**HIGHER PSYCHOLOGY**

**COURSE HANDBOOK**



**Contents Page**

Welcome to the course. This booklet aims to guide you through the course structure and assessment arrangements. Be sure to put this handout at the beginning of your folder as it has a lot of important information about the course.

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| **Course Summary** |

The Higher Psychology course consists of 2 units. These are;

**Social Behaviour**

This unit looks at 2 topics **– Conformity & Obedience (mandatory)**

In this section we will learn about the importance/influence of the group on an individual’s behaviour and why people obey requests from authority figures that may be against our better judgement.

Content for the exam



**Topic: Conformity and Obedience**

**Psychological concepts and/or theories which must include:**

* types of conformity which must include: identification, compliance, internalisation
* factors affecting conformity which must include:
* individual factors: gender, self-esteem
* situational factors: group size, group unanimity, task difficulty
* cultural factors: collectivist and individualistic cultures
* factors affecting obedience, which must include:
* perceived legitimate authority
* socialisation
* authoritarian parenting
* autonomous and agentic levels of behaviour
* situational factors: proximity, location, wearing a uniform

**Studies**

The aims, methods, results and conclusions of at least **two** relevant psychological studies which must include:

* Mori, K, and Arai, M (2010) *No need to fake it: Reproduction of the Asch experiment without confederates.* International Journal of Psychology, 45 (5), 390–397.
* Milgram, S (1963) *Behavioural Study of Obedience*. Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67, 371–78.

**Aggression (optional topic)**

In this section we consider why people behave aggressively (nature/nurture) and the influence of the media (both TV and computer games) on a child’s behaviour.

**Individual Behaviour**

In this unit you will be introduced to two further topics in psychology:

**Sleep, Dreams and Sleep Disorders (mandatory topic).**

In this topic you will study the purpose of sleep, what happens when we are deprived of sleep and what our dreams really mean.

**Content for the exam**

* biological processes relating to sleep and dreams, which must include: — - the role of the brain in sleep
* circadian rhythms
* non-REM and REM sleep and dreaming
* Oswald’s (1966) Restoration theory of sleep
* cognitive processes relating to sleep and dreams, which must include:

- sleep to facilitate information processing

 - Crick and Mitchison’s (1986) Reorganisational theory of dreaming

* factors affecting sleep, which must include:
* impact of drugs
* impact of light

psychodynamic processes relating to sleep and dreams, which must include: conscious and unconscious processes

* manifest and latent content of dreams
* defence mechanisms

**Studies**



* **Dement, W. and Kleitman**, N. (1957). *The relation of eye movements during sleep to dream activity: an objective method for the study of dreaming*. Journal of Experimental Psychology, 53, 339–46.
* **Czeisler, C. A., Johnson, M. P., Duffy, J. F., Brown, E. N., Ronda, J. M. and Kronauer, R. E.** (1990). *Exposure to bright light and darkness to treat physiologic maladaptation to night work*. New England Journal of Medicine 322, 1253–1259.

**Memory**

In this topic you will be introduced to different theories that help explain how memory works and why we forget.

As we progress through the course content, you will also be introduced to the different research methods that psychologists use to generate data. This information will be of use to you when undertaking your own research assignment.

Optional topics have been removed from the question paper this year, this means that you can only be assessed on ***conformity & obedience and sleep & dreams.***

*Optional topics will however, be taught so that you are gaining a width and breadth of knowledge of the subject.*

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| **Assessment and Assignments** |

**End of topic assessments**

These assessments will take place at the end of each topic, they will be closed book and of a 1hour duration. Assessments will be marked out of 30 with feedback provided. If an alternative mode of delivery is needed for this Higher due to Covid, these assessments will be taken as additional evidence in support of your predicted grade. It is therefore important to ensure that you study for these tests.

**Additional Requirements**

To help prepare you for the final exam you will be required to write and submit restricted and extended responses to sample questions which will be given throughout the year.

**Prelim**

You will be required to sit a 2 topic prelim to further prepare for the final exam. This is a **compulsory** part of the course and will take place in March (please note that this date may be liable to change due to covid)

# External Assessment - The Assignment



The Research Investigation is worth 40 marks and makes up 40% of the grade for the Higher. For this task you will work in small groups to conduct an experiment which will be based on the topic of conformity & obedience. However, the write-up of this report should be each individual’s own work. The report will be sent to SQA to be externally marked. Psychology projects have a very particular format, so part of the investigation is learning how to write up a psychological report and structure it correctly.

**Skills being developed**

The Assignment assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

* using research skills to generate, select, organise, interpret, analyse and evaluate information in psychology
* using communication skills to present information, including a report on psychological research

**How long should it be?**

The report should be between **2,000 and 2,500 words** long excluding references and appendices. You must provide a statement of the word length of your completed report, excluding appendices and references. The good news is thatstudents who walk into the exam having achieved 40% of the overall grade have a strong chance of passing the overall Higher

**Submission date: To be arranged with your tutor at a later date.**

**Reasonable assistance**

The assignment will be conducted under some supervision and control. This means that although you may complete part of the work out-with the classroom, your assessor will monitor your progress to ensure that the work is your own and that plagiarism has not taken place. At any stage in the assignment, reasonable assistance should not include:

* directing candidates to specific sources or resources to be used
* providing model answers
* providing any feedback on drafts, including marking

Some changes for this year:-

* I can suggest the research topic and the method for gathering data.
* You must collect your own primary data, but you can have a smaller sample size.
* Digital data collection methods can be used eg google forms, survey monkey, email as long as confidentiality is maintained.

# The Exam

The exam for higher psychology is 2 hours, and worth 60 marks. This component contributes 60% to the total mark. Along with the Assignment, this will determine the grade (A-D) that you achieve for the higher.

**Structure of the exam**

The question paper will have two sections. There are a total of 30 marks available in each of the 2 sections.

* The mark range for questions within each section will be between 2 and 20 marks.
* There can be up to five questions within a Section.
* Questions can have more than one part.
* A stimulus may be used with any question.
* A stimulus can include text, graphs or other information

**Section 1: Individual Behaviour (30 marks**)

This section will ask you questions on sleep and dreams.

**Section 2: Social Behaviour (30 marks)**

This section will ask you questions on conformity and obedience

**Catching up on material missed!!**

If you cannot attend a class, it is your responsibility to make sure that you catch up on the material missed. All materials will be uploaded onto teams. At the end of each lesson, I will update our schedule of work which will allow you to monitor what you have missed.

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**What to expect from questions**

Internal assessments and the external exam will be sampled, this means that any material covered can be assessed. Questions can require either a restricted or extended response.

**You may be asked to write;-**

* a description of a concept/theory/study
* an explanation of concept/theory/study
* Application from one context to a new context (scenario) – remember that it is important to constantly link back the material to the scenario in these questions. Explaining how it applies to the scenario.
* Explanation of concept/theory/study
* Evaluation (strengths/weaknesses) of theories/concepts/studies
* Analysis of theories/concepts/studies – when answering these questions it is important to also include some explanation and evaluation of the theory etc.

Questions can vary in marks, from 2-20

1. Questions that ask you to **‘describe’** – you should provide a statement or structure, characteristics and/or features. This is more than an outline, it could for example refer to a ***concept, a process, experiment, or situation***. Emphasis should be placed on the key facts/points.

These types of questions typically have a mark allocation of between 2-6 marks.

1. Questions that ask you to ‘**explain’** – these type of questions require you to provide more depth to your answer. When explaining points it is important to make the relationship between things clear. For example, making links between psychological theory and observed behaviour. ‘Explain’ requires you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of theory etc.

These types of questions typically have a mark allocation of between 2-15 marks.

1. Questions that ask you to ‘**evaluate**’ – these types of questions require you to explain the strengths/weaknesses of a theory/concept/study. Points made should be detailed, they involve describing the criterion in which the evaluation is made, then explaining why it is seen as a strength/weakness. These questions can either specify the number of evaluation points that should be given or it can ask for evaluation without specifying the type (strengths or weaknesses) and quantity required. When using terminology it is important to explain it eg *it could be argued that Milgram’s study lacked ecological validity as it was conducted within the confines of a lab. This means that the results may not be representative of a real life situation.*

These types of questions typically have a mark allocation of between 2-14 marks.

1. Questions that ask you to ‘analyse’ – see additional information on the next page.

 These types of questions typically have a mark allocation of between 6-20 marks.

**How to Analyse within Higher Psychology**

This requires the candidate to make points that identify parts, the relationship between them, and the relationships with the whole: draw out and relate implications; analyse data (calculations and/or conclusion).

When answering a question that requires you to analyse a theory etc it is important that you provide an explanation of the theory/research whilst also providing points of evaluation (strengths/weaknesses). Approximately half marks will be awarded for the descriptive element of the answer.

**Analysis marks can be gained in the following way:-**

1. **Evaluating the evidence** – is there evidence that supports or refutes the theory/study/concept
* Poole and Regoli (1983) collected data from four different young offenders institutions and found that pre-conviction violence was a greater predictor of institutional aggression than overcrowding and other stresses within the institution. This is in direct support of the importation model over the deprivation model.
1. **Implications** – this is when you explain the implications of a theory
* the implications of evolutionary theory is that males will select female romantic partners based on their youth and attractiveness.
1. **Links to other theories** – this is when you compare and contrast theories, you may want to emphasise similarities and differences between theories/studies etc.
* For example, Milgram was one of the first psychologists to identify that environmental factors influenced obedience. This is in direct contrast to Adorno ‘Authoritarian Personality’ which assumed that a deviant personality was to blame for obedience.

OR

* Mori and Arai (2010) replicated Asch’s standard line experiment, results were very different in that males did not conform within this study, compared to a 74% conformity level in Asch (1951) experiment. However, conformity levels of women where directly comparable as women in Mori and Arai study conformed 4.41 times within the critical trials.
1. **Implications of strengths and weaknesses of the theory/study/concept** – you need to go beyond just explaining the strengths and weaknesses. You need to explain the implication of the points made.
* A weakness of Oswald’s restoration theory is that the evidence for the role of sleep in restoring the body is conflicting. This implies that sleep is important to the restoration of the brain alone, not the brain and the body as the theory suggests.
1. **Similarities and differences in results between different studies –** you need to explain/compare the results between different studies, explaining their significance.

**Example:**-

In Mori and Arai’s study, women conformed 4.41 times in the critical trials, this level of conformity is similar to that found in Asch’s original study. It could be argued that women value conformity more as they value being part of the group.

1. **Applications of the theory** eg in what ways can psychological knowledge of the theory be applied to the real world (aiding understanding of human behaviour)

Examples:-

* When females are describing themselves on dating websites they will emphasis features that provide them with the most chance of securing a partner.
* Obedience: Milgram’s work demonstrates that people are more likely to obey due to situational factors. This information can therefore be used to help design an educational program which aims to highlight the dangers of blind obedience.
* Aggression – information regarding institutional aggression can be used to help design new institutions that help reduce the number of deprivations experienced by prisoners
1. **Conclusion** - what conclusions can be drawn about the theory/study/concept
* evolutionary theory may explain why people are aggressive, however it fails to acknowledge the role of social factors which may help us to understand why people are aggressive.