

OXFORD

INTERNATIONAL
AQA EXAMINATIONS

INTERNATIONAL AS LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY

(9685) PS01 Introductory Topics in Psychology
Report on the examination

January 2022

REPORT ON EXAMINATION: INTERNATIONAL AS LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY 9685 PS01 JANUARY 2022

QUESTION 01.1

Most students performed well on this question and all students seemed to have some understanding of coding. However, some were unable to gain the mark due to not referencing the 'form' or 'format' that the information takes so it can be stored within memory. This is a key term in relation to what is meant by coding.

QUESTION 01.2

This question was answered well by most students. However, there was some uncertainty regarding the type of coding used within the sensory register. Some students indicated that the sensory register has 'no coding'. This suggests that they misunderstood the fact that the sensory register is 'modality specific' and therefore codes according to the sense in which the information is received (eg iconic and echoic). Students perhaps were unaware that these terms actually indicate the 'input sense' which then determines the coding that will take place..

QUESTION 02

There were some excellent answers to this question, giving clear and coherent responses that were fully applied to the stem regarding Nada and the situation given. Many students demonstrated an understanding as to why Nada could not remember the information, referring the role of rehearsal in the multi-store model. However, some students often failed to clearly apply their knowledge to the situation given and instead presented a generic explanation of the role of rehearsal within the MSM.

QUESTION 03

Some students answered this question very well, giving clear information about the role of the central executive, often offering several pieces of relevant detail about the component. However, a considerable number of students provided very brief information that lacked clarity or elaboration.

QUESTION 04

The best answers for this question focused on the issues raised by psychologists about the central executive in terms of its role not being well explained, even though it is supposed to be the most important part of the whole model.

Many students focused their limitation on the model's lack of information about LTM. Simply quoting that 'it does not explain LTM'. Although mentioned in the textbook, this is not a particularly relevant evaluation to use in this way as Baddeley and Hitch's Working Memory Model was designed specifically as an explanation for STM and not LTM. However, some students did obtain all the marks, despite referring to LTM as their limitation, as they focused on the model's lack of clarity regarding how information moves between the working memory and LTM.

QUESTION 05

The majority of students answered this question accurately.

QUESTION 06

This was a challenging question for many students for two main reasons. Firstly, some students showed an unfamiliarity with the terminology used within the specification as the question referred to one or more 'factors affecting the accuracy of eyewitness testimony'. Despite this term being taken directly from the specification, it seemed to confuse some students. The other issue related to students not reading or interpreting the wording of

the question properly. The question asked for an evaluation of research. However, many students wrote long descriptions of the research studies, such as those conducted by Loftus and Palmer, instead of focusing on the evaluation issues relating to those studies.

QUESTION 07

This was a question which discriminated well. There were some excellent answers, with detailed knowledge of the processes involved within the cognitive interview, good application to the stem in terms of Kamal and effective evaluation. However, there were also answers demonstrating little detailed knowledge of the cognitive interview, minimal or no application to the stem and little effective evaluation.

QUESTION 08

Many students were able to answer this question effectively, giving one strength and one limitation of Asch's research into conformity, which were both an accurate and clear. Some students did not read the question properly and wrote several brief strengths and limitations, instead of focusing on just one strength and one limitation and explaining each fully.

QUESTION 09

While some students were able to provide accurate and detailed answers that demonstrated their knowledge of informational influence in relation to Nina, others struggled with this question. Many simply provided a generic explanation of informational influence with little or no engagement with the stem. The better answers were able to show their understanding by highlighting how and why Nina was conforming with her friends due to her desire to do the right thing, believing that they have more knowledge than her about art since they study art, and she does not.

QUESTION 10

It was pleasing to see that many students understood what this question was asking and were subsequently able to provide a relevant response. Although there was a mixture of marks achieved, some were able to produce excellent answers that were accurate and detailed. These included detailed description and effective evaluation for both types of explanations of resistance to social influence, in terms of social support and locus of control. The evaluation often included effectively used research evidence such as the variations of Asch and Milgram's studies

QUESTION 11

Some students were able to receive marks within the higher band on this question as they could successfully explain and apply two definitions of abnormality to the case of Helen. However, despite engaging well in the stem, some students' answers were too vague, muddled, or undeveloped. In these cases, information about the definitions was presented but only briefly within minimal detail. For example, when using the deviation from social norms definition, some students explained the concept in terms of 'people not following the social norms of society'. This is not clear or detailed enough to achieve marks within the higher bands.

QUESTION 12

This was a question that discriminated well. It was clear that most students understood what the ABC stood for within Ellis' model and were able to write the correct terms. However, many students did not recognise that this was a 6 mark question which required more than simply writing what the A, B and C stood for. Those who produced the better answers were able to provide more detail behind the ABC model by providing effective examples to demonstrate the A, B and C elements. These students were also able to broaden their explanation of the model by describing Ellis' underlying beliefs about mental health/depression and how this related to the model itself.

QUESTION 13

Although most students found this question straightforward and were able to achieve top marks, some failed to engage with the stem by using appropriate examples about Ismail's behaviour to link to their chosen characteristics.

Additionally, there was a minority of students who did not understand what this question required. Instead of identifying relevant characteristics of phobias such as avoidance and anxiety/fear, these students wrote about the three categories of phobias as listed in the DSM, ie specific, social and agoraphobia. This was not relevant.

QUESTION 14.1

While some students were able to provide clear and detailed answers showing good understanding, others struggled with this question. Good answers made effective use of terminology related to flooding such as 'extinction'. These answers often demonstrated a sound understanding of the process of flooding, providing detail about what is involved within the treatment as well as the principle behind it, ie anxiety levels rise but cannot remain high so will reduce over time. Poorer answers tended to involve relevant, but limited, information which primarily revolved around the process of exposure to the phobia and prevention of escape. These answers failed to include much of the key terminology related to the procedures involved in flooding.

QUESTION 14.2

This was a challenging question, which discriminated well. Some students were able to give several thorough and effective evaluation issues in relation to flooding. These often centred on the use of supporting research evidence such as Shipley et al, as well as effective comparisons between flooding and other treatments such as systematic desensitisation. However, some students relied on the use of brief evaluations such as how flooding is 'unethical'. These evaluations were often either too generic or unclear and lacked effectiveness therefore reducing access to marks above Level 1.

GET HELP AND SUPPORT

Visit our website for information, guidance, support and resources at oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

FAIR ASSESSMENT PROMISE

In line with OxfordAQA's Fair Assessment promise, the assessment design, marking and awarding of this examination focused on performance in the subject, rather than English language ability.



OXFORDAQA INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
GREAT CLARENDON STREET, OXFORD, OX2 6DP
UNITED KINGDOM

info@oxfordaqaexams.org.uk
oxfordaqaexams.org.uk

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases, efforts to contact copyright-holders may have been unsuccessful and OxfordAQA International Examinations will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements. If you have any queries please contact the Copyright Team, AQA, Stag Hill House, Guildford, GU2 7XJ.