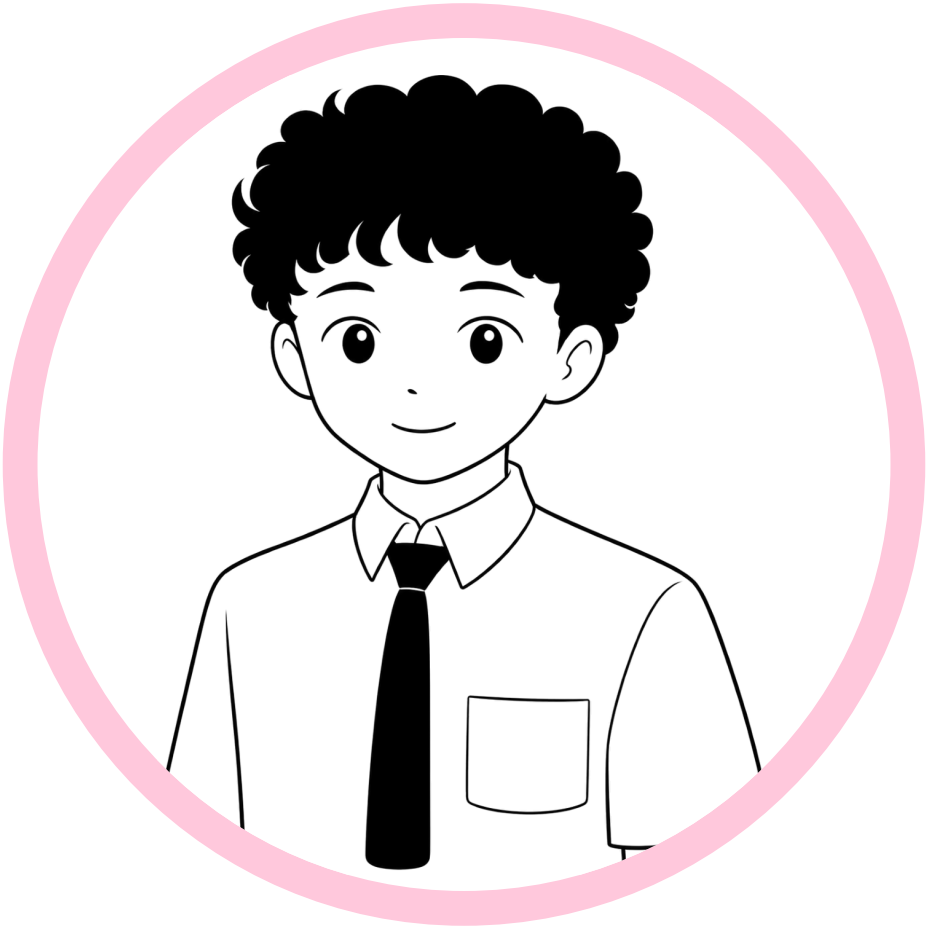
AQA A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY · 7182

PSYCHOLOGY



MARK SCHEME

3.2.1 COMPARISON OF APPROACHES

SCORE	PERCENTAGE
/82	%

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Q1.

[AO1 = 6 AO3 = 10]

Level	Mark	Description
4	13-16	Knowledge of the behaviourist approach is accurate and generally well detailed. Comparison with the biological approach is thorough and effective. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9-12	Knowledge of the behaviourist approach is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies / omissions. Comparison with the biological approach is mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5-8	Limited knowledge of the behaviourist approach is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any comparison with the biological approach is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1-4	Knowledge of the behaviourist approach is very limited. Comparison with the biological approach 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 - outline:

- basic assumptions of the behaviourist approach
- the concept / theory of classical conditioning
- Pavlov's research
- the concept / theory of operant conditioning
- Skinner's research.

Possible comparisons:

- focus on environmental causes and experience vs focus on internal influences (nature vs nurture). Discussion of the interactionist approach
- approaches to treatment (e.g. flooding vs drug therapy)
- use of scientific methods
- the issue of determinism
- the issue of reductionism
- use of animal experiments and extrapolation
- contrasting implications (e.g. blame, responsibility and social stigma).

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Note - Use of topic examples to illustrate and elaborate on comparison points should be credited.

Credit other relevant information.

[16]

Q2.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Comparison is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Comparison is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any comparison is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Comparison is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

Marks for knowledge and understanding of key features / assumptions of the cognitive approach. Likely content: thought, both conscious and unconscious can influence behaviour; thought mediates between stimulus and response; information processing approach; mind works similarly to a computer; use of models; mental processes can be scientifically studied; the human mind actively processes information.

AO3

Marks for comparing the cognitive approach with the psychodynamic approach.

Possible comparison points: cognitive – people as conscious logical thinkers vs

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psychodynamic – focus on unconscious thought (though conscious level is acknowledged); cognitive – stages of intellectual / cognitive development including moral development in early years through to teenage years vs psychodynamic – stages of personality development, also early years through to teenage years; cognitive – information processing approach and little focus on emotions vs psychodynamic – focus on emotional life and childhood experience; cognitive – damage to brain and mental processes as explanation of atypical behaviour vs psychodynamic – repression and unconscious conflict; cognitive – people as rational conscious thinkers vs psychodynamic – irrational; cognitive – explanations involve active processing and an element of free will / soft determinism vs psychodynamic – individual is passive and behaviour is determined. Accept comparisons based on therapies and research methods, application to all topic areas and to all the debates. Credit use of relevant evidence.

Q3.

[AO1 = 2]

Up to two marks for explaining one way in which social learning theory overlaps with one other approach.
One mark for identifying a way in which SLT is similar to another approach. Likely answers will refer to overlap with the behaviourist approach – learning of behaviour and role of reinforcement; overlap with cognitive approach – mental processes in learning. Accept any other possible answers such as overlap with the psychodynamic approach – role of identification in gender / moral development.
One mark for elaboration / further detail or explaining limits of the similarity and / or difference between the SLT and chosen approach.
Credit description of evidence or reference to topics as elaboration.

Q4.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. Other approach used effectively. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. Some use of other approach. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation /

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		application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

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AO1

Marks for relevant knowledge of assumptions of the humanistic approach and concepts. Most likely assumptions and concepts will focus on: concern with individual's subjective view and experience of the world and conscious experience; focus on person-centred approach and uniqueness of the individual; holistic approach; the individual has free will; the individual striving for self-actualisation; scientific methods are inappropriate for the study of human minds; aim of psychology is to help people reach their full potential; concept of self; conditions of worth; unconditional positive regard; client-centred therapy; Q-sort / POI.

AO3

Marks for analysis, comparisons with other approaches, evaluation of the approach including its contributions and application of knowledge.
Discussion may focus on comparison with one other approach, though students may well broaden their discussion to include more than one. All approaches are acceptable though the behaviourist approach, with its focus on objectivity, determinism, reductionism and scientific and mechanistic approach, is likely.
Students may be stimulated to respond to the claim that the approach has little to offer psychology as part of their discussion. Strengths may cover: promotes a positive image of human beings; optimistic view – person can grow and change throughout life; focus on subjective experience makes a valuable contribution to understanding the individual – more sensitive than scientific methods; persons in control of their lives – largely ignored by other approaches; contributes to psychological theories eg mood disorders; effective in some treatments eg counselling for stressful events – insight and control, milieu therapy. Limitations may include: opposition to scientific approach and implications; use of qualitative techniques; focus on individual, and problem of formulating general laws of behaviour / idiographic approach; vagueness of terms – implications for testing; lack of comprehensiveness; culture-bound values.
Credit use of relevant evidence.

Q5.

Please note that the AOs for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) have changed. Under the new Specification the following system of AOs applies:

- AO1 knowledge and understanding
- AO2 application (of psychological knowledge)
- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

Although the essential content for this mark scheme remains the same, mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) take a different format as follows:

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- A single set of numbered levels (formerly bands) to cover all skills
- Content appears as a bulleted list
- No IDA expectation in A Level essays, however, credit for references to issues, debates and approaches where relevant.

[AO1 = 4, AO2 = 8]

AO1

Up to four marks for knowledge and understanding of key defining features of the psychodynamic approach. Likely content: the role of the unconscious mind in motivating behaviour; instinctual drives; psychodynamic conflict; the importance of childhood experiences; the psychosexual / psychosocial stages of development; the structure of personality.
Credit reference to methodology and therapies.
Credit description of relevant evidence up to one mark.

AO2

Up to eight marks for the discussion including analysis, evaluation and application of knowledge.
Discussions should focus on the uniqueness of the psychodynamic approach and comparisons with other approaches should be made in this context. Possible discussion points in relation to other approaches: focus on power of the unconscious mind vs. humanistic approach (focus on conscious subjective experience), SLT and cognitive approach (internal conscious mediating processes); psychosexual stages of development vs. behaviourism and biological approach (development as continual process); conflict ridden person vs. humanistic approach (free individual with potential for growth and fulfilment).
Credit relevant references to topic areas.
Discussions could include overlap and similarities with other approaches as well as the defining differences such as: biological approach (inheritance of instincts and evolution of behaviour); behaviourism (role of early experience); humanistic (person centred and considers the individual); cognitive (study of the mind).
Credit use of relevant evidence.

Maximum of 7 marks if there is no reference to other approaches

Mark bands

10 – 12 marks	**Very good answers** The answer is clearly focused on the uniqueness of the psychodynamic approach in psychology and shows sound knowledge and understanding of the approach. Discussion is full and includes thoughtful analysis. Most references to other approaches are well developed and presented in the context of the discussion as a whole. The answer is well organised and mostly relevant with little, if any, misunderstanding. The candidate expresses most ideas clearly and fluently, with effective use of psychological terminology. Arguments are well structured, and coherent with appropriate use of sentences and paragraphs. There are few, if any, minor errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling. The overall quality of language is such that the meaning is rarely, if ever, obscured.
7 – 9 marks	**Good answers** Answer shows knowledge and understanding of the psychodynamic approach. Discussion is evident and the answer is mostly focused on the issue of uniqueness although there may be some irrelevance and / or

	misunderstanding. References to other approaches are apparent at the middle and top of the band though these perhaps are not linked so clearly to the discussion as for the top band. The candidate expresses most ideas clearly and makes some appropriate use of psychological terminology. The answer is organised, using sentences and paragraphs. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling may be present but are mostly minor, such that they obscure meaning only occasionally.
4 – 6 marks	**Average to weak answers** Answer shows some knowledge and understanding of the psychodynamic approach. There must be some discussion for 5 / 6 marks. Answers in this band may be mostly descriptive. There may be considerable irrelevance and / or inaccuracy. Answers constituting reasonable relevant information but without proper focus on the question are likely to be in this band. The candidate expresses basic ideas clearly but there may be some ambiguity. The candidate uses key psychological terminology inappropriately on some occasions. The answer may lack structure, although there is some evidence of use of sentences and paragraphs. There are occasional intrusive errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling which obscure meaning.
1 – 3 marks	**Poor answers** Answer shows very limited knowledge and understanding but must contain some relevant information in relation to the question. There may be substantial confusion, inaccuracy and / or irrelevance. The candidate shows deficiencies in expression of ideas resulting in frequent confusion and / or ambiguity. Answers lack structure, consisting of a series of unconnected ideas. Psychological terminology is used occasionally, although not always appropriately. Errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling are frequent, intrusive and often obscure meaning.
0 marks	**No relevant content**

Q6.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. Effective comparison with at least one other approach. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Some comparison with at least one other approach. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is

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		only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

Marks for relevant knowledge and understanding of social learning theory. This most likely will focus on the key assumptions of the approach: learning in a social context; observational learning; imitation; identification; role of models, characteristics of models; consequences of behaviour for models; vicarious reinforcement / punishment, distinction between learning and performance; cognitive factors in learning (for example attention, retention). Credit reference to methodology and use of appropriate terminology eg reciprocal determinism, personal agency, self-efficacy, etc.

AO3

Marks for analysis, comparisons with other approaches, evaluation of the approach including its contributions and application of knowledge.
Discussion may focus on comparison with one other approach – though candidates may well broaden their discussion to include more than one. All approaches are acceptable but most likely will be the behaviourist approach. Strengths may cover: the role of cognition in learning; the learning of complex social behaviours; the use of the experimental method and focus on humans in research; applications to health psychology, sport psychology and therapies requiring increase in self-efficacy.
Limitations may include: neglects the role of biology / heredity / maturation; methodological aspects of research where linked to social learning theory; does not explain the learning of abstract ideas.
Credit use of relevant evidence.

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Q1.

Overall this question was well answered with some impressive responses. Students appeared to be well prepared, demonstrating good, detailed knowledge of classical and operant conditioning and of Pavlov and Skinner's research, with stronger students outlining general assumptions upon which the approach is founded. Some schools / colleges appear to be teaching all the learning approaches together rather than distinguishing between the behaviourist approach and social learning theory therefore many students incorrectly included the social learning theory in their outline of the behaviourist approach.

The comparisons given were variable. Whilst there were some excellent, well discussed and effective comparisons, weaker students exposed their limited knowledge of the approaches and terminology in the inappropriate comparisons given. A worrying number of students claimed that the biological approach does not use animals in their research and poses no ethical issues. Furthermore, some claimed the behaviourist approach focusses on free will and is subjective and unscientific in its methodology. Understanding of reductionism was often limited and nature and nurture were frequently muddled. The most successful comparisons tended to focus their discussion around determinism and comparing and contrasting explanations and treatments for phobias. Unfortunately, many students provided pre-learned essays, focussing on outlining and evaluating the approaches, as opposed to providing effective comparison. This meant that students often wasted time providing a wealth of material which lacked relevance but could have easily been rearranged to provide effective comparison.

Q2.

This question required an outline of the cognitive approach and many students had sufficient knowledge to gain full marks for this part of the question. The second part of the question required a comparison between the cognitive approach and the psychodynamic approach. On such a question, the A02 marks are only accrued for comparative points identified and discussed. Many students wasted time and effort providing general evaluative points on the cognitive approach, and some even described and evaluated the psychodynamic approach too. Students are urged to read the question carefully and plan their response so that they answer the question set. Deviating from comparison attained no marks and led to irrelevance in the answer. Although there was an attempt by many students to provide some comparison, this was often brief and required elaboration, e.g. simply stating 'the cognitive approach focuses on cognitions whereas the main focus of the psychodynamic approach is on emotion'. This type of essay clearly highlights the need for students to spend time thinking and planning their answer; a significant number of students provided a 'pre-prepared' "describe and discuss the cognitive approach" essay which failed to gain marks beyond the A01 for knowledge.

Q3.

This question was answered well, most students referring to the overlap between social learning theory and cognitive or behaviourist approaches. A few students failed to explain the overlap and gained only 1 mark.

Q4.

This question was answered well with a number of students gaining full marks. Most students had sound knowledge of the assumptions of the humanistic approach and some

showed detailed insight into client-centred therapy and measuring techniques such as Q-sort and Personal Orientation Inventory (POI). The answers were sometimes overly descriptive and some students had difficulty providing sufficient discussion, but most accessed some points regarding the lack of scientific rigour and use of qualitative techniques, etc. Better answers compared the humanistic approach with other approaches on concepts such as 'freewill' and 'methodology' and were able to give a detailed discussion of both strengths and weaknesses of the approach. There were some valid and thoughtful comparisons with other approaches, in particular key differences between behaviourism and humanism and similarities / contrasts between humanism and the psychodynamic approach.

Q5.

This question clearly highlighted the fact that students need to plan their essays in the context of the questions asked instead of writing a pre-prepared essay. The few students who accessed the top band focused on what was unique about the approach and made thoughtful and intelligent comparisons with other approaches. Unfortunately, many students, though showing detailed knowledge and effective evaluation of the psychodynamic approach, wrote a pre-prepared "Describe and discuss" essay. Other students focused on irrelevant comparisons referring simply to Freud's unscientific approach as a unique feature, with incorrect statements such as 'case studies are unique to the psychodynamic approach' or 'the approach is unique because it is the only approach that is unscientific'. It was disappointing that students focused on the weaknesses of Freud's psychodynamic analysis rather than the theoretical aspects of the approach. Another frequently stated assertion was that the psychodynamic approach is the only approach to take account of both nature and nurture. This essay clearly emphasised the need for students to take time to carefully think about and plan their answers.

Q6.

In the main students were knowledgeable about key features of social learning theory (SLT) and many provided very detailed explanations of this with description of one or more of the Bobo doll studies. However, there were some very inaccurate descriptions of studies such as '... the group that saw the aggressive model copied the model's aggressive behaviour more than the group that did not see the aggressive model...' Some students have clearly been guided to make evaluative points about the methodology and ethical issues raised by the Bobo doll studies. Although it is commendable that students are made aware of such issues, students must be reminded always to consider whether or not these are of direct relevance to the question set. Likewise, many raised the issue of 'lack of ecological validity' although they did not explain clearly why this was the case or why this was problematic in the context of the question. Valid and thoughtful comparisons with the behaviourist and cognitive approaches were made by more successful students. Less effective answers made comparisons, but did not use these to draw out the strengths and limitations of the theory. Evaluative points were not always well developed, for example, some stated that social learning theory (SLT) was highly scientific as it made use of laboratory experiments and that SLT 'fails to take biological factors into account', with no further elaboration.