is assessed externally.
- The report on the Research Investigation is submitted to SQA by the date specified in the *Operational Help Centre* on the SQA website.
- Although there is no single “correct” format for a research report, the following sequence of conventional sections and sub-sections is recommended:
 - (a) Title
 - (b) Abstract
 - (c) Introduction
 - (d) Method
 - (i) Design
 - (ii) Sample/Participants
 - (iii) Materials
 - (iv) Procedure
 - (e) Results
 - (f) Discussion
 - (g) Conclusion
 - (h) References
 - (i) Appendices
- The length of the report should be 1500–2000 words.
- The report is marked out of 50 by SQA. The marks are allocated as shown in the table below:

<i>Abstract</i>	5
<i>Introduction</i>	10
<i>Method</i>	8
<i>Results</i>	8
<i>Discussion</i>	12
<i>References</i>	3
<i>Style and Presentation</i>	4
Total	50

- Although there is no mark allocation for *Title and Conclusion*, these should be included as good practice. The content of *Appendices* is assessed within the Method and Results mark allocation.

- SQA will set a list of studies on which the Research Investigation **must** be based. This list will cover the constraints/choice within the Course Arrangements and will be distributed to centres in the spring/summer of the year preceding the submission date. A detailed brief will be provided for each study.
- The study will be either experimental or non-experimental, however, the data collected must be suitable for predominantly quantitative analysis.
- Candidates may conduct their research individually or in a small group of up to four members. A whole class may use the same research design, but each individual or group should collect their own data from participants.
- Centres should follow ethical practice in the conduct of research as specified by the BPS *Code of Conduct*.

PART 3

This part of the Course Assessment Specification provides guidance on how to use information gathered from the Question Paper and the Research Investigation in this Course to estimate candidate performance.

The Course assessment comprises two components, a Question Paper and a Research Investigation. The mark for the Research Investigation is scaled by SQA to take account of the relative weightings of the two components.

Component	Mark Range	Weighting
Question Paper	0–100	80%
Research Investigation	$(0-50) \div 2 = 0-25$	20%
Total marks	0–125	100%

Course awards are based on the candidate's **total** marks – there is no requirement that they pass in both components.

In National Qualifications, cut-off scores are set at approximately 70% for grade A, 50% for grade C, with grade B falling midway. For the total mark range of 0–125, the following table gives an indication of cut-off scores for grades and bands:

Grade	Band	Mark Range
A	1	106 – 125
A	2	87 – 105
B	3	81 – 86
B	4	75 – 80
C	5	69 – 74
C	6	62 – 68
D	7	56 – 61
No Award	8	50 – 55
No Award	9	0 – 49

These cut-off scores may be lowered slightly if the Question Paper component turns out to be more demanding, or raised if the Question Paper is less demanding than intended.

In estimating candidate grades:

- Centres should apply the assessment criteria with the range of marks available for **each** component.
- The **total** of the marks gained over the two components should then provide the estimate grade.

Worked example

- In a centre's own prelim, a candidate scores 62/100. In the Research Investigation report, the centre estimates a mark of 26/50. This gives a total mark of 75/125 (62 + 13).
- The centre's view is that their prelim is slightly less demanding than the SQA examination.
- Using the mark range, a realistic estimate may be **band 5** rather than band 4.

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Time: 2 hours 30 mins

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Specimen Question Paper valid
from Session 2009/2010

There are three Sections in this paper:

Section A – Understanding the Individual

Section B – Investigating Behaviour

Section C – The Individual in the Social Context

Sections A and C are each worth 40 marks.

Section B is worth 20 marks.

Candidates should answer:

- **TWO** questions from Section A
- **ALL** questions from Section B
- **TWO** questions from Section C

The breakdown of knowledge and understanding (*ku*) and analysis and evaluation (*ae*) marks are indicated beside each question.

SECTION A

*Marks
ku ae*

UNDERSTANDING THE INDIVIDUAL

Answer **TWO** questions from **A1, A2 or A3**

Answer ALL parts of your chosen questions

A1. Early Socialisation

- (a) Explain the stages of attachment in human babies. Refer to research evidence in your answer. **8 2**
- (b) Analyse the positive and negative aspects of day care on child development. **4 6**
- (20)**

A2. Stress

- (a) Describe the effects of stress on the individual. **8**
- (b) Describe **two** stress reduction strategies and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. **4 8**
- (20)**

A3. Memory

- (a) Discuss **two** theories of forgetting, referring to research evidence in your answer. **8 4**
- (b) Describe and evaluate **one** research study that has investigated Eyewitness Testimony. **4 4**
- (20)**
- (40)**

[END OF SECTION A]

SECTION B

Marks
ku ae

INVESTIGATING BEHAVIOUR

Answer ALL questions in this Section.

B1. Read the following research scenario, and answer the questions below.

Two psychologists wished to investigate how computer and video games might affect children's cognitive processes. From the registers of three high schools, they selected a random sample of children, and compared 25 boys who were regular video-game players with 25 boys who were non-players. On a number of trials, they recorded how many images the participants could see on the screen at any one time, and found that the regular players could detect more images at the same time.

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------|
| (a) Give a suitable experimental hypothesis for the study described above. | 2 | 0 |
| (b) In this study, describe the two conditions of the independent variable. | 2 | 0 |
| (c) Name the experimental design used in this study. | 1 | 0 |
| (d) State one possible extraneous or confounding variable in this study, and explain how it could be controlled. | 1 | 2 |
| (e) Describe how the researchers may have selected the random sample. | 2 | 0 |
| (f) Suggest two types of data analysis suitable for the data from this study. | 0 | 2 |
| (g) Describe one other research method that could be used to investigate the effects of video games on children's behaviour. | 2 | 0 |
| (h) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the experimental method. | 2 | 4 |
| | | (20) |

[END OF SECTION B]

SECTION C

Marks
ku ae

THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

Answer ONE question from Social Psychology and ONE question from Psychology of Individual Differences.

Answer all parts of your chosen questions.

Social Psychology

Answer ONE question from C1, C2 or C3.

C1. Prejudice

Describe **and** evaluate **two** research studies which demonstrate prejudice reduction.

Your answer **could** include the following or any other relevant points:

- a definition of prejudice
- a description of **two** research studies which demonstrate prejudice reduction
- one strength and one weakness of **each** study.

12 8
(20)

OR

C2. Social relationships

Describe **and** evaluate **two** research studies on Social Relationships.

Your answer **could** include the following or any other relevant points:

- a definition of social relationships
- a description of **two** research studies into social relationships
- one strength and one weakness of **each** study.

12 8
(20)

OR

C3. Conformity and Obedience

Describe **and** evaluate **two** research studies on Conformity.

Your answer **could** include the following or any other relevant points:

- a definition of conformity
- a description of **two** research studies into conformity
- one strength and one weakness of **each** study.

12 8
(20)

SECTION C (continued)

*Marks
ku ae*

Psychology of Individual Differences

Answer **ONE** question from C4 **or** C5.

C4. Atypical behaviour

Explain **two** therapeutic approaches to the treatment of depression or an eating disorder.

Your answer **could** include the following or any other relevant points:

- a definition and the key features of depression **or** an eating disorder
- an explanation of **two** therapeutic approaches to the treatment of depression or an eating disorder
- one strength and one weakness of **each** approach.

**12 8
(20)**

OR

C5. Intelligence

Describe **and** evaluate **two** contrasting theories of Intelligence.

Your answer **could** include the following or any other relevant points:

- a definition and the key features of Intelligence
- a description of any **one** factor theory and any **one** information processing theory of Intelligence
- one strength and one weakness of **each** theory.

**12 8
(20)
(40)**

[END OF SECTION C]

[END OF SPECIMEN QUESTION PAPER]

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Specific Marking Instructions – Section A Understanding the Individual

	Question A1 Early Socialisation	Approx Marks weightings: 60% K&U - 40%A&E	
(a)	<p>Explain the stages of attachment in human babies</p> <p><i>A definition of attachment could be provided. Stage 1 – a social/pre-attachment Stage 2 – indiscriminate or attachment-in-the-making Stage 3 – specific attachments Stage 4 – multiple attachment phase</i></p> <p><i>AE marks – explanation of studies eg the work of Shaffer & Emerson (1964) could be mentioned or any other relevant study.</i></p>	8	2
(b)	<p>Analyse the positive and negative aspects of day care on child development.</p> <p><i>Two marks should be given for each evaluative strength and weakness given. A minimum of 3 evaluative points should be given for full marks; eg social, cognitive, emotional development or the importance of quality day care. The evaluation should be relevant to the strategies described.</i></p>	4	6
		12	8

	Question A2 Stress	Approx Marks weightings: 60% K&U - 40%A&E	
(a)	<p>Describe the effects of stress on the individual.</p> <p><i>Effects:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Short and Long Term effects on mental physical health. Answer may look at these in detail or could broaden to include:</i> • <i>Physical changes eg GAS or arousal of autonomic nervous system</i> • <i>Fight or flight</i> <p><i>For full marks to be awarded the answer should be 'psychological' in nature eg short term effects on health could include, anxiety, headache, sleeplessness. Long term effects could include heart attacks, high blood pressure, depression</i></p>	8	
(b)	<p>Describe two stress reduction strategies and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies.</p> <p><i>Two stress reduction strategies such as physical exercise, progressive muscle relaxation techniques, individual coping strategies, social strategies/support</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation should be relevant to the strategies described.</i></p>	4	8
		12	8

	Question A3 Memory	Approx Marks weightings: 60% K&U - 40%A&E	
(a)	<p>Discuss two theories of forgetting, referring to research evidence in your answer.</p> <p><i>Any two theories from;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trace decay</i> • <i>Displacement</i> • <i>Interference</i> • <i>Cue-dependant forgetting</i> • <i>Repression/motivated forgetting.</i> <p><i>Each theory should be described and discussed in terms of relevance to STM/LTM, availability/accessibility, support from research evidence, etc</i></p> <p>Alternative points may be credited as appropriate</p>	8	4
(b)	<p>Describe and evaluate one research study that has investigated Eyewitness Testimony.</p> <p><i>A description of eye witness testimony should be given and a relevant research study ie Loftus & Palmer (1974) should be evaluated.</i></p>	4	4
		12	8

Specific Marking Information

Section B – Investigating Behaviour

	<i>Question B1</i>	<i>Approx Marks weightings: 60% k & u - 40% a & e</i>	
(a)	<p>Give a suitable experimental hypothesis for the study described above.</p> <p><i>Either a one-tailed or two-tailed hypothesis is acceptable. Regular players will detect more screen images at any one time in a video game, than non-players.</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>There will be a difference between regular players and non-players in the number of screen images they detect at any one time in a video game.</i></p>	2	0
(b)	<p>In this study, describe the two conditions of the independent variable</p> <p><i>Regular players of video games, and non-players.</i></p>	2	0
(c)	<p>Name the experimental design used in this study.</p> <p><i>Independent measures / groups</i></p>	1	0
(d)	<p>State one possible extraneous or confounding variable in this study, and explain how it could be controlled.</p> <p><i>Several possible answers. 1 mark for stating the variable, 2 marks for how it could be controlled. Likely answers include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Age of participants. Ensure the two groups have similar mean and range of ages.</i> <i>- Participants might exaggerate their experience of game-playing. Check (eg with parents) to ensure boys are correctly allocated to 'regular player' and 'non-player' groups.</i> <i>- Differences in eyesight. Ensure that all participants have normal eyesight, and that, if they normally wear spectacles, they wear them for the task.</i> <i>- Variation in equipment/software. Ensure all equipment/software settings are identical.</i> <i>- Regular players may be from more affluent families than non-players. Ensure similar mix of social backgrounds in the two groups.</i> 	1	2

	Question B1	Approx Marks weightings: 60% k & u - 40% a & e	
(e)	<p>Describe how the researchers may have selected the random sample.</p> <p><i>From the school registers, select classes in the required age range.</i></p> <p><i>OR</i></p> <p><i>Identify regular and non-players from the registers, and make two lists of these.</i></p> <p><i>AND</i></p> <p><i>Use random numbers, from computer, calculator or tables, to select 25 participants from each list.</i></p>	2	0
(f)	<p>Suggest two types of data analysis suitable for the data from this study.</p> <p><i>Two from:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Measure of central tendency: Mean or median scores of the two groups.</i> <i>- Measure of dispersion: Ranges of scores from the two groups</i> <i>- Bar chart of mean scores</i> <i>- Frequency distribution graphs</i> <p><i>Other appropriate forms of analysis, though not required in Course content, may be credited, eg:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Standard deviations from the two groups.</i> <i>- t-test</i> 	0	2
(g)	<p>Describe one other research method that could be used to investigate the effects of video games on children's behaviour.</p> <p><i>No marks for simply stating a method.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>- Survey by interview, structured or semi-structured. Children/adults are asked a set of in-depth questions about their game-playing, and other leisure activities. Analysis would be mainly qualitative.</i> <i>- Survey by questionnaire. Children/adults are asked a set of mainly closed-ended questions about their game-playing, and other leisure activities. Analysis would be mainly quantitative.</i> <i>- Naturalistic observation. Children/adults are observed in their day-to-day interactions and other behaviour. Analysis could be quantitative or qualitative. Credit may be given where the candidate suggests a specific example of behaviour, eg imitation of games characters, aggression, etc.</i> 	2	0

	Question B1	Approx Marks weightings: 60% k & u - 40% a & e	
(h)	<p>Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the experimental method.</p> <p><i>2 marks for descriptive content of answer, 4 marks for evaluative content. Two or more strengths and two or more weaknesses should be given for full marks.</i></p> <p><i>Experimental method involves changing one variable to test its effect on another variable, while keeping all other variables constant, or controlled. It tests the effect of an IV on a DV.</i></p> <p><i>Strengths:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>strong control of variables, especially in the lab</i> - <i>allows cause-and-effect conclusions</i> - <i>replicability</i> - <i>generalisability</i> - <i>good ecological validity of field and natural experiments.</i> <p><i>Weaknesses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>artificiality of lab experiment / poor ecological validity / low realism</i> - <i>often not possible, for ethical reasons</i> 	2	4
		12	8

Specific Marking Instructions Sections C – The Individual in the Social Context

Weightings of mark allocations shown in the table are approximate, and should be flexibly rather than rigidly interpreted.

<i>Assessment objective</i>	<i>Generic requirements</i>
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accurate, relevant and detailed psychological knowledge is demonstrated.• The information is presented in a coherent manner• Information is communicated effectively using accurate psychological terminology and formal style
Analysis and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of concepts, processes, evidence etc is shown, and/or• Evaluation is balanced and informed.

	<p align="center">QuestionC2 Social Relationships</p>	<p align="center">Approx Marks weightings: 60% k & u - 40% a & e</p>	
	<p>Describe and evaluate two research studies on Social Relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A definition of social relationships <i>e.g. The study of social relationships is concerned with the factors that lead to the formation, maintenance and breakdown of relationships. Including relationships between family members, friends, romantic relationships and marriage.</i> • A description of two research studies into Social Relationships. <i>The description of the studies should include a brief overview of the- aims, methods, results and conclusions. (Elaborate details are not required for full marks to be awarded; has the candidate understood the study? If yes award marks at the top end of the mark allocation.)</i> <i>Studies could include: Festinger et al (1950); Newcomb (1961);Walster (1966); Murstein (1977);Buss (1990); Oswald and Clark (2004).</i> • One strength and one weakness of each study. <i>The strengths and weakness should be appropriate to the study, but are likely to be based on the methods used, ethics of the study, validity of the study, usefulness/impact of the study - or similar. 2 points should be awarded for each correctly explained strength and weakness for each study.</i> <i>e.g. Walster –Strength: Follow up studies have all found similar results – supporting the matching hypothesis as a phenomenon stable across cultures and generations. Weakness: Only students were used as participants therefore the findings may only be applicable to younger cohorts who were not making long term commitments.</i> <i>e.g. Newcomb – strength: Well controlled weakness: The sample was unrepresentative, they were all mainly white American undergraduates</i> <p>Alternative points may be credited as appropriate.</p>	<p align="center">0/2</p> <p align="center">5/6+5/6</p> <p align="center">(12)</p>	<p align="center">2+2+2+2</p> <p align="center">(8)</p>

Psychology of Individual Differences

Candidates should answer **one** question from C4 or C5

	QuestionC4 Atypical Behaviour	<i>Approx Marks weightings: 60% k & u-40% a & e</i>	
	<p>Explain two therapeutic approaches to the treatment of depression or an eating disorder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A definition and the key features of depression. <i>e.g. Depression is a common mental disorder that presents with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, and poor concentration. These problems can become chronic or recurrent and lead to substantial impairments in an individual's ability to take care of his or her everyday responsibilities. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide (WHO).</i> • A definition and the key features of an eating disorder. <i>e.g. An abnormal eating pattern or psychological disorder centering on the avoidance of food such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa or excessive consumption or purging of food; sometimes linked to a dependency on food. Eating patterns can become the object of dependency and disturb the balance of daily life.</i> 	4	

