



# Edexcel Psychology A-Level Advanced

## Information Breakdown

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### Paper 1 – 9PSO/01

#### Prejudice (1.1.4 – 1.1.5)

- Explanations and research into prejudice, including social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, 1986) and realistic conflict theory (Sherif, 1966).
- Factors affecting prejudice (and discrimination), including individual differences (personality), situation and culture.

#### Individual Differences and Developmental Psychology (1.1.6 – 1.1.7)

- Individual differences in obedience/prejudice:
  - Obedience is affected by personality.
  - Prejudice can have an explanation linked to personality.
- Developmental psychology in obedience/prejudice:
  - Obedience can be affected by gender and culture, which come from environmental effects.
  - Prejudice can be affected by culture, which comes from environmental effects.

#### Practical investigation (1.5.1)

- One practical research exercise to gather data relevant to topics covered in social psychology. This practical research exercise must adhere to ethical principles in both content and intention.
- In conducting the practical research exercise, students must:
  - Design and conduct a questionnaire to gather both qualitative and quantitative data to look for a difference in the data.
  - Consider questionnaire construction, sampling decisions and ethical issues.
  - Collect and present an analysis of quantitative data using measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, (including range and standard deviation as appropriate), bar graph and frequency table.
  - Collect and present an analysis of qualitative data using thematic analysis.
  - Consider strengths and weaknesses of the questionnaire and possible improvements.
  - Write up the procedure, results, and discussion section of a report.

#### Memory (2.1.1 – 2.1.4)

- The working memory model (Baddeley and Hitch, 1974).
- The multi-store model of memory (Atkinson and Shiffrin, 1968), including short- and long-term memory, and ideas about information processing, encoding, storage and retrieval, capacity, and duration.
- Explanation of long-term memory – episodic and semantic memory (Tulving, 1972).
- Reconstructive memory (Bartlett, 1932) including schema theory.

#### Contemporary Study (2.3.2 – 2.3.4)

- Schmolck et al. (2002) Semantic knowledge in patient HM and other patients with bilateral medial and lateral temporal lobe lesions.

#### Issues and Debates (2.6)

- Issues and Debates in Cognitive Psychology:
  - Ethics (e.g., Henry Molaison (HM) and confidentiality).
  - Practical issues in the design and implementation of research (e.g., how to measure memory and the validity of experimental design).



- Reductionism (e.g., under-emphasis on the interconnections between parts of the brain in favour of individual parts responsible for memory; artificially breaking memory up into parts like Short-term Memory and Long-term Memory for the purposes of study).
- Comparisons of ways of explaining behaviour using different themes (e.g., the different memory models).
- Psychology as a science (e.g., laboratory experiments and controls).
- Culture and gender (e.g., how memory is reconstructed based on cultural differences or gender stereotypes; or differences in digit span cross-culturally if studied Sebastian and Hernandez-Gil contemporary study).
- Nature-nurture (e.g., Henry Molaison (HM) and brain function = nature, reconstructive memory emphasises experiences = nurture).
- An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time (e.g., if studying the development of the working memory model over time; or how the multi-store model informed later memory models).
- Issues of social control (e.g., perhaps using understanding of memory in court situations).
- The use of psychological knowledge within society (e.g., using understanding of memory to help with memory 'loss', for example a memory bus).
- Issues related to socially sensitive research (e.g., memory loss related to dementia is socially sensitive for the individual).

### Issues and Debates (3.6)

- Issues and Debates in Biological Psychology:
  - Ethics (e.g., studying aggression and how findings are used; in the research itself such as issues of confidentiality and informed consent).
  - Practical issues in the design and implementation of research (e.g., issues in scanning and measuring the complexity of the brain).
  - Reductionism (e.g., focusing on aggression when studying the brain).
  - Comparisons of ways of explaining behaviour using different themes (e.g., causes of aggression comparing Freud's ideas and biological explanations).
  - Psychology as a science (e.g., synaptic transmission; brain-scanning techniques).
  - Culture and gender (e.g., hormonal differences between males and females possibly influencing behaviour, such as aggression)
  - Nature-nurture (e.g., brain localisation in aggression and environmental influences in aggression).
  - An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time (e.g., development of scanning techniques up to fMRI and development of knowledge accordingly).
  - Issues of social control (e.g., using knowledge of brain function to control individuals).
  - The use of psychological knowledge within society (e.g., understanding causes of aggression, in order to perhaps deal with them).
  - Issues related to socially sensitive research (e.g., confidentiality).

### Classical Conditioning (4.1.1 – 4.1.2)

- The main features of classical conditioning, including unconditioned stimulus (UCS); unconditioned response (UCR); conditioned stimulus (CS); neutral stimulus (NS); conditioned response (CR); extinction, spontaneous recovery, and stimulus generalisation.
- Pavlov (1927) experiment with salivation in dogs.

### Operant Conditioning (4.1.3 – 4.1.5)

- The main features of operant conditioning, including types of reinforcement and punishment (positive and negative).
- Properties of reinforcement, including primary and secondary reinforcement and schedules of reinforcement.



- Behaviour modification, including 'shaping' behaviour.

### Social Learning Theory and Bandura's Research (4.1.6 – 4.1.9)

- The main features of social learning theory, including observation, imitation, modelling and vicarious reinforcement.
- Social learning 'stages' of attention, retention, reproduction and motivation (reinforcement).
- Bandura (1961, 1963) original Bobo doll experiments.
- Bandura (1965) Bobo doll experiment with vicarious reinforcement.

### Issues and Debates (4.6)

- Issues and Debates in Learning Theories:
  - Ethics (e.g., the ethical issues involved in using animals in studies).
  - Practical issues in the design and implementation of research (e.g., generalising from animal-study findings to humans).
  - Reductionism (in the way behaviourism reduces behaviour into parts to be studied).
  - Comparisons between ways of explaining behaviour using different themes (e.g., different learning theories)
  - Psychology as a science (e.g., in the methodology; in the explicit focus of behaviourism on the measurable).
  - Culture (e.g., relates to reinforcement patterns in learning theory as well as social learning theory and what is modelled) and gender (e.g., if used in the practical research exercise, and in observational learning issues).
  - Nature-nurture (e.g., in the observations if looking at gender or age or characteristics as these can be learned or biologically given).
  - An understanding of how psychological understanding has developed over time (e.g., can come through choice of study, such as if looking at video game violence or through current therapy practice).
  - Issues of social control (e.g., use of learning theories in therapy can be social control, including issues of power of the therapist).
  - The use of psychological knowledge within society (e.g., using patterns of reward to shape behaviour in schools or prisons).
  - Issues related to socially sensitive research (e.g., issues of the power of the therapist).

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## Paper 2 – 9PS0/02

### Diagnosis of Mental Disorders (5.1.1)

- Diagnosis of mental disorders, including deviance, dysfunction, distress, and danger.

### Classification Systems (5.1.2)

- Classification systems (DSM IVR or DSM V, and ICD) for mental health, including reliability and validity of diagnoses.

### Classic Study (5.3.1)

- Rosenhan (1973) On being sane in insane places.

### Key Question (5.4.1 – 5.4.2)

- One key question of relevance to today's society, discussed as a contemporary issue for society rather than an academic argument.



- Concepts, theories and/or research (as appropriate to the chosen key question) drawn from clinical psychology as used in this specification.

### Explanations of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (6.1.1 – 6.1.2)

- Explanations of crime and anti-social behaviour, with consideration given to gender differences.
  - Biological explanations, including brain injury, amygdala, and aggression, XYY syndrome and personality.
  - Social explanations, including labelling, self-fulfilling prophecy.

### Factors Influencing EWT (6.1.7)

- Factors influencing eye-witness testimony, including consideration of reliability (including post-event information and weapon focus). Studies can be the same as those used for the methodology section of criminological psychology.

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## Paper 3 – 9PS0/03

### Classic Studies from Topic 1 and Topic 4 (9.2.1 – 9.2.2)

- Draw on and compare studies from the classic study section throughout the qualification.
- Review synoptically the classic studies of psychology in terms of issues and debates.

### Explaining Behaviour Using Themes (9.3.4)

- Comparisons of ways of explaining behaviour using different themes.

### Issues Related to Socially-Sensitive Research (9.3.11)

- Issues related to socially-sensitive research.