



AS PSYCHOLOGY 7181/1

Paper 1 Introductory topics in psychology

Mark scheme

June 2025

Version: 1.0 Final



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright information

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Copyright © 2025 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Section A

Social Influence

0 1

Outline consistency as a factor in minority influence.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 2

2 marks for a clear and coherent outline of consistency as a factor in minority influence.

1 mark for a limited/muddled outline.

Possible content:

- consistency is repeating the same message, that challenges the beliefs held by the majority
- consistency may be within the members of the group (synchronic) or over time (diachronic)
- this draws attention to the minority view.

Credit other relevant content including outline embedded within an example.

0 2

Explain why researchers often use deception in conformity research studies.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO3 = 2

2 marks for a clear and coherent explanation of why deception is often used in conformity research studies.

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation of why deception is often used in conformity research studies.

Possible content:

- conformity is about changing behaviour because of perceived pressure from other people – knowing the pressure was not real but part of an experiment, would reduce the effect on behaviour and make any findings less valid
- once participants know what the real aim of the study is, they could try to help/hinder the researcher because of demand characteristics. This means that the behaviour being measured would be less likely to be natural behaviour. This may make the findings less valid.

Credit other relevant content including the use of examples to illustrate why deception is often used in conformity research studies.

0	3
---	---

Explain how **two** situational variables could have influenced Amal to obey the police officer.

[4 marks]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 2, AO2 = 2

For **each** situational variable award marks as follows:

2 marks for a clear and coherent explanation with appropriate application

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation/application.

Possible content:

- uniform – Amal is likely to obey the police officer because he is wearing his uniform as this will indicate the officer as a legitimate authority figure
- proximity – Amal is in the direct presence of/close proximity to the police officer as he stands next to her therefore, she is more likely to obey as she might fear the immediate consequences of not obeying.

Credit other relevant content.

Note: no marks for simply naming the variables.

0	4
---	---

Briefly evaluate social support as an explanation of resistance to social influence.

[4 marks]**Marks for this question: AO3 = 4**

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	Evaluation of social support as an explanation of resistance to social influence is clear and has some detail. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of appropriate terminology.
1	1–2	Evaluation of social support as an explanation of resistance to social influence is limited/muddled. Terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible evaluation:

- use of evidence to support the explanation, eg use of specific studies of non-conformity/disobedience such as variations of Asch's and/or Milgram's basic experiments that demonstrated increased resistance, Rank & Jacobson (1977)
- social support is a purely situational explanation of resistance to social influence which depends on other people which contrasts with locus of control which is a dispositional explanation
- resistance to social influence in reality is likely to be due to a combination of situational and dispositional explanations.

Credit other relevant evaluation points.

0 5Describe and evaluate Asch's research into **two or more** variables affecting conformity.**[12 marks]****Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 6**

Level	Marks	Description
4	10–12	Knowledge of Asch's research into two or more variables affecting conformity is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation is effective. Minor detail and/or expansion is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear and coherent. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	7–9	Knowledge of Asch's research into two or more variables affecting conformity is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. There is some effective evaluation. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used appropriately.
2	4–6	Limited knowledge of Asch's research into two or more variables affecting conformity is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any evaluation is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions. OR one variable only at Level 3/4.
1	1–3	Knowledge of Asch's research into two or more variables affecting conformity is very limited. Evaluation is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used. OR one variable only at Level 1/2.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- group size – Asch varied the number of confederates in the study, conformity rates increased to around 32% with three confederates/as group size increased up to a point. More than three confederates made little difference to conformity rates
- task difficulty – Asch made the task harder by making the three comparison lines similar lengths so it became less obvious/more difficult to judge the matching line/more ambiguous. Conformity rates increased when the task became more difficult/decreased when the task was made more obvious
- unanimity – Asch arranged for one of the confederates to go against the group and give either the correct answer or a different wrong answer. Conformity rates decreased to 5.5% when one confederate gave a different answer/unanimity was broken
- mode of response – conformity rates were lower when participants gave their responses in writing compared to saying them aloud
- individual differences eg highly confident individuals were less likely to conform.

Credit other relevant content.

Possible evaluation:

- use of evidence to consider the influence of different variables on conformity, eg cultural differences, gender differences, level of expertise
- Asch's research involved laboratory experiments so had high control over extraneous variables (eg environmental distractions) therefore the experiment has high internal validity
- Asch's studies and results have been replicated many times so the results can be considered to be reliable
- Asch's findings may not be relevant today (child of its time/lacks temporal validity) as the results may be influenced by attitudes of the 1950s where post-war attitudes meant people were generally more conformist
- Asch used an artificial task (judging line lengths), therefore not an ecologically valid measure of real-life conformity which often occurs where there is no 'correct' answer
- Asch's situation was artificial because the confederates were strangers/actors, so it was not a valid measurement of how people conform in their usual social contexts
- limited sample of participants as Asch only used males (gender bias) therefore it may not reflect female behaviour and only used American students (culture bias) therefore it may not reflect behaviour of other cultures
- Asch's research may be unethical as he deceived his participants (believed they were taking part in a test of perception) and failed to protect them from harm (they were put in a stressful and embarrassing situation).

Credit other relevant material.

Section B

Memory

0 6

What is meant by capacity in relation to memory?

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

1 mark for:

- capacity refers to how much information a memory store can hold.

0 7

What is the duration of short-term memory according to the multi-store model?

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

1 mark for:

- Accept any answer between and including, 18 and 30 seconds

0 8

What is the duration of long-term memory according to the multi-store model?

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

1 mark for:

- up to a lifetime.

0 9

Using your knowledge of coding explain why this was the case.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 2

2 marks for a clear, coherent and detailed explanation, using appropriate terminology.

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation.

Content:

- this is a short-term memory (STM) task which uses an acoustic code so participants will have difficulty recalling the words in the same order (acoustic confusion), because the words in list one sound similar.

1 0

Using your knowledge of coding explain why this was the case.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 2

2 marks for a clear, coherent and detailed explanation, using appropriate terminology.

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation.

Content:

- this is a long-term memory (LTM) task which uses a semantic code so participants will have difficulty recalling the words in the same order, because the words in list two have similar meaning.

1 1

Explain how the psychologist could have randomly allocated the participants to the two conditions.

[3 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 3

Award 1 mark for each of the following points (up to 3 marks):

- all 100 participants are given a number/all 100 names are put into a hat/container/computer
- numbers/names are drawn using either random number tables/hat method/generated by the computer
- the first 50 numbers/names are assigned to Condition A, second 50 numbers/names assigned to Condition B OR numbers/names assigned alternately to Conditions A and B until there are 50 in each condition

OR

Award 1 mark for each of the following points (up to 3 marks):

- use 100 slips of paper, label 50 'Condition A' and 50 'Condition B'
- put/mix the slips of paper in a hat/container
- each participant draws a condition from the container.

Credit alternative methods of randomly allocating the sample.

1 2

Suggest **two** ways these interviews could be designed to minimise investigator effects.
[4 marks]

Marks for this question: AO3 = 4

For **each** way investigator effects could be minimised award marks as follows:

2 marks for a clear and coherent suggestion of an appropriate way that might minimise investigator effects in this study.

1 mark for a limited/muddled suggestion.

Possible content:

- create and use a standardised script for the interviews so that the participants are all asked the same questions in the same order about how they recalled the words
- the psychologist could have asked someone else to conduct the interviews about how the word lists were recalled who was unaware of the aim/(blind to) the conditions the participants were assigned to
- the interviewer could have been trained to greet the participants in the same way and ask questions about the techniques with a neutral tone.

Credit any other relevant ways.

1 3

Identify **two** cognitive interview techniques. Explain how a police officer might use **each** of these techniques with Kristen.

[4 marks]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 2, AO2 = 2

1 mark for identification for **each** technique **plus 1 mark each** for appropriate application of the technique to the bank robbery.

Possible content:

- context reinstatement – a police officer would ask Kristen to try and remember information about the environment at the time of the bank robbery such as how she was feeling, what the weather was like, etc
- recall everything – a police officer would ask Kristen to recall everything she could about the robbery including any details that might seem unimportant or minor, eg detail such as the colour of the robber's shoes
- change perspective – Kristen may be asked to imagine what her friend Raj may have seen
- change order – Kristen may have been asked to start her recall with the man running out of the bank and then working backwards to the beginning of the robbery.

Credit any other relevant content.

Note: if the technique is left blank but a relevant technique is identified in the explanation, it can receive credit for the technique.

1 4

Outline **one** limitation of the cognitive interview.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO3 = 2

2 marks for a clear and coherent limitation of the cognitive interview.

1 mark for a limited/muddled limitation.

Possible content:

- use of evidence to challenge the effectiveness of cognitive interview (CI), eg Kohnken et al (1999)
- although CI leads to more correct information, incorrect information also increases
- some elements of CI may be more successful than others – Milne and Bull (2002)
- the success of CI may be related to the age of witness
- CI requires training and investment so it may not always be available because of limited resources.

Credit other relevant limitations.

1 5 . 1

Using the data in **Table 1**, identify the type of distribution for the scores in **Condition A**. Justify your answer.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 2

Award **1 mark** for **each** of the following points:

- the data in Condition A is symmetrical/normally distributed
- because the mean (64.4) is approximately equal to the mode/median (65).

Note: credit can be given if this information is provided in a diagram.

1 5 . 2

Using the data in **Table 1**, identify the type of distribution for the scores in **Condition B**. Justify your answer.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 2

Award **1 mark** for **each** of the following points:

- the data in Condition B is positively skewed
- because the mean (42.6) is greater than the mode (30)/median (34) (accept alternative wording)

Note: credit can be given if this information is provided in a diagram.

Note: do not accept right skew.

Section C

Attachment

1 6 Choose the percentage of children classified as securely attached.

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 1

B – 27%.

1 7 With reference to attachment types, what conclusion can you reach from the data in **Figure 1**? Justify your answer.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO2 = 2

Award **1 mark** for **each** of the following points.

Content:

- most children (who have spent time in an orphanage) are (more) likely to be insecurely attached/ less likely to be securely attached
- the percentage of securely attached children is less than the percentage of insecurely attached children/as the area of the pie chart is smaller for securely attached children.

Accept justifications focused on the percentage of secure attachment.

1 8 Name **one** stage of attachment that Schaffer identified.

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

Possible content:

- asocial
- indiscriminate/diffuse
- specific/discriminate
- multiple.

Credit any other relevant information.

Note: read questions 18 and 19 before marking. If Q19 outlines the same stage as Q18, but is worth more, award the mark for Q19 and give zero marks for Q18. Also annotate reason why Q18 is awarded zero marks.

1 9 Outline **one other** stage of attachment that Schaffer identified.

[3 marks]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 3

3 marks for a clear, coherent and detailed outline, using appropriate terminology.

2 marks for an outline which lacks some detail.

1 mark for a limited/muddled outline.

Possible content:

- (asocial): birth – approx. 8 weeks - infants respond to people and objects the same way but they do show a preference for faces and eyes
- (indiscriminate/diffuse): approx. 2 months – approx. 7 months – preference begins to be shown for familiar faces, but a child does not show separation anxiety or stranger anxiety
- (specific/discriminate): from approx. 7 months – attachment to the primary caregiver has been made/formed/established, a child does show separation anxiety and stranger anxiety
- (multiple): approx. 12 months onwards – a child has formed attachments to multiple people, eg fathers/siblings/grandparents.

Credit any other relevant information.

Note: stage described must be different to the one named in the previous question.

Note: read questions 18 and 19 before marking. If Q19 outlines the same stage as Q18, but is worth more, award the mark for Q19 and give zero marks for Q18. Also annotate reason why Q18 is awarded zero marks.

2 0

Which **one** of the following best describes Ainsworth's Strange Situation procedure?

[1 mark]

Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

A – Controlled observation combined with a laboratory experiment.

2 1

Apart from ethical issues, explain **one** strength of the Strange Situation as a way of studying attachment.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO3 = 2

2 marks for a clear, coherent and detailed explanation of a strength, using appropriate terminology.

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation of a strength.

Possible strengths:

- the Strange Situation uses standardised procedures therefore attachment styles can be reliably compared between different children and across different cultures. It also means that studies can be reliably replicated
- the Strange Situation is a reliable technique for assessing types of attachment, as different observers agree on their assessment of child attachment types
- the Strange Situation uses a high level of control/standardisation so you can minimise the effect of extraneous variables

Credit any other relevant strengths.

Note: do not credit ethical issues.

2	2
---	---

Apart from ethical issues, explain **one** limitation of the Strange Situation as a way of studying attachment.

[2 marks]

Marks for this question: AO3 = 2

2 marks for a clear, coherent and detailed explanation of a limitation, using appropriate terminology.

1 mark for a limited/muddled explanation of a limitation.

Possible limitations:

- children may show characteristics of insecure attachment for various reasons, eg because they are used to being separated from their mother in day care, so it may not be a valid measure of attachment type
- research has shown that children behave differently depending on which parent they are with, so it may not be a valid measure of attachment type, as what it measures is one relationship rather than a personal characteristic of the infant
- the Strange Situation may be a culture-bound test, as it was developed in America/based on US norms. It may not be valid to use it to study attachment types in different cultures, eg children in Germany are encouraged to be independent and may appear to show insecure avoidant attachment/children in Japan are rarely separated from the mother and may appear insecure resistant
- ecological validity may be low as the study was carried out in controlled conditions, which were unfamiliar to the child, and might not represent the attachment type displayed when the infant is at home
- the original classification system was incomplete/some infants may not fit into the original categories of attachment, as a 4th attachment type, disorganised, characterised by a lack of consistent patterns of social behaviour, has since been identified.

Credit other relevant limitations.

Note: do not credit ethical issues.

2 3

Outline the learning theory of attachment. Refer to Janey as part of your answer.

[4 marks]**Marks for this question: AO1 = 2, AO2 = 2**

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	Outline of learning theory of attachment is clear with some accurate detail. Application is appropriate. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of appropriate terminology.
1	1–2	Outline of learning theory of attachment is limited/muddled. Application is limited. The answer lacks coherence and use of appropriate terminology.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- idea of 'cupboard love' – children learn to become attached to their caregiver because they give them food
- secondary drive/drive reduction in relation to feeding and attachment
- learning can be due to associations (classical conditioning) – outline of how this process works in attachment: association of caregiver (NS) with food (UCS) causes conditioned response of pleasure
- learning can be due to patterns of positive/negative reinforcement (operant conditioning) – outline of how this process works in attachment, eg being fed when they cry – crying is positively reinforced by the caregiver; caregiver receives negative reinforcement when crying stops.

Credit other relevant content.

Possible application:

- Janey has associated her mother (NS) with food (UCS) which causes the conditioned response of pleasure
- according to operant conditioning food satisfied Janey's hunger and made her feel comfortable again (drive reduction)
- food was a primary reinforcer. Janey's mother was associated with food and became a secondary reinforcer
- Janey became attached to her mother because she was a source of reinforcement/reward
- Janey's crying is positively reinforced by her mother feeding her; Janey's mother receives negative reinforcement when crying stops.

Credit other relevant application.

Note: answers that only refer to one aspect of learning theory of attachment (classical, operant, social learning theory) can be awarded full credit.

Note: no marks for answers that only explain learning theory eg Pavlov's dogs, without reference to attachment and/or Janey.

2 4

Discuss research into the influence of early attachment on later relationships.

[8 marks]**Marks for this question: AO1 = 4, AO3 = 4**

Level	Marks	Description
4	7–8	Knowledge of research into the influence on early attachment on later relationships is accurate with some detail. Discussion is effective. Minor detail and/or expansion is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear and coherent. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	5–6	Knowledge of research into the influence on early attachment on later relationships is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. There is some effective discussion. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used appropriately.
2	3–4	Limited knowledge of research into the influence on early attachment on later relationships is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1–2	Knowledge of research into the influence on early attachment on later relationships is very limited. Discussion is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- Bowlby's internal working model (IWM) – early attachment provides blueprint/prototype for later attachment; formation of mental representation/schema of first attachment relationship; affects later relationships during childhood/adulthood
- attachment type associated with quality of peer relationships in childhood – studies of friendship patterns, bullying, eg Myron-Wilson and Smith, 1998
- Hazan and Shaver's 1987 research on types of adult relationships and the links with Ainsworth's secure, insecure-avoidant, insecure-resistant types
- research into relationships with own children when they become a parent, eg Bailey et al (2007)
- material on maternal deprivation is creditworthy if made relevant to the question.

Possible discussion points:

- use of evidence in discussion. Evidence to support or challenge Bowlby's internal working model
- evidence to support/contradict continuity of attachment type from childhood into adulthood and across generations: eg Fonagy, Steele and Steele 1991, Main 1985, Hazan and Shaver 1987
- discussion of theory, eg Bowlby's IWM and issue of determinism; negative implications of assumption that the relationship is cause and effect - cannot establish causality/implications of findings re continuity
- discussion of use of self-report techniques to assess quality of childhood/adult relationships – subjectivity, social desirability, etc – as well as retrospective assessment of early attachment patterns
- difficulty of measuring the IWM – hypothetical concept.

Credit other relevant information.