

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

PSYCHOLOGY

J203

For first teaching in 2017

J203/02 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

J203/02 Studies and applications in psychology is the second of two examined components for the OCR GCSE Psychology 9-1 qualification. This component focuses on:

- Social Influence
- Memory
- Sleep and Dreaming
- Research Methods

Candidates who did well on this paper showed precise knowledge of the studies, theories, key concepts, and terms and were able to effectively use source material to give contextualised responses. The paper appeared accessible, with the majority of candidates attempting all the questions.

Candidates should be encouraged to read questions carefully. Question 15 required candidates to refer to NatCen and one other study from a different area of psychology. Some candidates described theories instead of a research study, or studies from the same area of psychology. These responses were capped at Level 1.

In Section D, Research Methods, a scenario is provided for context, and candidates are required to refer to the source in their responses. In those responses requiring contextualisation (Questions 17, 19, 21, and 22) candidates often did not use the source material. Furthermore, Questions 10 (a) – (e) were centred around a source. Many candidates did not use this in their responses, for example in Questions 10 (c) and (e). The Assessment Objective weighting for AO2 in this paper is 33%-37% and these types of questions reflect this.

Candidates are encouraged to show their workings when doing calculations. Some candidates did not achieve full marks as they only stated the final answer when the question directed them to 'show your workings' (e.g. Questions 20 (a) and (b)).

When candidates use extra pages, clearly labelling the questions in the margin is essential. On some occasions, incorrect numbering/absence of question numbering was seen. Furthermore, when answering the multiple-choice questions, candidates need to make sure their response is legible. On occasion, it was challenging to decipher which letter a candidate was referring to as one had been written over another. Candidates are encouraged to clearly cross out any responses they do not want to be marked. Finally, candidates are encouraged to make sure their handwriting is legible and that they write within the space provided, utilising the extra pages where necessary.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gave contextualised responses to the source material• addressed the question in full, for example, using knowledge from studies to support their evaluation (e.g. Question 9 (b))• could distinguish between specialist terms (e.g. Question 5 (b) and Question 6)• were able to give examples from the source provided (e.g. Question 10 (e) and Question 19).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gave generic responses when contextualised responses were required• did not show their workings for calculations• gave partial responses when a description or explanation was required• confused specialist terminology• confused studies.

Section A overview

Section A covered Sleep and Dreaming. There were 24 marks available in total for this section.

Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Identify which of the following is an exogenous zeitgeber.

- A Light
- B Melatonin
- C Pineal gland
- D Suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN)

Your answer

[1]

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Identify the number of stages in a complete sleep cycle.

- A 3
- B 4
- C 5
- D 6

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 1 (c)

(c) Identify which of the following statements is correct.

- A Melatonin levels are high at night and low in the morning
- B Melatonin levels are high in the morning and low at night
- C Melatonin levels go up and down during the night
- D Melatonin levels remain the same all day and all night

Your answer

[1]

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 2

2 Explain what REM sleep is.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates were able to give a brief response that Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep is when dreaming takes place. Fewer candidates were able to give a more elaborated response outlining an additional description of REM sleep. Some candidates explained when REM takes place rather than explaining what it is.

Question 3 (a)

3 Charlie and Alex share a bedroom. Charlie is having trouble getting to sleep. Charlie's mother has been researching ways in which their bedroom could be changed to help Charlie get to sleep.

(a) State the type of insomnia Charlie is experiencing.

..... [1]

Most candidates correctly identified that Charlie is experiencing sleep onset insomnia.

Question 3 (b)

(b) State **one** cause, apart from stress or anxiety, of the type of insomnia Charlie is experiencing.

..... [1]

Many candidates answered this question well.

Question 3 (c)

(c) Suggest **two** changes Charlie could make to the bedroom to improve sleep hygiene.

1

2

[2]

This question required the identification of two changes that Charlie could make to the bedroom to improve sleep hygiene. Many candidates were able to offer one identifiable change, fewer candidates were able to offer two. Some candidates relied on generic responses, for example, remove blue light, and some suggested actions Charlie could do unrelated to the bedroom such as take a hot bath. Such responses were not mark worthy.

Question 3 (d)

Charlie believes stress is making it difficult to get to sleep.

(d) Explain the role of the nervous system in insomnia **and** how Charlie could manage it through relaxation.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
..... [3]

Most candidates were able to achieve partial marks for identifying or explaining a relaxation technique Charlie could use to manage their insomnia. Fewer candidates were able to explain the role of the nervous system in insomnia, particularly related to Charlie's stress and how relaxation would rebalance its activity. Candidates are encouraged to respond to all parts of a question.

Exemplar 1

When we are anxious or stressed, the sympathetic nervous system is activated ^{which increases insomnia.} however Charlie could manage it by trying to activate the parasympathetic nervous system which would relax him and ^{which combats insomnia} help him get to sleep. He could do this by meditation or deep breathing/relaxation. This relaxation would activate the parasympathetic nervous system and therefore help Charlie ~~get~~ feel relaxed and not ^{sleep on the} suffer from insomnia. [3]

Exemplar 1 shows a successful response. The candidate begins by explaining how stress increases the activity of the sympathetic nervous system. The response identifies an appropriate relaxation technique (meditation/deep breathing) and explains how this method of relaxation will activate the parasympathetic nervous system to help Charlie sleep. This response was given full marks.

Question 4 (a)

4 (a) Outline **four** features of the procedure used in Williams et al.'s (1992) study into bizarreness in dreams and fantasies.

1

.....

2

.....

3

.....

4

.....

[4]

Many candidates were able to show excellent knowledge of the procedure used in Williams et al.'s study. Some candidates confused the study with the Freudian Theory of Dreaming research study. Responses referring to features of the method such as the aim, sample, or use of natural experiment were also seen. Candidates are encouraged to pay attention to the command word; in this question specifically, the use of outline means to go beyond the identification of a feature.

Question 4 (b)

(b) Outline **one** conclusion from Williams et al.'s (1992) study.

.....

.....

.....

.....

[2]

Many candidates could give one conclusion from Williams et al.'s study. Fewer candidates could go beyond a brief statement to fully encompass the question. As with the previous question, the use of 'outline' indicates that some explanation is required. Candidates are encouraged to use the number of marks attainable as a guide to the level of detail required.

Question 5 (a)

5 A psychologist wants to replicate Williams et al.'s (1992) study. They decide to interview their participants asking them questions to investigate the content of their dreams. They choose to use an unstructured interview.

(a) State **one** open question the psychologist could use in the interviews.

.....
..... [1]

Most candidates could state one appropriate open question the psychologist could use. Some candidates offered closed questions and some gave generic, unrelated open questions. Candidates are encouraged to use the source material as the question here had to pertain to the content of dreams to achieve marks.

Question 5 (b)

(b) Explain how using an unstructured interview will affect the construct validity of the investigation.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
..... [3]

To achieve full marks on this question, candidates needed to show an understanding of what construct validity is and place the response in the context of the source material. Few candidates could achieve this. Many candidates relied on the generic strengths and limitations of using an unstructured interview in isolation.

Question 6

- 6 Evaluate the Activation Synthesis Theory of Dreaming by matching the terms to the correct definitions.

Draw **one** line from each definition to the correct evaluative term.

Definition

Dreams are highly complex so reducing them down to simple neuronal processes is too simplistic

There is evidence that dreams occur in more than one of the stages of the sleep cycle

Evaluative term

Determinism

Reductionism

Validity

[2]

Most candidates were able to achieve at least partial marks on this question. Some candidates confused validity and determinism. Candidates are encouraged to cross through any lines do they do want marked; some responses with more than two lines between the definition and evaluative term were seen.

Section B overview

Section B covered Memory. There were 24 marks available in total for this section.

Question 7 (a)

- 7 (a) 30 out of 46 participants in the Experimental Group in Braun et al.'s (2002) study mentioned memories of Disney World. Identify the percentage of the Experimental Group these 30 participants represented.

A 53%

B 56%

C 65%

D 67%

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 7 (b)

- (b) Identify the independent variable in Braun et al.'s (2002) study.

A Whether participants completed two distraction tasks

B Whether participants had a difference in scores between week one and week two

C Whether participants met and shook hands with a favourite TV character

D Whether participants were shown a Disney advert or a control advert

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Identify which of the following statements is true in Braun et al.'s (2002) study.

- A The study was age biased
- B The study was ecologically valid
- C The study was ethical
- D The study was holistic

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 8 (a)

8 A company hires a psychologist to write a survey to see how satisfied its customers are with its service. The psychologist includes a variety of questions in the survey such as:

- a) How much did you like our service, was it excellent or good?
- b) Would you use our service again, yes or no?
- c) How do you feel about the service you received?

Using the source:

(a) Identify the leading question.

..... [1]

Most candidates correctly identified (a) as the leading question. Some candidates mixed up their responses between Question 8 (a) and 8 (c).

Question 8 (b)

- (b) Explain how leading questions could lead to memory distortion of how satisfied customers are with the company's service.

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates could explain that leading questions suggest a certain type of response. To achieve full marks, some contextualisation to the source was required through the use of the leading question that was stated in the source.

Question 8 (c)

- (c) Identify the question which collects qualitative data.

..... [1]

Most candidates correctly identified (c) as the question which collected qualitative data. Some candidates mixed up their responses between Question 8 (a) and Question 8 (c).

Question 8 (d)

- (d) The psychologist decides to use a rating scale to measure how satisfied customers are overall with the company's service.

Give an example of a suitable question using a rating scale the psychologist could use.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

A well answered question with most candidates giving a suitable question using a rating scale the psychologist could use. It was lovely to see so many fully quantified scales. Some candidates offered questions that had already been provided by the source and some gave the question with no rating scale or vice versa.

Question 9 (a)

9 Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur's (2008) study of prominent and persistent loss of past awareness in amnesia found that Clive Wearing suffered from both retrograde and anterograde amnesia.

(a) Match the finding from Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur's (2008) study with the correct type of amnesia.

Draw **one** line from each type of amnesia to its correct finding.

Type of amnesia	Finding
Anterograde amnesia	Clive Wearing was unable to recall facts and autobiographical information from before his accident
Retrograde amnesia	Clive Wearing had severe brain abnormalities
	Clive Wearing always scored zero on tests of delayed recall meaning he could not form new semantic memories

[2]

This was a well answered question with most candidates correctly identifying the type of amnesia with the findings from Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur's study. Candidates are encouraged to cross through any response they do not want marked; some responses with more than two lines were seen.

Question 9 (b)

(b) Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur (2008) used a case study.

Explain **one** strength of Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur (2008) using a case study.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates could state one strength of the use of a case study. Fewer candidates could use Wilson, Kopelman and Kapur's study to illustrate the strength; using the research study to support points is encouraged. Some responses were seen that focused on the strengths of longitudinal research in isolation; these could not be given marks.

Question 10 (a)

10 A psychologist investigated how decay can affect our ability to remember. Two groups of participants were read a list of 10 words at the same time. Group One recalled the word list immediately, whereas Group Two were asked to count backwards from 10 to 1 before recalling the word list (delayed recall).

The table below shows the total percentage of words recalled in both conditions. The psychologist concluded decay does affect our ability to remember.

Condition	Total percentage of words recalled
Immediate recall	74%
Delayed recall	59%

(a) State what is meant by decay.

.....

..... **[1]**

A wide variety of responses were seen for this question; most commonly, generic dictionary definitions of the word decay. Candidates should be mindful that any specialist terms require a psychological response. Successful responses referred to the lack of attention or rehearsal.

Question 10 (b)

(b) Outline **one** other type of forgetting that may explain the results of this study.

.....

.....

.....

..... **[2]**

This was a well answered question with most candidates achieving at least partial marks for identifying displacement as one other type of forgetting that may explain the results of this study. To achieve full marks, responses needed to outline how displacement may explain the results of the study. Some successful responses were seen.

Question 10 (c)

- (c) Explain how using cues could have improved the participants' recall of the words in this study.

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Candidates are encouraged to read questions carefully as many were seen to provide a definition of a cue or give an example of a cue with no contextualisation to the source. For full marks, some reference to the recall of words was required.

Question 10 (d)

- (d) Explain how the psychologist could have calculated the median number of words recalled in each condition.

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates could demonstrate an understanding of how the median is calculated. Fewer candidates recognised that the median would need to be calculated for each condition. Some candidates confused the median with the mean and others repeated the term median without explanation by saying, 'line them up and find the median'. On occasion, candidates gave responses referring to ordering the words and finding the most frequently occurring word, when the **number** of words was needed.

Question 10 (e)

- (e) Explain whether the psychologist used an independent measures or repeated measures experimental design in this study.

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Most candidates could identify that the psychologist used an independent measures experimental design in this study. Fewer candidates could give an elaborated response explaining why. Candidates are encouraged to illustrate how it was used when an explanation is required by the question.

Command words

'Explain' means that candidates must go beyond identification or making a statement. Candidates are encouraged to use the number of marks available to help them determine the level of detail required.

Question 11

- 11 Outline how the Wechsler Memory Scale is used to measure memory functions.

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Few candidates could show knowledge of the Wechsler Memory Scale. Many candidates chose to either leave the question unanswered or linked its use to retrograde/anterograde amnesia or to the Multi-store Model of memory.

Section C overview

Section C covered Social Influence. The total marks available for this section were 24.

Question 12 (a)

12 (a) Identify which part of the brain is associated with having low self-esteem.

- A Cerebellum
- B Hippocampus
- C Hypothalamus
- D Prefrontal cortex

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 12 (b)

(b) Identify which part of the brain is associated with having faulty moral reasoning.

- A Cerebellum
- B Hippocampus
- C Hypothalamus
- D Prefrontal cortex

Your answer

[1]

This was a well answered question.

Question 15*

15* Use your knowledge and understanding from across the psychology course to explain how far you agree with the following statement:

‘Research is only useful when we can generalise the findings to wider society.’

In your answer, refer to the NatCen (2011) study into the August riots and at least **one** other study from a different area of psychology you have studied.

[13]

Question 15 required candidates to show knowledge of generalisability and the use of research using NatCen’s (2011) study and at least one other study from a different area of psychology. Candidates who performed well on this question knew which studies to refer to and were able to describe how they supported or refuted the statement in the question. These candidates referred to the sample and procedures of NatCen as well as the findings. These candidates were then able to evaluate the features of their chosen studies in relation to how useful and generalisable they are. The studies by Wilson, Kopelman, and Kapur (2008) and the Freudian Theory of Dreaming research study were most commonly referred to. Some candidates were able to write insightful conclusions offering valid judgements based on the discussion of the evidence they provided.

Less successful responses showed little or no knowledge of NatCen’s (2011) study, gave incorrect details, or chose one other study from the same area of psychology; these candidates often described Bickman’s (1974) study into the social power of a uniform. These responses could not be given marks as both studies fall under social influence. Less successful responses also cited generic evaluation issues with research studies with no link to generalisability or usefulness from the statement. Some candidates described theories where description of a research study was required.

Exemplar 2

① — Very rare condition
 CS ⇒ lots in depth data

14

Natter did a study into the Tottenham riots with the aim to see why the youth got involved with the riots. His sample included people from Tottenham. Natter used police reports and used an unstructured interviewing method to gather qualitative data on the events which occurred in the riots. He conducted the interviews 5 weeks after the riots had occurred. He used a large sample of people. He then split the people ~~involved~~ in the riots into 4 categories: non-involved, watchers, rioters and looters. He then split these into 2-3 further categories each (e.g. looters involved sellers and opportunists). A strength of the study is that it ~~was~~ used a large sample of the participants. This means that Natter would have been able to gather more data about what would have happened and why the youth were involved, giving the study much more detail and making it more generalisable to the population and more valid.

A weakness is that the study only included people from Tottenham. This means the study

has culture bias as ~~people~~^{the youth} from different countries could have different reasons for getting involved, meaning the study's findings cannot be generalised to the ~~very~~ whole population.

Wilson et al did a case study into a man called Clive Wearing who had retrograde and anterograde amnesia after HSV-1 caused ~~the~~ much damage to his brain. Clive was married and was a famous musician who played the piano. Clive kept a journal which he would write in every day. Many tests were conducted on him over a period of several ~~with~~ months such as MRI scans and delayed recall tests. ~~An~~ Informed consent was gained ~~and was~~. A strength of the study is that it is a case study meaning it has lots of in depth data looking into the regions of his brain affected. Lots of data was gathered allowing ~~us~~^{us} to draw more accurate conclusions, giving the study validity. A weakness is that Clive suffered from a very rare condition (HSV-1) which is

very uncommon among the population, this means the results can't be generalised to people without the condition

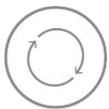
I agree with the statement

Exemplar 2 illustrates a successful response. This candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of NatGen's research including details relevant to the statement in the question. The candidate discusses both strengths and weaknesses of the research drawing appropriate links to how this impacts generalisability. The candidate then describes Wilson, Koplelman, and Kapur's study showing good knowledge. Similarly, strengths and weaknesses are given and linked to generalisability. The structure is good. The response would have benefitted from a judgement being made in a conclusion and was placed in Level 3 for AO1 (5 marks) and Level 2 for AO3 (5 marks).

Section D overview

Section D covered Research Methods. There were 24 marks available in total for this section are 24.

Assessment for learning



In Section D, Research Methods, a scenario is provided for context, and candidates are required to refer to the source in their responses. In those responses requiring contextualisation (Questions 17, 19, 21, and 22) candidates often did not use the source material. Candidates are encouraged to re-read the source material when answering the questions in this section.

Question 16

A psychologist wanted to investigate whether working from home made employees more productive than working in an office. All participants worked for the same company. 10 participants were asked to complete a set of tasks at home, and 10 participants were asked to complete a different set of tasks in their office at their place of work. Participants were given a maximum of 8 hours to complete their tasks and were asked to record how long it took them.

The results of the experiment are shown in the table below.

Table to show the amount of time (in hours) each participant took to complete their tasks (maximum time allowed: 8 hours)			
Participant number	Working from home	Participant number	Working in the office
1	6.5	11	4.25
2	6.75	12	5.5
3	5	13	4
4	5.25	14	5.25
5	7.5	15	4
6	6.75	16	4.5
7	7	17	3.75
8	7.5	18	4.75
9	6	19	4.5
10	6.25	20	4.5

16 State an alternative hypothesis for this investigation.

.....
.....
.....
..... [2]

Varied responses were seen for this question, including: null hypotheses, hypotheses predicting a correlation, statements of aims and results. When candidates did give an appropriate alternative hypothesis, they were also seen to operationalise the variables, this was lovely to see.

Question 17

17 The psychologist used an opportunity sample of participants for this study.

Explain why they did **not** use a random sample instead.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Candidates are encouraged to avoid giving a definition where an explanation is required. Candidates were often seen to describe what random sampling is or explain how the psychologist in this study could achieve a random sample. Fewer candidates were able to offer responses relating to the strengths of using opportunity sampling or the weaknesses of using random sampling. As context is required for this question, candidates must make reference to features of the study in the source.

Question 18

18 Identify the type of experiment used in this study.

Tick **one** box to show your answer.

Field

Laboratory

[1]

This question was answered particularly well.

Question 19

19 Explain why the psychologist used an independent measures design in this study.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates were seen to give a definition or description of an independent measures experimental design where an explanation as to why it was used was required by the question. Candidates who did give a weakness of using a repeated measures design or a strength of using an independent measures design, often did not contextualise their response. Such responses achieved partial marks.

Exemplar 3

.....They use indenpendent measures.....in order to.....

.....reduce practice effects as if they had already

done the ~~task~~^{task} onee they could be quicker

~~at~~ at completing the work tasks next ~~time~~

.....time..... [2]

Exemplar 3 illustrates a successful response. The candidate recognises that using an independent measures design reduces the presence of practice effects. The response explains how practice effects would affect the study in the source to give a fully contextualised response. This response was given 2 marks.

Question 20 (a)

20 Participant **Number 9** took 6 hours to complete their tasks.

- (a) Calculate the time taken by participant **Number 9** as a fraction of the maximum number of hours allowed to complete their tasks.
Express your answer in its simplest form.
Show your workings.

.....

.....

..... [2]

Many candidates were given full marks for this question. Some candidates calculated the fraction using the number 9, having misread the question. Candidates are encouraged to read all the information provided.

Question 20 (b)

- (b) Calculate the range of time taken for the participants who worked at home.
Show your workings.
The table of results is repeated below.

.....

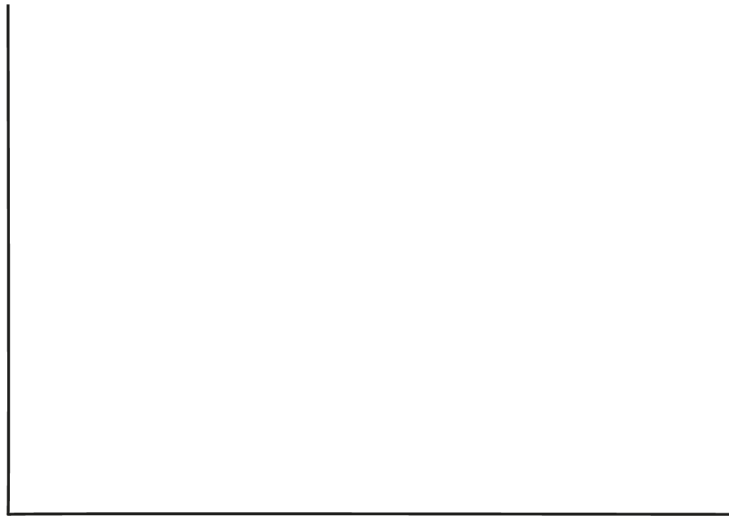
.....

..... [2]

Many candidates were given full marks for this question. Some candidates did not show their workings and so achieved partial marks. Some candidates calculated the median and few used the incorrect data from the table of results.

Question 23

23 Draw a normal distribution curve on the axes below.



[1]

A wide range of responses were seen for this question. Many candidates could not demonstrate an understanding of what a normal distribution is. Line graphs, scatter diagrams and many 'hill like' responses were seen. To achieve marks, candidates had to produce a recognisable normal distribution curve as a bell-shaped curve.

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