

GCSE (9-1)

Examiners' report

PSYCHOLOGY

J203

For first teaching in 2017

J203/01 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 1 series overview

J203/01 is one of two examination papers which follow the same structure in terms of sections, skills and patterns of questions. This paper focuses on the topics of Criminal Psychology, Development and Psychological Problems as well as assessing Research Methods through asking candidates to plan and design an investigation.

To do well on this paper, candidates need to have a broad and detailed knowledge of the content, especially with reference to theories and studies. The ability to apply knowledge and understanding to novel sources and scenarios is also important for success. Lastly, candidates' evaluation skills need to be evident and to be effective to achieve the higher marks on this paper.

Candidates who did well on this paper were able to demonstrate the range of psychological skills assessed through this GCSE including mathematical ability. Candidates who did less well often showed limited knowledge of key ideas and found application of understanding a challenge. Their attempts to evaluate sometimes lacked focus or were vague.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided a contextualised, well-structured and evaluative response to Question 18 • demonstrated sound knowledge of correlational and mathematical concepts • showed clear understanding of the term prevalence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gave general or vague responses to extended questions such as Questions 7, 17 and 18 • demonstrated poor understanding of key evaluative concepts • gave responses that lacked contextualised focus throughout.

Section A overview

Generally, knowledge of Daniel, Weinberger, Jones et al.'s study was sound. However, candidates were less successful at demonstrating clear knowledge of Stigma and Discrimination. Also it was clear that most candidates were unaware of the meaning of prevalence for Question 7.

Question 1 (a)

1 (a) Identify the area of the brain investigated in Daniel, Weinberger, Jones et al.'s (1991) study into the effect of amphetamine on regional cerebral blood flow.

- A hippocampus
- B limbic system
- C pre-frontal cortex
- D temporal lobe

Your answer

[1]

The majority of answers were correct here.

Question 1 (b)

(b) Identify the scanning technique used in Daniel, Weinberger, Jones et al.'s (1991) study into the effect of amphetamine on regional cerebral blood flow.

- A CAT scan
- B MRI scan
- C PET scan
- D SPECT scan

Your answer

[1]

Candidates generally answered correctly here.

Question 1 (c)

- (c) Identify which **one** of the following is a conclusion from Daniel, Weinberger, Jones et al.'s (1991) study into the effect of amphetamine on regional cerebral blood flow.
- A amphetamine significantly decreased cortical activity during the sensori-motor task
 - B amphetamine significantly decreased cortical activity during the WCST cognitive task
 - C amphetamine significantly increased cortical activity in an area of the brain during the sensori-motor task
 - D amphetamine significantly increased cortical activity in an area of the brain during the WCST cognitive task

Your answer

[1]

The majority of candidates correctly identified the correct answer.

Question 2

- 2 Outline **one** criticism of the procedure used in Daniel, Weinberger, Jones et al.'s (1991) study into the effect of amphetamine on regional cerebral blood flow.

.....

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.....

..... [2]

Most candidates gained marks here, commonly focusing on small sample sizes. Contextualisation was generally good.

Question 4 (c)

(c) Identify a consequence.

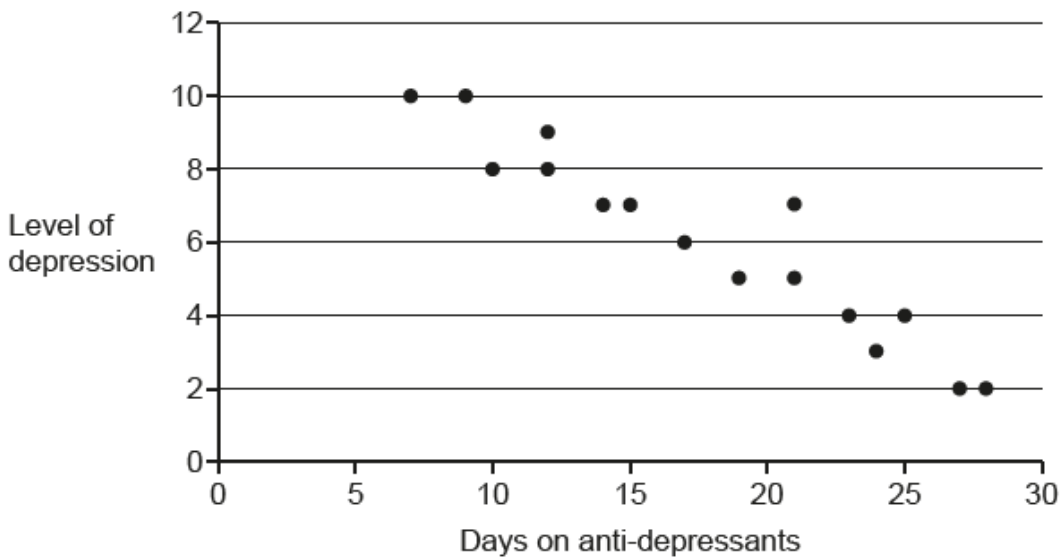
..... [1]

There was some confusion here with letting his family down.

Question 5 (a)

5 A psychologist investigated the correlation between how long people had been on anti-depressants and how severe their depression was, where the higher the score, the more depressed they were.

Their results are shown in the graph below.



(a) Name the type of graph used to display the data.

..... [1]

Question 5 (b)

(b) Give the **two** co-variables in this investigation.

1

2

[2]

Question 5 (c)

(c) Using the graph, state the type of correlation shown.

..... [1]

Question 5 (d)

(d) Using the graph, state what the psychologist would conclude about the correlation between how long people had been on anti-depressants and how severe their depression was.

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

The vast majority of candidates answered parts (a – d) correctly.

Question 6

6 Explain why a person with an undiagnosed mental health problem may experience stigma and discrimination.

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

Candidates seemed unclear on the difference between stigma and discrimination. Candidates needed to clearly differentiate between the two usually facilitated by examples.

Section B overview

In this section the majority of candidates demonstrated good maths skills. However, it was clear that knowledge of Piaget was often confused with other theories or theorists. Greater depth and breadth of Piaget's theory would be expected. Blakewell's study was generally confused by candidates between study 1 and 2, however evaluation was on the whole done well.

Question 8 (a)

8 (a) Identify the first stage of cognitive development according to Piaget's theory.

- A concrete operational
- B formal operational
- C pre-operational
- D sensori-motor

Your answer

[1]

Most candidates gave the correct answer here.

Question 8 (b)

(b) Identify which **one** of the following features of cognitive development is in place before the concrete operational stage according to Piaget.

- A conservation
- B decentration
- C object permanence
- D reversibility

Your answer

[1]

Most candidates gave the correct answer here.

Question 12

12 Outline how Piaget's ideas have been applied to education.

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.....

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.....

..... **[4]**

Most candidates successfully identified one key concept with development. However, two distinct ideas needed to be developed for 4 marks. Common misconceptions were discussing fixed and growth mindsets.

Question 13 (a)

13 (a) Describe **Study 1** of Blackwell et al.'s (2007) research into fixed and growth mindsets.

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.....

.....

..... **[4]**

Commonly weaker responses confused details from study 1 and 2 therefore losing marks.

Question 13 (b)

(b) Explain **two** reasons why **Study 1** of Blackwell et al.'s (2007) research into fixed and growth mindsets can be criticised.

1

.....

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2

.....

.....

[4]

Candidates generally answered well here, with contextualisation being the differentiator between full marks and 2/3 marks.

Section C overview

Candidates showed good knowledge and understanding of the Criminal Psychology topic both through the short response questions and the one requiring an extended response. Candidates were less consistent in terms of evaluation skills which represented a range in the extended response. Neuropsychology remains challenging for a lot of candidates.

Question 14 (a)

- 14 (a)** Identify which of the following best describes the research method used in Heaven's (1996) study into delinquency.
- A** Longitudinal, case study, correlation
 - B** Longitudinal, questionnaires, correlation
 - C** Longitudinal, structured interviews, correlation
 - D** Longitudinal, unstructured interviews, correlation

Your answer

[1]

The majority of responses were correct here.

Question 14 (b)

- (b)** Identify the reason why Heaven's (1996) study into delinquency lacked construct validity.
- A** because it did **not** measure neuroticism
 - B** because it used closed questions and rating scales
 - C** because it was a longitudinal study
 - D** because 20% of participants dropped out of the study

Your answer

[1]

A clear divide between candidates that understood construct validity and therefore selected the correct response and those that did not.

Question 14 (c)

(c) Identify the weakness of the correlational method used in Heaven's (1996) study into delinquency.

- A it **cannot** be used to establish cause and effect
- B it can only be used with a self-report
- C it relies on participants **not** withdrawing from the study
- D participants may give socially desirable answers

Your answer

[1]

Most candidates answered this question correctly.

Question 15

15 Draw a line to match each type of crime with the appropriate example.

[3]

Type of Crime

Example

Acquisitive

Charlie has been cautioned for having loud parties that go on into the night.

Anti-social

Layla has been arrested for possession of drugs.

Violent

Tom is under investigation for carrying out online fraud.

Hugo is in custody having been accused of physical assault.

The majority of responses were correct.

Question 16

16 Ben has been caught a number of times shoplifting from local businesses. His probation officer is concerned that his community sentences are not enough to stop him re-offending.

Briefly explain how restorative justice could be used to try to stop Ben re-offending.

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..... [2]

The vast majority of candidates answered correctly, with occasional weakness in context. However, a proportion of candidates confused restorative justice with alternative punishments such as community service.

Question 17

17 Describe the neuropsychology involved in neuroticism.

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..... [3]

There was a clear divide between candidates that had secure knowledge of neuroticism and neuropsychology and those who confused neuroticism with extroversion.

Exemplar 2

Neurotics have an easily aroused ANS and limbic system which controls sexual and aggressive urges. This causes them to act on their impulses by committing crimes. ~~The~~ The crimes included may be associated with rape and perhaps murder, as their limbic system is overly-aroused, so they seek thrills in their environment. [3]

This response clearly identifies the neuropsychological link to neuroticism and then applies it to the context of crime effectively achieving full marks.

Question 18*

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

'It is possible to change any human behaviour through learning from others.'

In your answer, you should refer to the Social Learning Theory of Criminality and to **one** other theory from another area of psychology you have studied. [13]

A full range of responses were shown here. Stronger responses clearly described SLT in the context of crime and went on to evaluate in context well. More successful candidates picked nature based theories (such as biological explanations of schizophrenia) and contrasted with SLT well.

Exemplar 3

The statement, "It is possible to change any human behaviour through learning from others," suggests that all human behaviour can be changed as a result of their experiences with other humans in their environment. It therefore favours nurture in the nature vs. nurture debate.

The Social Learning Theory of Criminality in the Criminal Psychology also supports the idea of nurture and human behaviour as a product of our environment. The theory states that we go through a process of identification ~~so~~ so we decide we want to be like a role models such as parents or friends (people who look up to). Therefore, when we observe our role models being rewarded for a behaviour such as by gaining friends from stealing, we decide to imitate ~~that~~ their behaviour in a process of vicarious reinforcement, with the hope that we would be rewarded ~~to~~. If we have been rewarded, ~~by~~ by getting more friends after stealing (imitating), we go through a process of direct reinforcement. Continuous direct reinforcement leads to internalisation, where a behaviour becomes a part of us - therefore it will be done whether it is punished or rewarded. This theory provides a ^{good} psychological explanation for why people turn to crime and blames it on observing and imitating negative role models. However, ~~the theory can be criticised for~~ This supports the statement which says human behaviour can be changed "through learning from others." in this case; learning from role models. However, the theory can be criticised for as it does not explain why people turn to a life of crime despite not being exposed to negative role models. This directly challenges the statement in question. It could be that ~~the~~ human behaviour such as criminal behaviour is a fixed part of our genetic make up and cannot be changed, - opposing the statement. It is also true that many psychologists believe criminal behaviour

to be caused by a criminal gene.

A theory on the other side of the nature vs. nurture debate which completely opposes the statement, "It is possible to change any human behaviour through learning from others," is the Biological Explanation of Schizophrenia in the Psychological Problems area of Psychology. This theory states that the mental disorder - schizophrenia is caused by an overactive dopamine system which means D2 receptors in the brain fire dopamine too easily or too frequently resulting in excess dopamine binding, as dopamine is a neurotransmitter which controls mood, perception and movement, this explains erratic behaviour in people with schizophrenia such as mood fluctuations and catatonic behaviours. The theory also suggests that schizophrenia is caused by neurological damage to the brain due to problems during pregnancy and changes in the foetus' genetic makeup. These symptoms get worse after the baby is born. This theory suggests behaviour is innate and decided before birth, completely opposing the statement in question. It says that people with schizophrenia have ~~larger~~ smaller brains that are smaller in volume than the average human with smaller temporal and frontal lobes as well as decreased blood flow to the frontal lobe and brain scans have been used to support this. The theory therefore focuses on nature to provide a reasonable and reliable explanation for why people with schizophrenia behave the way they do, suggesting it can only be changed through the use of anti-psychotics which alter brain chemistry and therefore alter human behaviour, rather than the behaviour being changed and learned by from others, as the statement suggests. However, it is difficult to establish cause and effect. Did brain dysfunction or schizophrenia ^{come first?} To conclude, both theories provide a strong defence for nature and nurture, suggesting they are both important in deciding and changing human behaviour. Rather than completely agreeing and suggesting that "It is possible to change any human behaviour through learning from others," perhaps both nature and nurture interact and so the idea of diathesis-stress is more important when attempting to change human behaviours.

Exemplar 3 gained full marks. It clearly links SLT to crime, provides multiple accurate evaluation points and contrasts well with the biological explanation of schizophrenia. Evaluation is developed and the layout and discussion is logical and clear.

Section D overview

Most candidates showed some ability to apply what they have learnt in Research Methods to plan their own investigation. Planning space seemed to be infrequently used and candidates should be encouraged to spend some time planning in context to improve their responses in this section.

Question 19

You have been asked to carry out a **questionnaire** to investigate how much bullying happens in the workplace. The theory is that people who work in large organisations will experience more bullying than people who work in small organisations.

Use this space to plan your investigation.

19 Outline **one** strength of using a questionnaire in your investigation.

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..... [2]

Too many responses focused on data strengths rather than actual strengths of questionnaires. Candidates need to be encouraged to read questions carefully to correctly respond to the demands of the question.

Question 20 (a)

20 (a) Write an example of an open question that could be used in your investigation.

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

The vast majority of candidates answered correctly.

Question 20 (b)

(b) Explain whether this question would give you primary or secondary data.

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

Most candidates correctly identified the answer as primary. However, many candidates struggled to correctly justify the choice, commonly focusing on information being direct from participants, which is also true of secondary data.

Question 21 (a)

21 (a) Write an example of a closed question that could be used in your investigation.

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

This was rarely answered correctly. Candidates must demonstrate the fixed choice nature of the question to gain marks. Many candidates expressed a question that could equally have been interpreted as an open question.

Question 21 (b)

(b) Name a measure of central tendency you could use to analyse responses to this question.

..... [1]

Candidates showed little knowledge of what central tendency meant.

Question 21 (c)

(c) Explain how you would use this measure of central tendency on your data.

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

There were very few mark worthy responses here. This is an area of the specification which may need more focus from candidates.

OCR support



The following resource by OCR could help here: [Student activity – Descriptive statistics](#).

Question 22 (a)

22 (a) Explain how you could obtain a self-selected sample for your investigation.

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..... [2]

Generally this was well answered, usually with good contextualisation.

Question 22 (b)

(b) Explain how using a self-selected sample could affect the representativeness of your investigation.

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..... [2]

Stronger responses focused on the type of person that may volunteer or the limitation of the specific workplace. These stronger responses were well contextualised. Weaker responses were general and vague.

Question 23

23 Outline **one** way you would deal with an ethical issue that might be raised by your investigation.

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..... [2]

The majority of candidates were able to correctly select an appropriate ethical issue, but often struggled to correctly contextualise to the context of the investigation.

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