



National  
Qualifications  
2025

---

**2025 Psychology**

**National 5**

**Question Paper Finalised Marking Instructions**

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2025

These marking instructions have been prepared by examination teams for use by SQA appointed markers when marking external course assessments.

The information in this document may be reproduced in support of SQA qualifications only on a non-commercial basis. If it is reproduced, SQA must be clearly acknowledged as the source. If it is to be reproduced for any other purpose, written permission must be obtained from [permissions@sqa.org.uk](mailto:permissions@sqa.org.uk).



## General marking principles for National 5 Psychology

*Always apply these general principles. Use them in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidates' responses.*

- (a) Always use positive marking. This means candidates accumulate marks for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding; marks are not deducted for errors or omissions.
- (b) If a candidate response does not seem to be covered by either the principles or detailed marking instructions, and you are uncertain how to assess it, you must seek guidance from your team leader.
- (c) Marks for each candidate response must **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking instructions for this assessment
- (d) We use the term 'or any other acceptable answer' to allow for the possible variation in candidates' responses. Credit should be given according to the accuracy and relevance of candidates' answers. The skill of using appropriate psychological terminology and relevant research evidence is reflected in exemplar responses. However, at this level candidates may be awarded marks where the answer is accurate but expressed in their own words.
- (e) Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information. For example, if **two marks** are available award a mark for making the main point and a **further mark** for developing the point by giving additional or related information.
- (f) Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' or 'use' require the candidate to apply their psychological knowledge and understanding to give further information about the meaning of something, to give reasons or show connections. This may include explaining features of a theory, or explaining behaviour using approaches, concepts or theories, or relating a theory to a scenario. For example, if **three marks** are available for an 'explain' question, award **one mark** for making a key point of explanation and a **further mark** for each additional correct key point of explanation.
- (g) For credit to be given, points must relate to the question asked. If within a structured question of, say, two or three parts, a candidate gives more information in the first part than is required and inadvertently has given the answer to the second part, then although the candidate has given the answer for part (b) in part (a), award the marks if the answer is relevant and correct.
- (h) Each question is structured to assess the candidate's breadth of psychological knowledge and understanding and their skill in using this. Within the structure of some questions short stimulus pieces or scenarios are used, requiring the candidate to use their skills, knowledge and understanding in unfamiliar contexts. The candidate can respond by drawing on learning where personalisation and choice have been exercised. If you are not familiar with the topic chosen, you must seek guidance from your team leader.

Marking instructions for each question

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
1.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this by giving further information.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a laboratory experiment was conducted (1)</li> <li>• nine participants took part (1)</li> <li>• participants were attached to an EEG when sleeping (1)</li> <li>• they were woken up several times during the night (1)</li> <li>• they were asked if they had been dreaming/what their dream had been about/how long their dream had lasted. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	6	<p>Candidates can gain a <b>maximum of 3 marks</b> for describing the functions of sleep. To gain more than <b>3 marks</b> they must explain the effects of sleep deprivation with reference to restoration theory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the individual may be more likely to catch colds (1) as nREM improves the immune system (1)</li> <li>• the individual may take more time to recover from minor injuries (1) as nREM allows for the body to repair damaged tissue/remove waste (1)</li> <li>• the individual may become moody/anxious (1) as during REM neurotransmitters are replenished (1)</li> <li>• the individual may become forgetful (1) as REM plays a role in memory (1)</li> <li>• Peter Tripp stayed up for 201 hours and his body temperature became unstable (1) due to a lack of nREM sleep. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(c)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.</p> <p>In the case of strengths and weaknesses, candidates should state the strength or weakness then give a commentary on why this is a strength or weakness.</p>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research found that sleep deprivation had no impact on participants' ability to exercise (1) however restoration theory suggests we need sleep for physical functioning (1)</li> <li>• some people function well on very few hours' sleep (1) so the theory ignores individual differences (1)</li> <li>• research found that non-REM sleep increased after heating the brain with a hairdryer (1), and not only when the body required regeneration. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(d)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.</p>	4	<p>Candidates can gain a <b>maximum of 1 mark</b> if no reference to dreams is made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dreams provide insight into an individual's unconscious (1) which is where unfulfilled desires/wishes/conflicts lie (1)</li> <li>• these thoughts/desires/feelings are so unacceptable/distressing (1) that the conscious represses them (1)</li> <li>• the latent content of a dream represents these unconscious wishes/desires (1)</li> <li>• the latent content of Little Hans' dream was that he wanted to replace his father/he was afraid of his father/he desired his mother (1)</li> <li>• the id is part of the unconscious (1), and becomes dominant during sleep. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
2.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>personality is a set of characteristics/thoughts/emotions/behaviours (1) which are unique to an individual, (1) are consistent across situations (1) and relatively stable over time. (1) It is a product of biology and environment. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the EPQ-r is a personality scale which measures traits (1) on three dimensions (1). There is an N-scale, a P-scale and an E-scale (1)</li> <li>People who score high on the <b>N-scale</b> of the EPQ-r indicate a tendency towards neuroticism (1) whereas those who score low indicate a tendency towards stability. (1) A high score on the N scale shows that someone can be prone to anxiety (1)</li> <li>people who score high on the <b>E scale</b> of the EPQ-r indicate a tendency towards extraversion (1) whereas those who score low indicate a tendency towards introversion. (1) A high score on the E scale shows that someone can be prone to be outgoing (1)</li> <li>people who score high on the <b>P scale</b> indicate a tendency towards psychoticism (1) whereas those who score low indicate a tendency towards sociability. (1) A high score on the P scale shows that someone can be prone to aggression (1)</li> <li>the <b>L scale</b> was included to ensure reliability/prevent social desirability bias. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(c)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	8	<p>Award a <b>maximum of 6 marks</b> if no research evidence is referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APD may be caused by brain abnormalities (1)</li> <li>• the prefrontal cortex is associated with feelings of guilt (1) and being able to plan for consequences of behaviour. (1) Risk-taking behaviours may be a result of reduced grey matter in the prefrontal cortex (1)</li> <li>• in people with APD the amygdala may not be aroused by emotions such as fear (1), so they do not learn to avoid behaving in ways that make others afraid (1) and this may lead to impulsive behaviour (1)</li> <li>• Raine found that people with APD had less prefrontal grey matter than those who did not have APD. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(d)	(i)	2	<p>Candidates must include the name of the researcher(s)/name of study.</p> <p><b>Example:</b>  <b>Name:</b> Farrington (1)  <b>Aim:</b> To investigate the anti-social behaviour of males from poorer areas of London. (1)</p> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
		(ii)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participants were all white males (1) so results cannot be generalised to the target population (1)</li> <li>• interviews were used (1), therefore socially acceptable answers may have been given (1)</li> <li>• the study did not consider genetic factors (1) therefore it is reductionist. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(e)		2	<p><math>6 + 4 + 2 = 12</math> divided by 3. (1)</p> <p>The mean is 4. (1)</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
3.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a phobia is an extreme irrational fear (1) of an object or a situation (1)</li> <li>• a phobia is an anxiety disorder (1) which differs from normal feelings of anxiousness as it involves excessive fear (1)</li> <li>• a person will try to avoid the feared object or situation (1) which can impact on everyday life. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	6	<p>Award a <b>maximum of 3 marks</b> if candidates have described but not explained systematic desensitisation.</p> <p>Award a <b>maximum of 3 marks</b> if candidates have only described the stages of systematic desensitisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• systematic desensitisation is based on classical conditioning principles (1)</li> <li>• it involves teaching relaxation techniques (1) and gradually exposing the individual to the object/situation of their fear (1)</li> <li>• the individual and the therapist establish an anxiety hierarchy (1)</li> <li>• this allows the individual to replace the fear response with a relaxation response (1) as fear and relaxation cannot coexist (1)</li> <li>• the individual is conditioned to associate the object of fear with a feeling of relaxation. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(c) (i)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.</p> <p>Candidates should give a developed response and refer to all parts of the question to achieve full marks.</p>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>name:</b> Watson and Rayner/Little Albert (1)</li> <li>• <b>aim:</b> to study whether a fear response could be conditioned in an infant. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(ii)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.</p> <p>In the case of strengths or weaknesses, candidates should state the strength or weakness, then give a commentary on why this is a strength or weakness.</p>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only one participant was tested (1) so results cannot be generalised to the rest of the population (1)</li> <li>• it was unethical (1) as it caused distress in the child. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(d)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.</p>	6	<p>Award a <b>maximum of 4 marks</b> if no research evidence is referred to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• genetic inheritance means people can have a predisposition towards developing a phobia. (1) Having a family member increases the risk of developing a similar fear (1)</li> <li>• parents with phobias may have children with phobias (1) because they pass on genes that make them more prepared to be afraid (1)</li> <li>• research shows that a close relative of someone suffering a phobia is three times more likely to develop the same phobia (1)</li> <li>• people may have evolved to avoid danger (1) therefore be more likely to survive (1)</li> <li>• Ost found that 64% of patients who had a fear of needles had a relative with a needle phobia. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(e)	This question requires the candidate to apply knowledge to calculate the answer.	2	<p><math>6 + 4 + 2 = 12</math> divided by 3. (1)</p> <p>The mean is 4. (1)</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
4.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	4	<p>in their answer.</p> <p>Award a <b>maximum of 3 marks</b> if there is no reference to research in the response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compliance is where behaviour/attitudes change publicly to match the majority (1) but do not change privately (1)</li> <li>• this is the weakest/shallowest type of conformity (1) and is a temporary change (1)</li> <li>• this was seen in the Asch study (1951) where participants publicly gave the same answer as the majority even though they knew it was incorrect. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	8	<p>Award a <b>maximum of 4 marks</b> if the scenario is not referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informational social influence is the drive to conform in order to be right (1) this often happens in new/ambiguous situations (1)</li> <li>• Janice conforms due to informational social influence as the more experienced wheelchair users have more knowledge about sports (1) and they will help her make the right decision (1)</li> <li>• informational social influence often leads to internalisation which is a long-term change publicly and privately (1) so Janice may come to love basketball and continue thinking it is the right sport for her (1)</li> <li>• normative social influence is when someone conforms because they are driven by the need to be liked/to fit in (1) so Janice may agree to basketball because she wants to belong to the group of other wheelchair users (1)</li> <li>• women have been largely socialised to avoid conflict/create harmony in groups so are more likely to conform (1) therefore Janice may agree to take up basketball because of her gender. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(c)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this by giving further information.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>female participants in the Mori and Arai study had similar results to the men in the Asch study (1)</li> <li>in Asch the males conformed, whereas in Mori and Arai they did not (1)</li> <li>in Mori and Arai males conformed around 0.6 times out of 12 trials (1) while in Asch males conformed around 4.41 times out of 12 trials (1)</li> <li>in Mori and Arai it made no difference to results whether or not the group was unanimous, whereas in Asch group unanimity increased conformity. (1)</li> </ul> <p>Any other valid response.</p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
5.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>diffusion of responsibility occurs when an individual assumes others are responsible for taking action (1) or assumes others have already taken action/assumes others have expertise (1) therefore no action is taken (1)</li> <li>the more people that are present (1) the less help is given (1) and the less responsibility they feel they have. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give their reasons or show connections.	4	<p>Award a <b>maximum of 2 marks</b> if only one type of culture is mentioned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>individualistic cultures place value on competition/personal space (1) therefore individuals in these cultures are less likely to help others (1). However, collectivist cultures value co-operation (1) therefore helping others is more likely. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(c)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>this theory is based on the idea of natural selection (1)</li> <li>it suggests that individuals behave selflessly to promote the survival of their genes (1)</li> <li>an individual will favour their own kin. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Research evidence can be credited.</b></p> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(d)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give their reasons or show connections.</p> <p>In the case of strengths or weaknesses, candidates should state the strength or weakness, then give a commentary on why this is a strength or weakness.</p>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mateo (2003)/Ground squirrel study (1)</li> <li>• the study uses animals rather than humans (1), so can't be generalised. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(e)	<p>Questions that ask the candidate to 'explain' require them to give their reasons or show connections.</p>	8	<p>Candidates can gain a <b>maximum of 6 marks</b> if they do not refer to research evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• this theory suggests that helping behaviour is motivated by an individual's understanding of other people's feelings (1)</li> <li>• the individual wants to help to reduce the distress of another person (1)</li> <li>• when the individual's feelings of empathy are increased (1) they are more likely to help (1)</li> <li>• an individual may also help for egoistic reasons (1) to reduce their own distress (1)</li> <li>• Batson found that participants with high empathic concerns were more likely to help. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
6.	(a)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• people with high status tend to have a more relaxed body posture (1)</li> <li>• in hierarchical societies nonverbal cues such as bowing/avoiding direct eye contact may be used to show respect to those of higher status (1)</li> <li>• people with higher status claim more direct space with their bodies (1)</li> <li>• people with higher status touch and point more. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(b)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• women are better at interpreting NVC (1) and using NVC messages (1)</li> <li>• men maintain eye contact for longer (1) and women make eye contact more frequently. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(c)	Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	6	<p>Candidates can gain a <b>maximum of 4 marks</b> if they do not refer to research evidence.</p> <p>Candidates can gain a maximum of <b>3 marks</b> for descriptive points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in most Western cultures the OK sign indicates that everything is fine (1) however in Japan it can mean 'money'. (1) In Germany it is used to cause offense (1)</li> <li>• these differences indicate that Non-Verbal Communication (NVC) is learnt (1) and is not innate (1)</li> <li>• Yuki found that Japanese participants rated the faces with happy eyes as the happiest (1) whereas American participants rated the faces with happy mouths as the happiest. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

Question		General marking instructions for this type of question	Max mark	Detailed marking instructions for this question
	(d) (i)	Questions that ask the candidate to 'describe' require the candidate to make a point and then develop this point by giving further information.	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 mark</b> for naming an appropriate study/researcher(s)</li> <li>• <b>3 marks</b> for a description of the method/procedure.</li> </ul> <p><b>Name:</b> Matsumoto (1)</p> <p><b>Method/Procedure:</b> An observational study was conducted. (1) The researcher studied the photographs (1) of blind and sighted athletes when they were awarded medals. (1). They compared the expressions of the athletes. (1)</p> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>
	(ii)	Questions that ask candidates to 'explain' require them to give reasons or show connections.	4	<p>If a candidate only gives a description of the results award a <b>maximum of 2 marks.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the blind athletes had been blind since birth therefore had never observed another person's facial expression (1) they expressed their feelings in the same way as the sighted athletes (1) which suggests that their response was innate/had not been learnt (1)</li> <li>• in both blind and sighted athletes the gold/bronze medallists displayed broad smiles that signalled genuine happiness (1) whereas the silver medallists were more likely to display fake smiles/expressions of disgust. (1)</li> </ul> <p><b>Any other valid response.</b></p>

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]