

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

PSYCHOLOGY

H567

For first teaching in 2015

H567/02 Summer 2023 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from OCR.

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Paper 2 series overview

H567/02 is the second of three A Level units assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of up to twenty core studies representing a range of themes from five areas of psychology. This component focuses on:

- Knowledge and understanding of the twenty core studies as well as their ability to evaluate the study on their own and in relation to the study they have been paired with
- Knowledge, understanding and evaluation of areas and perspectives in psychology
- Methodological issues, themes and debates relating to core studies and areas in psychology
- Practical application of the knowledge from theory and research covered in psychology.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had extensive knowledge of the nine core studies in Section A • showed clear understanding of the demands of different questions and responded to command words appropriately • gave a coherent discussion of ethical considerations within psychological research with a range of points and valid conclusions being made • demonstrated application of their psychological knowledge effectively to the applied scenario presented in Section C • utilised core studies within their discussions to illustrate points raised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had inaccuracies within their responses when referencing core studies in Section A • provided only basic knowledge and understanding of the core studies, therefore not using them to a good effect in discussion • offered vague comparisons when comparing studies • lacked discussion, making few arguments when identifying strengths/weaknesses • described practical strengths and weaknesses when evaluating their suggestions without reference to any themes, issues and debates.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Describe the procedure used in Piliavin et al.'s (1969) Subway Samaritan study.

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The majority of candidates responded well to this question with. Many candidates provided appropriate details and described the victims, the staged emergency, observations taken and model conditions clearly. Some responses showed a confusion with terminology (e.g. difference between 'victim' and 'model') and inaccurate information (e.g. timings of model intervention). Some candidates forgot to focus on procedure and included irrelevant material (sample, results or conclusions). These gained no marks as the question was specifically about the procedure.

Exemplar 1 demonstrates how full marks can be achieved discussing background theory. Hancock's research was investigating the existence of disfluencies in language. He was interested in testing if their instrumental orientation would be reflected in their speech in the form of more casually framed language. Therefore, he wanted to test out his own theory, that more conjunctives would be found giving a clear link to the subsequent aim of research.

Question 3

3 Outline **three** different results from Blakemore and Cooper's (1970) study into the impact of early visual experience.

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 - 2
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 - 3
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- [6]

Candidates showed an understanding of the results of this study with the majority of candidates achieving at least 3 marks. Most of the results given were in brief, vague or muddled statements without development.

Question 4 (a)

4 (a) In Grant et al.'s (1998) study on memory, why was the short-answer test taken before the multiple-choice test?

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This question elicited many good responses with candidates reasoning why the multiple-choice questions were second and the short-answer test first. The minority of candidates did not always elaborate well on why this was an issue to be considered in this study.

Question 4 (b) (i)

(b) (i) Explain **one** difference between **Experiment 1** of Moray's (1959) study into attention and Simons and Chabris' (1999) study into inattention.

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..... [4]

The minority of candidates were well prepared for this type of question and approached it in a formulaic way by making a clear comparative point and then outlining relevant information from each study to evidence. Successful candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the two studies and were able to further outline the difference given. The candidates who were less successful, did not identify valid comparison points (e.g., talked about the research aims) and without this were unable to access any further marks.

The majority of candidates gave correct responses to this question, clear strength and weakness of qualitative data outlined in relation to Kohlberg's study were provided. However, some candidates referred to the collection of quantitative data which did not gain any marks.

Misconception



Candidates were required to outline a strength and a weakness of the data collected which was qualitative data from the child's responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas. The child's reasoning was used to identify their stage of moral development based on the underlying structures of moral reasoning expressed.

A common misconception was identifying the data collected as quantitative, but it was qualitative in its original form.

Question 5 (b)

(b) Explain **one** way Lee et al. (1997) attempted to ensure the reliability of their study into lying and truth-telling.

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Candidates who performed well on this question gave a clear response identifying how the design of Lee et al. increased reliability with clear context to Lee et al.'s research. To achieve full marks, candidates also needed to demonstrate their understanding of reliability in their responses. This was not always clear in the responses given. Candidates who missed out on full marks did not give clear details of Lee et al. (e.g. referred only to 'rating scale' without detailing the scale 'very very good to very very naughty').

Section B overview

Questions in this section assess candidates on their knowledge of areas, perspectives and debates in psychology. The focus of this section was the individual differences area. Candidates who answered these questions well were able to refer to relevant core studies as evidence to support points being made. Questions range in mark allocation with a total of 35 marks for this section.

Question 6 (a)

6 (a) Explain **two** defining principles or concepts of the individual differences area.

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The majority of candidates were able to give a brief outline of the principles of the individual differences area such as 'people are unique', 'psychological attributes can be quantified/measured'. Only some candidates developed the principle/concept given further to show a greater understanding of the area.

Misconception

 There were candidates who made the mistake of referring to concepts relating to the psychodynamic perspective (e.g. ongoing conflict within the tripartite personality, defence mechanisms are used to protect the conscious mind). These are more study specific concepts relating to Freud's case study on Little Hans and so did not achieve credit.

Question 6 (d)

(d) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the individual differences area.

[8]

There was a range of responses to this question. The strongest responses made clear points and used studies in an illustrative way, developing on their point well and offered a balanced consideration of at least one strength and one weakness. Some candidates showed an ability to analyse the points made and concluded/gave value judgements about what the strength/weakness means for the area. (e.g. By understanding complex disorders earlier, we can use the information to prevent future unwanted behaviour in their adulthood).

Responses scoring in the lower bands tended to take a more study-based approach with commentary relating to core studies rather than the area (e.g. Research like Freud only tests a small number of individuals) or stated a strength/weakness without developing it clearly into the area (e.g. A strength is the individual differences area is holistic).

OCR support



There are a [range of OCR teaching activities available](#) to review the areas covered with clear learning objectives and worksheets to introduce the area, help students use research to illustrate points and clearly review the strengths and weaknesses of the areas in psychology. These can all be downloaded and used in the classroom.

Question 6 (e)*

(e)* Discuss ethical considerations in psychological research.

Support your answer using core studies from both the individual differences area **and one** other area.

[15]

The majority of candidates were able to identify a range of ethical considerations in psychological research and the majority supported their response with core studies from the individual differences area and one other area. Only a few candidates discussed research from a third area or did not refer to the individual differences area.

Many candidates defaulted to evaluating each core study in turn which limited their discussion of the ethical issues being reviewed. Most candidates demonstrated an understanding of the studies and the arising ethical considerations within research.

Responses in the lower band tended to list the ethical considerations without making meaningful links to psychological research.

Successful responses offered a range of valid conclusions which summarised the issues raised from ethical considerations well. The minority of candidates did this by evaluating ethical issues in research (e.g., referring to more valid data being gathered by breaking ethical guidelines, reducing demand characteristics when not informing participants). Some candidates did this by including comparison between the areas (e.g. Social area uses deception more in research as they carry out more research in the field compared to the individual differences area).

Exemplar 2

Psychological research can be considered to be ethical. Being ethical involves following guidelines laid out by the BPS such as informed consent. As the individual differences area studies individuals in depth, informed consent is often gained to allow for case studies to be completed. For example, Freud gained informed consent from Little Hans' father who was fully aware of the research. Being ethical is a strength as it upholds the reputation of psychology and will allow for ~~more~~ ^{further research} ~~research~~ into the area. However, some ~~contemporary~~ research into the ~~individual differences~~ ^{theory of mind} in autistic people who had full informed consent gives for the research which further highlights how the individual differences area is ethical. By being ethical, future participants may be more willing to volunteer to be a part of psychological research.

However psychological research can also be considered to be unethical. The social area can be seen as unethical as it often deceives participants in order to study the effect of a social environment on behaviour. For example, Milgram's study into obedience deceived participants by making them believe they were shocking Mr Wallace who was in fact a confederate and not being electric shocked. A strength of using deception is it limits demand characteristics and improves validity of the findings. Follow-up research conducted on a train where participants were unable to leave during the experiment, this means they had no right to withdraw. However a problem with breaking ethical guidelines is that it damages the reputation of psychology and can result in no funding for further research into the area which would then limit the ~~knowledge~~^{research} available for psychologists to carry out.

Exemplar 2 shows how a discussion on ethical issues can be given which is relevant to the demands of the question. Point has been illustrated with psychological research from the individual differences area. Studies could be more to support more coherently. Valid conclusions have been made showing an understanding of the issue raised with use of psychological terminology.

Question 7 (b)

(b) With reference to the abstract, outline **one** positive **and one** negative correlation found by this study.

Positive

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Negative

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The majority of candidates answered this question well with a clear understanding of both correlational types. Some candidates used the phrasing 'leads to' suggesting a causation was found which led to a more confused statement being made.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Outline **one** limitation of using a correlation technique in this study.

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This was well answered with the majority of candidates identifying inability to establish cause and effect as a limitation. Those not achieving full marks often did not elaborate on why it was a limitation (e.g. other aspects like friendships and social life may also be having an impact as well as social media).

Exemplar 3

One way psychologists could use social media to promote positive mental health in young people could be by posting positive / helpful videos. This could be done by having a psychologist film one, three minute video per week and posting it on Instagram / YouTube / Tiktok. The videos could include positive messages and good coping mechanisms for young people to try out themselves at home. This would be good as we are aware that young people imitate their role models. It could even be done that the person posting the video each week could be a popular influencer, to increase the chances of imitation.

Another way psychologists could use social media to promote good mental health [8] would be by having social media apps take down negative comments. This could be done by having a system where trigger words are automatically deleted as soon as they are posted.

Exemplar 3 demonstrates how developed suggestions can be made. Their first suggestion is done to a high standard with clear detail of how it would be done (posting videos to show good coping mechanisms) within social media, where it would be accessible (TikTok), along with the psychological knowledge which underpins the idea (imitation of influencers). Their second suggestion is reasonable (taking down negative comments) but is more limited than the first as no development or link to psychological knowledge has been made, the candidate could have referred to classical conditioning to support the psychological basis of their idea to fully develop their response.

Question 7 (f)*

(f)* Evaluate the suggestions you have made in part (e) using your knowledge of psychology.

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The majority of candidates relied on the practicalities of their ideas to evaluate which did not allow them to fully respond to the question and use their knowledge of psychology.

Those answering the question well did refer to debates, themes and issues clearly such as reductionism/holism, ethnocentrism, determinism/freewill and reliability.

Assessment for learning



[Teaching guides](#) on psychological applied learning scenarios can be found on the OCR Teach Cambridge site – they can be used to practise evaluating suggestions.

Give candidates some suggestions of ways to improve the behaviour/situation and get them to evaluate the ideas put forward.

They should be familiar with a range of debates, themes and issues from the specification. This can be used as a checklist for points which can be raised when evaluating their suggestions. Some debates apply more readily to certain suggestions than others, so practice is key to gain confidence with working through a generated suggestion. The depth in the discussion given is important so candidates do not need to discuss every debate in their evaluations but do need to show how it is demonstrated in the suggestion given.

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