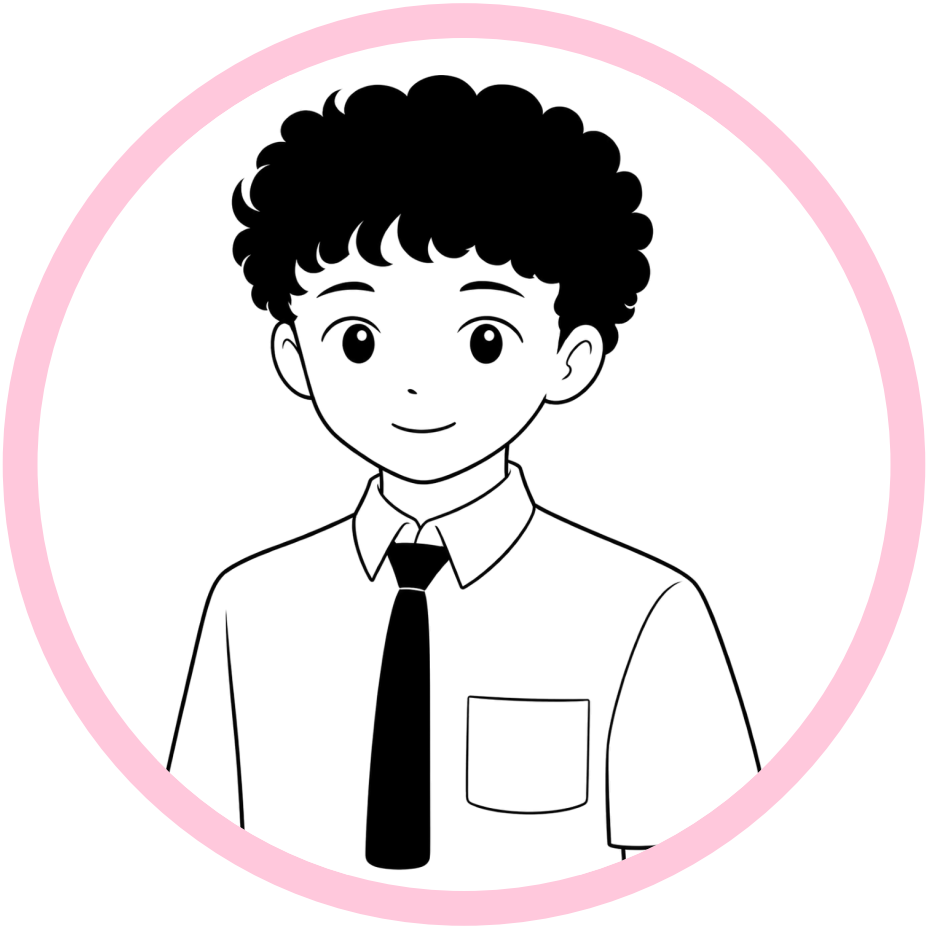
AQA A-LEVEL PSYCHOLOGY · 7182

PSYCHOLOGY



MARK SCHEME

3.2.3 CASE STUDIES

SCORE	PERCENTAGE
/35	%

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Q1.

(a) **[AO3 = 5]**

Level	Marks	Description
3	4 – 5	Evaluation of the use of case studies in psychological research is clear and accurate. There is at least one strength and one limitation, though a number of points may be presented in less detail. The answer is clear and organised. Specialist terminology is used effectively.
2	2 – 3	Evaluation of the use of case studies is limited. The answer may contain strengths or limitations, or both are presented but are lacking in detail. The answer may lack accuracy and organisation. There is some appropriate use of specialist terminology.
1	1	One evaluative point is stated but not developed, or there may be more than one but there is substantial inaccuracy. Specialist terminology is absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Likely content:

- Depth/detail of data collected – qualitative
- Validity/meaningfulness of data, insight gained
- A single anomalous case may lead to revision of a theory
- Researcher bias/subjective interpretation
- Unscientific/unreliable, cannot be replicated
- Problems of generalisation

Accept other valid points.

Application to the case of ‘Patient X’ may be present but is not essential for full marks.

(b) **[AO2 = 2]**

1 mark for the link to the MSM: this suggests that STM and LTM are separate stores/functionally different (supporting the model).

Plus

1 mark for the idea that whilst Patient X’s STM is functioning normally, he is unable to retain new info in LTM/the link between STM and LTM appears to have been cut.

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(c) **[AO2 = 4]**

2 marks for an outline of two types of LTM from the following (1 for each type):

- Episodic – memory for events/autobiographical memory
- Semantic – memory for facts/general knowledge/the rules of language
- Procedural – memory for motor skills/actions/'muscle memory'

Plus

2 marks for linking the two types to the information in the stem (1 for each type):

- Episodic – he had no recollection of ever doing the task
- Semantic – he could not remember the names of the psychologists
- Procedural – his performance improved on the rotating disc task over consecutive days

(d) **[AO3 = 4]**

Level	Marks	Description
2	3 – 4	Discussion of two differences is clear and mostly accurate. For full marks, there must be reference to both types of memory within each difference discussed. The answer is generally coherent with effective use of specialist terminology.
1	1 – 2	Discussion of two differences are both incomplete/partly accurate. For 1 mark there may be one difference briefly stated. Specialist terminology is not always used appropriately.
	0	No relevant content.

Content:

Possible differences (depends on the types of LTM chosen):

- Semantic/episodic – 'knowing that'/declarative memory; available for conscious inspection – procedural – 'knowing how'/non-declarative memory; often unavailable for conscious inspection
- Semantic – may not recall when we learned/encoded these memories – episodic – stored with reference to time and place
- Credit differences based on the durability/resistance to forgetting of different types of memory
- The fact that evidence suggests that these types of memory reside in different areas of the brain
- Credit use of evidence as part of the discussion of the differences.

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Credit other valid differences.

Do not credit differences that merely restate the definitions of both types of memory.

Q2.

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.

(a) **AO3 = 2**

A case study is an in-depth study of one person or a group of people over time. It is usually carried out in the real world. They are idiographic and very individualistic.

1 mark for a basic answer and a further mark for elaboration. Note that the answer does not have to be linked to psychopathology.

(b) **AO3 = 2**

Weakness of case study:

- Findings cannot be generalised very easily to other individuals.
- The information gathered is often based on retrospective data, which might not be accurate.
- Because it is very difficult to replicate a case study they lack reliability.
- As case studies are unique situations it is difficult to generalise (to other situations).

1 mark for a basic answer and a further mark for elaboration.
Note that the answer does not need to be linked to psychopathology.
Reference to ethical issues are not creditworthy.

Q3.

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:

- 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.

(a) **AO3 = 2**

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Confidentiality could be maintained by making sure individuals are not identifiable when reporting the case study. This could be done by using a different name or initials, avoid publishing details of address, schools etc.

1 mark for identification of a relevant way.
2nd mark for some elaboration (which could be an example) or for identification of a second way of maintaining confidentiality.

(b) **AO2 = 2**

Psychologists may use psychological tests eg IQ testing. They could observe his behaviour in different situations. They might interview people, such as family members, to find out the circumstances of his early life.

1 mark for simply naming any appropriate techniques such as IQ test, observation or interviews.
2nd mark for some elaboration.

(c) **AO3 = 4**

The main limitation is that each individual, and their experience, is unique and the results cannot therefore be generalised to others. Evidence from an individual's past may be difficult to verify.
Researchers may get to know the individual well, which may lead to loss of objectivity.

Although description of specific case studies is not relevant, candidates may refer to examples as part of and explanation of limitations.

AO3 Knowledge of limitations of case studies
4 marks Accurate and reasonably detailed Accurate and reasonably detailed answer that demonstrates sound knowledge of at least one limitation.
3 marks Less detailed but generally accurate Less detailed but generally accurate answer that demonstrates relevant knowledge of at least one limitation.
2 marks Basic Basic answer that demonstrates some relevant knowledge of one or more limitations, but lacks detail and may be muddled.
1 mark Very brief / flawed Very brief or flawed answer demonstrating very little knowledge of limitations.
0 marks No creditworthy material.

Q4.

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)

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- AO3 evaluation, analysis, interpretation.

(a) **AO2 = 4**

As Luca was in a poor quality orphanage for four years cognitive impairment is likely. Answers could also refer to Bowlby's MDH and possible consequences such as affectionless psychopathy and problems with later relationships. Reactive attachment disorder and physical effects would also be relevant.

1 mark or 2 marks for identification of possible negative effect(s), eg Luca may have problems forming relationships. [1 mark for identifying one negative effect, 2 marks for identifying two or more.]
Up to 2 additional marks for some elaboration of two or more effects or a more detailed elaboration of one effect.

(b) **AO3 = 4**

Strengths
Rich data, high ecological validity, investigates a situation which could not be set up for ethical reasons.

Limitations
Selection from large amounts of data may lead to observer bias.
Findings from one individual can't be generalised to others.

1 mark each for identification of a strength / limitation. Second mark for some elaboration.
For example, an advantage of a case study is that it provides lots of detail (1 mark). This gives great depth and understanding of this single individual (2 marks).

Q2.

Interestingly, students seemed to find it easier to outline a weakness of case studies rather than explain what they are. There was a wide range of answers to (a) and better answers referred to a study of a single person, usually over a period of time, using a range of methods to collect data. Some students also illustrated their answers with relevant examples, such as Freud's Anna O or Little Hans.

Most students were able to offer lack of population validity, since a case study was of a unique person; or the issue of reliability since they could not be replicated.

Q3.

(a) There were many appropriate suggestions for maintaining confidentiality, such as using pseudonyms, avoiding using photographs and avoiding identifying the location of the case study participant and / or family. A few candidates did not seem to understand the term confidentiality as some answers were based on other ethical issues eg protection of participants from harm.

(b) Most techniques identified were appropriate and there was some thoughtful elaboration related to the case study. Answers referring to the use of meta-analysis were not appropriate.

(c) Many candidates scored at least two marks, usually by focusing on the uniqueness of a case study and the limited possibility for generalisation. A few candidates could elaborate on this whilst others considered a second factor such as the difficulty of verifying evidence from the past. Answers focusing on limitations due to the time involved in longitudinal research were not credited as many case studies are not longitudinal.

Q4.

(a) This question was well answered when candidates focused on two or three possible negative effects which could apply to Luca. Sometimes effects were just listed with no elaboration. In other cases, research into effects of institutionalisation was described with insufficient application to Luca.

(b) Some candidates got confused with longitudinal and observational research and gave answers that did not apply to a case study at all.