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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

PSYCHOLOGY

GCE Advanced Level and GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

<p>Paper 9698/01 Core Studies 1</p>

General comments

This paper continues to produce candidates whose answers score across the whole mark range. As usual, many candidates impress with the quality of their answers: detailed knowledge, understanding and thorough preparation being clearly evident. It is a pleasure to be able to award high marks to quality answers. However, life as an Examiner is often frustrating because of the number of candidates who are ill-prepared and struggle to answer most of the questions on the paper. Most frustrating are candidates who do not do justice to their potential because, through lack of examination technique they 'run out of time', do too many questions, or commit some other avoidable mistake.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

- (a) In response to this question, candidates had to describe the finding (one mark) of one study (one mark) in the Deregowski review. Many candidates were able to provide both these aspects, but many only provided one aspect or none at all.
- (b) For this part of the question they had to say whether this supported the nature or nurture viewpoint (and so showed whether the purpose of the study had been understood). Whilst many candidates gave the correct 'nurture' answer, many candidates were incorrect.

Question 2

Most candidates were able to give four features of autism. These included a preference for solitary play; preference for routine; difficulty with verbal communication; difficulty with non-verbal communication; difficulty with social relationships; lack of theory of mind, amongst others.

Question 3

- (a) This question asked '*What is meant by transfer?*' To quote from the study, "...transfer her signs spontaneously to new members of each class of referents". Although candidates were *not* required to quote this definition it is included for the many candidates who did not answer this question correctly.
- (b) This asked for an example of transfer. One example of this is Washoe's signing for flower, as flowers were indoors, outdoors and in pictures.

Question 4

- (a) This question, from the Hodges and Tizard study, required knowledge of matching participants in studies. In this study the children were matched on a number of features: sex, position in family, number of siblings, occupation of main breadwinner and, of course, all the children were the same 16 years of age. Any two of these features gained two marks.
- (b) This question asked why participants are matched. In general, this is to control as many participant (and other) variables as possible.

Question 5

- (a) In the Bandura study the researchers looked at a number of response categories and these included: imitative physical aggression, imitative verbal aggression, imitative non-verbal aggression, mallet aggression, and aggressive gun play, to mention a few. If candidates were imprecise and simply wrote physical aggression, this did not score a mark as it was not one of the categories.
- (b) This asked how Bandura et. al. checked the reliability of their observations. This was done by having two observers observing independently and at the end of the study the results were correlated, the outcome of which was 0.88. This is, as many candidates correctly stated, inter-rater reliability.

Question 6

This question required four responses, each worth one mark. A strength of Freud's methods (one mark) and an example to support it (one mark), a weakness (one mark) and an example to support it (one mark). Quite a few candidates did not manage to score full marks. Questions of this type are quite common, so it is worth noting how marks are allocated.

Question 7

- (a) The two factors in the Schachter and Singer theory of emotion are arousal (or a physiological component) and interpretation of the situation (or cognitive/psychological factors).
- (b) Arousal was manipulated by giving an injection to the participants. The cognitive component was created by the behaviour of the stooge who acted in an angry or euphoric manner.

Question 8

Candidates usually find questions on the Sperry study difficult, but most candidates provided correct answers to this question, showing they understood what is going on.

- (a) The answer to this part of the question is that if an image is presented to the LVF (left visual field) then it will be seen in the right hemisphere of the brain.
- (b) Sperry found that as the language centre is in the left hemisphere, participants could not name the object they had seen.

Question 9

This question was poorly answered by most candidates. In the Raine et al article, one section lists concerns about the equipment, and another outlines five concerns the authors have about the implications of the findings. Candidates were asked to describe two of the five concerns. Amongst the five are: no assumptions can be made about cause and effect; cannot generalise from NGR1's to other type of offender; cannot generalise to other types of crime.

Question 10

- (a) There were a number of ethical guidelines broken in the Milgram study. Participants were deceived in many ways. Most, if not all, suffered some psychological harm and some suffered physical harm. Participants were prevented from withdrawing through the use of prods.
- (b) All participants were debriefed and their identity remained confidential.

Question 11

Most candidates were able to outline two features of pathological prisoner syndrome and answers differed according to the amount of description provided. Two main features include: perceived loss of identity and arbitrary control of their lives.

Question 12

In the study by Tajfel, the participants had a number of characteristics including: aged 14-15 years; they were all boys; all from the same school; there were sixty-four of them. Any two of these features scored two marks. For question part (b), asking how the participants were put into groups, three answers were possible: by over- or under-estimation; by artistic preference, or randomly (which is how they were actually allocated).

Question 13

This question presented an example from one of the IQ tests and candidates had to identify two groups who scored badly. The two main groups were the immigrants and those who could not read. Question part **(b)** wanted an example of cultural bias evident in the test. Most candidates were able to identify the bias (e.g. toward North American culture) but not all were able to give an example, even though one was provided in the question.

Question 14

The Hraba and Grant study was a replication of the Clark and Clark study and this question wanted one similarity and one difference between the two studies. The most commonly stated difference was the change in attitude in the preference of dolls. The most commonly stated similarity was that the white children still preferred white dolls.

Question 15

This question required the findings of two tests rather than just identification of the tests. Most candidates referred to the results of the IQ tests (scores of one hundred and ten and one hundred and four), the memory test, the Rorschach or the EEG.

Section B**Question 16**

Most candidates were able to write some very good answers in response to this question. Whilst **Section A** of this paper may ask questions about precise detail of a study, **Section B** questions allow candidates rather more flexibility to write more generally about a procedure and possibly the procedure of one of their favourite studies. One distinguishing factor in answers was the amount of description provided. Some candidates were just too brief (no more than half a side of writing).

- (b)** This part of the question asked about results, but also asked specifically about quantitative results. Whilst some candidates knew exactly what the term quantitative meant and provided a specific answer to address this, others clearly did not, but still gained some marks simply by writing about the results in general.
- (c)** This part is the main discriminator of **Section B** questions as candidates need to know more about the wider issues that go beyond the core studies. For answers like this, two advantages and two disadvantages are required in order to access the full range of marks.
- (d)** Candidates are often not prepared and find it difficult to suggest an alternative approach for their chosen study. Those who do suggest an alternative often fail to address the effect the change may have on the results and so they fail to score up to five marks.

Question 17

This question on observational data was popular and the choice of the three named studies in answers was probably equal.

- (a)** This was done very well by most candidates. Many candidates often describe aspects of procedure but forget to mention how the observations themselves are actually done.
- (b)** This question part was also very well done by most candidates as it simply asked for a description of the results. Marks were allocated in relation to the accuracy of the description, the detail and the level of understanding shown.
- (c)** As usual, this is the main discriminator and candidates should choose either **Question 16** or **Question 17** based on the nature of the assessment request and whether they know the advantages and disadvantages of the assessment request topic. A question like this on the advantages and disadvantages of observations should cause very few problems and many candidates successfully achieved very high marks. However, many candidates were less successful, appearing to think about observations for the first time in the examination.
- (d)** As always, this question asked for an alternative way to gather data and yet again, answers at both extremes of the mark range were present.

<p>Paper 9698/02 Core Studies 2</p>

General comments

Overall, there was a very pleasing performance by most candidates. Good understanding of the Core Studies was demonstrated as well as knowledge of methodological issues. Very few candidates made rubric errors. The paper requires candidates to read the questions carefully and some failed to do this, therefore failing to give the specific answer required. The essay questions were answered well in the main, with most candidates referring to all four of the studies listed. It was pleasing to see that all three questions were equally popular. Parts (b) and (c) of the essays provided good differentiation in the marks as better candidates were able to discuss a range of problems or strengths and weaknesses and were also able to sustain an argument using a variety of points in part (c).

Comments on specific questions**Section A****Question 1**

- (a) Answered well. Some candidates gave general descriptions of how the severity of the verb increased the estimation of speed, whilst others gave specific details of the average speed estimation in each condition. Reference to specific verbs was required for full marks.
- (b) Most answers showed insight into the difficulties involved in measuring cognitive processes, including reference to their subjective nature, the problem of finding valid measurements, ethnocentric measurement, ecological validity and demand characteristics. Weaker answers discussed general problems in psychological research without specific reference to cognitive processes.

Question 2

- (a) Well answered, with most candidates referring to the operations as an extreme procedure for the epilepsy. A few candidates were under the impression that the procedure had taken place for the purposes of Sperry's research into hemisphere functioning.
- (b) Again, many good answers referring to the difficulty of generalising from a small sample with unusual characteristics; many referred to the fact that the epilepsy may have caused changes in the brain functioning of the patients.

Question 3

Most answers referred to Freud's analysis, involving the Oedipus complex and the phallic stage of development, in particular the unresolved conflicts as a reason for Hans's phobia of horses. Some candidates offered their own explanation for the phobia rather than, as the question requested, Freud's reasons.

Question 4

- (a) Most candidates were able to suggest a way in which the participants were harmed by the experiment, including harm from the injection, or the stress caused by a lack of warning about the side effects. Other candidates referred to the anger induced by the personal nature of the questionnaire in the angry condition.
- (b) This question was answered well, with frequent reference to the need for deception to reduce demand characteristics. Weaker answers made vague reference to the fact that deception is unavoidable or that there would be no point in doing the experiment without deception, without any explanation of why.

Question 5

This question was straightforward for most candidates, who outlined problems of the case study method including problems of generalising, lack of comparison, and ethics of too much involvement.

Section B**Question 6**

- (a) Candidates answered part (a) really well, and were able to outline the influence of others shown in each of the studies listed. Weaker answers described the results of the studies rather than concluding what the studies showed in relation to the question. Some findings from the study are useful in supporting the conclusions but findings alone do not fully answer the question.
- (b) This presented a challenge for some candidates, who struggled to find problems such as demand characteristics, ecological validity and ethics. All of these points could easily have been discussed in relation to the problem.
- (c) This was answered well by those who discussed alternative approaches in psychology such as cognitive and physiological. Good answers referred to other studies and everyday examples.

Question 7

Again, this was a well-answered essay with excellent reference to the nature/nurture debate in each of the studies. Good answers even made reference to both sides of the debate for each study.

- (b) This was a little more challenging, as always, but many candidates were able to discuss three or four major issues made specifically relevant to the nature/nurture debate including ethnocentrism, methodological problems, and issues of working with animals and children. Weaker answers merely evaluated the studies listed without making reference to the nature/nurture debate.
- (c) Answers here were very interesting to read, as candidates made reference to many uses for the findings from each of the studies ranging from education, parenting and social policy.

Question 8

Ecological validity is always a favourite with candidates and this again proved a popular question. Most answers argued that each of the studies did or did not have ecological validity. Stronger answers were able to discuss the extent in more detail with reference to mundane realism and experimental realism in the discussion.

- (b) This was answered well, and seemed to present little problem in allowing candidates to discuss a range of problems relating to achieving ecological validity, including issues of control, ethics and demand characteristics.
- (c) This proved to be quite challenging for some candidates, but others presented impressive arguments regarding the balance between ecological validity and a high level of control, showing a thorough understanding of the problems faced by psychologists in their research.

<p>Paper 9698/03 Specialist Choices</p>

General comments

Candidates should be reminded to follow the rubric of the paper. Answering the appropriate number of questions from the sections that have been studied helps to maximise the marks available.

The length of answer or amount of writing should equate to marks allocated. If a question is allocated two marks (e.g. **Section A** question part (a)) then not very much detail is required: a few sentences rather than a whole side or more. If eight marks are allocated (e.g. **Section B** question part (a)) then more detail is needed: at least a side, not just a few lines. Many candidates write as much for **Section A** questions (eleven marks) as they do for **Section B** questions (twenty four marks) and this is not a good strategy.

Significant numbers of candidates do nothing more than relate common-sense information that is often only vaguely psychologically informed. This means that marks fail to be gained because candidates do not show Examiners that they have studied psychology. The quoting of psychological evidence related to a question will always score significantly more marks than common sense.

Section B questions always ask candidates to **(a)** Describe and **(b)** Evaluate. Part **(a)** is not an introduction where further detail is given in part **(b)** as is often assumed. Part **(b)** should comment, either positively or negatively, on what has been written in part **(a)**. If such comments were organised around psychological issues, methods or approaches, then an impressive answer would begin to be created.

Comments on specific questions

Psychology and Education

Section A

Question 1

- (a)** Most candidates gained two marks for explaining what was meant by the term 'motivation in education'. On this occasion the number of candidates writing about Maslow was significantly reduced and rightly so as the work of Maslow relates to organisations rather than education.
- (b)** Two ways of improving motivation were required. Some candidates distinguished appropriately between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation whilst others used examples from conditioning/positive reinforcement.
- (c)** This required an example of learned helplessness, a term identified in the syllabus. Most candidates struggled to describe this adequately. It is simply where a student will give up easily without trying to complete a task.

Question 2

This question focused specifically on the cognitive approach to education. All candidates answering this question were able to provide a good explanation of the term.

- (b)** Two *applications* of the cognitive approach to education were required. Discovery learning featured prominently and often descriptions scored high marks.
- (c)** Appropriate weaknesses were considered, often based on the alternative behaviourist or humanistic approach.

Section B

Question 3

- (a)** Rachael (see the question itself) is generally pleased with the answers she received! Most candidates described a range of ways in which performance is assessed. However, many failed to realise that their answers must contain some psychology and not be anecdotes of their school days.
- (b)** This often had disappointing evaluation (for reasons outlined in the general comments above).
- (c)** This part of the question required candidates to think as it asked about the assessment of artistic ability. Candidates provided a range of interesting answers many of which showed good understanding and were thought provoking.

Question 4

- (a)** This question on classroom environments was very popular and some excellent answers were produced by candidates who described a range of design aspects as identified by psychologists. There were those who seemed to have studied no psychology at all and could go no further than reproducing the three seating designs quoted in the source.
- (b)** Evaluation was reasonable for some, but very poor for others (often to seating design).
- (c)** Candidates were required to suggest a seating design suitable for six-year-olds. Many suggested that social relationships were important in any classroom and so opted for a 'modern' design.

*Psychology and Environment***Section A****Question 5**

- (a) Noise can be defined simply as 'unwanted sound' and this would have been sufficient for two marks.
- (b) This part of the question asked for two studies on the negative effects of noise on performance and, surprisingly, only a small number of candidates were able to do this. This aspect is quoted in the syllabus and for anyone taking this option, studying the effects on performance (along with the effects of noise on social behaviour and noise on health) is essential.
- (c) This question asked for ways in which noise could be reduced. For those knowing the study by Bronzaft the answer was simple: install rubber rail tracks and soundproofing.

Question 6

- (a) Whereas climate refers to average weather conditions over a period of time, weather refers to relatively rapidly changing conditions.
- (b) Two studies looking at the effects of climate/weather on performance were required. As with **Question 3**, those covering psychological studies had little difficulty answering the question and often scored full marks, whereas those applying common sense struggled to score marks.
- (c) This part looked at seasonal affective disorder, suffered by up to one person in ten in Northern Europe. The main treatment is simply to have light therapy – exposure to very bright light.

Section B**Question 7**

This question on density and crowding was approached with enthusiasm by many candidates as it allowed freedom (like all **Section B** questions) for candidates to write about whatever they had studied in this area. Many looked at animal studies whilst others focused entirely on human studies. Either approach scored marks for quoting psychological evidence.

- (b) Answers here varied in quality; the main discriminator being those who had given some thought to the area before the examination, contrasted with those who had clearly not.
- (c) Answers to this part of the question about coping with crowding on public transport were also varied, and covered the range of available marks.

Question 8

For this question candidates could write entirely about natural disaster, entirely about catastrophe or provide an answer based on a combination of the two. It is legitimate for candidates to describe actual events, and regrettably there are far too many examples to choose from. Good examples to choose would be those matching psychological theory, particularly those of LeBon (contagion) and Schenk and Abelson (cognitive script schemata).

- (b) A mention of laboratory studies attempting to recreate events would be good for evaluation here.
- (c) This concerned what psychologists could do to help people after an event (rather than before) and this is mainly in the form of treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with systematic desensitisation.

*Psychology and Health***Section A****Question 9**

- (a) Candidates had to provide an explanation of what is meant by the term 'health promotion'. Most candidates were able to do this successfully.
- (b) This part focused on two methods that have been used to promote health. 'Methods' was interpreted in a very general sense here, and candidates could focus specifically on either fear arousal techniques, or providing information, or they could focus on where these have been applied (such as a laboratory, in a school, worksite or community).
- (c) This question asked for a description of one community health campaign and the most popular choice was the Three Community Study by Farquhar.

Question 10

- (a) An explanation of the term substance abuse caused little difficulty, with most candidates providing appropriate answers.
- (b) Candidates were asked for two theories of substance abuse, as applied to one substance. Frequently candidates chose smoking as their abused substance and were able to give two theories from a wide range of possibilities including positive effect, reduction of negative effect and nicotine regulation, for example.
- (c) This part of the question asked for one way in which people can be discouraged from abusing a substance and a wide range of answers was provided.

Section B**Question 11**

The area of lifestyles and health behaviour allows candidates to write a general, all-encompassing answer, and this is precisely what candidates did. However, whilst many candidates used an impressive range of appropriate psychological studies from a variety of health areas, many others wrote about life in general whether it related to health or not. This always has implications for part (b) as it is much more difficult to evaluate anecdotes than psychological theories and studies. Question part (c) also allowed wide-ranging answers and many candidates appropriately assumed that the optimal way to encourage people to improve their lifestyle and health is through a health promotion campaign.

Question 12

This question was a standard 'adherence to medical advice' question. Some answers to question part (a) scored maximum marks because of the wide range of relevant evidence which was accurately described and demonstrated understanding and organisation throughout. Most typically rational non-adherence was included as were aspects of the doctor-patient relationship. The work of Milgram is not relevant here. Answers to part (b) were equally impressive on occasion. Question part (c) asked candidates to consider how adherence can be improved and most candidates were able to make appropriate suggestions, though not all were supported with evidence.

*Psychology and Abnormality***Section A****Question 13**

- (a) The term 'model of abnormality' was appropriately explained by most candidates.
- (b)(c) This provided some interesting answers which reflected the varying cultural explanations of abnormality across the world. Such explanations were often linked to historical treatments as required in part (c). Amongst the many were the burning of witches, the drilling of holes in the brain, the cleansing of blood using various techniques and the giving of malaria to people to cure their schizophrenia!

Question 14

- (a) The term abnormal affect relates to disorders of mood or emotion and candidates were able to do this most successfully.
- (b) This part of the question asked for two symptoms and again, most candidates were able to do this successfully often basing their answers on the symptoms of depression.
- (c) This required one treatment and most candidates chose to outline the use of drugs, most typically Prozac for the treatment of depression.

Section B

Question 15

This essay question on abnormal affect due to trauma was not as popular as **Question 16**.

- (a) In this part most candidates outlined details of amnesia, fugue and/or post-traumatic stress disorder. Marks as always were allocated for accurate description, range of evidence and understanding.
- (b) Answers here were competent but tended to lack organisation of issues.
- (c) This part asked for treatments and, perhaps not surprisingly, this again resulted in answers at the extremes of the mark range.

Question 16

This was a popular question which allowed candidates to focus on either abnormal need or abnormal avoidance, or both. Those considering abnormal need included descriptions of disorders such as kleptomania (compulsion to steal) and pyromania (compulsion to start/watch fire). Those considering abnormal avoidance focused on phobias with agoraphobia being most common. The wide ranging nature of disorders gave candidates quite a few issues to write about in part (b) and this was done effectively by many candidates. Question part (c) asked for treatments as is typical of questions for this option.

Psychology and Organisations

Section A

Question 17

- (a) This part of the question required an explanation of the term 'job analysis' and typically this is the systematic study of the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of a job and the qualities needed to perform it.
- (b) This asked for one job analysis technique. Whilst most candidates suggested nothing more than observation, in the United States they have specific techniques: the FJA, PAQ and CIT (see recommended texts for details).
- (c) This part asked for reasons for performance appraisal and answers here were generally good, showing understanding.

Question 18

- (a) An explanation of organisational work conditions was required here. This concerns a physical or psychological aspect of the working environment.
- (b) This explored these two aspects further and candidates could legitimately choose aspects such as illumination, temperature or noise, amongst others. Psychological factors could include feelings of privacy or crowding, excessive or absence of social interaction, and feelings of job satisfaction or alienation.
- (c) This part of the question asked for ways in which the effects of these factors could be reduced. Job enlargement or enrichment are most appropriate; simply giving more money often does not help the worker or employee.

Section B

Question 19

This essay question on leadership and management allowed candidates to include any aspect within this topic and many candidates covered an appropriate range of theories, including those under the headings of universalist, behavioural, contingency and charismatic. Answers to part **(b)** covered the whole mark range. Question part **(c)** focused on the important topic of leader-worker interaction and again a range of answers of varying quality was observed here.

Question 20

Motivation to work is a popular area and many candidates produced long, detailed answers. Many attempted to describe every theory that has been proposed and discovered that they did not have sufficient time. Most sensibly, some candidates focused on more modern theories rather than those that applied some fifty years ago. Question part **(b)** was taken as an opportunity by some to extend part **(a)** and, as outlined in the **General comments** above, this is an evaluation section with no marks allocated for description. Part **(c)** asked for ways to increase worker performance and again, many candidates assume this can be done financially.