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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

PSYCHOLOGY **9990/42**

Paper 4 Specialist Options: Application and Research Methods **February/March 2026**

1 hour 30 minutes

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You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **five** questions in total:
  - Answer questions from **two** options.
    - Section A: answer **four** questions.
    - Section B: answer **one** question.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 60.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Section A

Answer questions from **two** options in this section.

Clinical Psychology

Answer **all** questions if you have studied this option.

1 From the key study by Freeman et al. (2003) on virtual reality and persecutory ideation:

(a) Identify **four** features of the sample of participants used in this study. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** reason why clinical patients were **not** used as participants in this study. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using participants that were paid to take part in this study on virtual reality and persecutory ideation. [4]

2 **(a)** Identify **two** features of the treatment of imaginal desensitisation for impulse control disorders. [2]

(b) Suggest how pyromania can be treated, other than by imaginal desensitisation. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using imaginal desensitisation to treat pyromania. [4]

Consumer Psychology

Answer **all** questions if you have studied this option.

3 The study by Hall et al. (2010) on choice blindness used 10-point scales to measure different variables.

(a) Outline **two** of the variables these 10-point scales measured. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** open question that could be used to measure **one** of these variables. [2]

(c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using 10-point scales in this study. [4]

4 **(a)** Identify **two** functions of slogans. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** way in which the effectiveness of a slogan could be measured. [2]

(c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of the measurement you suggested in **4(b)**. [4]

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Health Psychology

Answer **all** questions if you have studied this option.

5 From the key study by Yokley and Glenwick (1984) on improving medical adherence using community interventions:

(a) Identify the **four** experimental groups used in this study. [4]

(b) Suggest why control groups were included in this study. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using postal questionnaires to collect data about immunising children. [4]

6 **(a)** Outline the treatment of 'acupuncture' to manage and control pain. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** psychological treatment that could be used to manage the acute pain of toothache. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using acupuncture to manage pain. [4]

Organisational Psychology

Answer **all** questions if you have studied this option.

7 From the key study by Swat (1997) on monitoring accidents and risk events:

(a) Outline **two** conclusions from the study. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** reason why the data gathered on the type of accidents may **not** be accurate. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of conducting longitudinal studies on accidents and risk events. [4]

8 Stages of group development have been proposed, for example Tuckman and Jensen (2010).

(a) Outline **one** stage of group development, other than the storming stage. [2]

(b) Suggest **two** behavioural categories that could be included in a structured observation of the storming stage. [2]

(c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using a structured observation to investigate the storming stage of group development. [4]

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Section B

Answer **one** question from this section.

Clinical Psychology

9 **(a)** Plan a study using an **interview** to investigate the long-term effectiveness of antipsychotic drugs in patients with schizophrenia.

Your plan must include details about:

- sampling technique
- interview format. [10]

(b) For **one** piece of psychological knowledge on which your plan is based:

(i) Describe this psychological knowledge. [4]

(ii) Explain how you used **two** features of this psychological knowledge to plan your study. [4]

(c) **(i)** Explain **one** reason for your choice of sampling technique. [2]

(ii) Explain **one** weakness with your choice of sampling technique. [2]

(iii) Explain **one** reason for your choice of interview format. [2]

Consumer Psychology

10 **(a)** Plan a study using an **online questionnaire** to investigate which consumer decision-making strategy people use when shopping on the internet for clothes.

Your plan must include details about:

- question format
- sample of participants. [10]

(b) For **one** piece of psychological knowledge on which your plan is based:

(i) Describe this psychological knowledge. [4]

(ii) Explain how you used **two** features of this psychological knowledge to plan your study. [4]

(c) **(i)** Explain **one** reason for your choice of question format. [2]

(ii) Explain **one** weakness of using an online questionnaire in your study. [2]

(iii) Explain **one** reason for your choice of sample of participants. [2]

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Health Psychology

11 **(a)** Plan a study using a **controlled observation** to investigate the effectiveness of mirror treatment for phantom limb pain.

Your plan must include details about:

- location of the study
- behavioural categories. [10]

(b) For **one** piece of psychological knowledge on which your plan is based:

(i) Describe this psychological knowledge. [4]

(ii) Explain how you used **two** features of this psychological knowledge to plan your study. [4]

(c) **(i)** Explain **one** reason for your choice of location for your study. [2]

(ii) Explain **one** weakness with your choice of location. [2]

(iii) Explain **one** reason for using behavioural categories in your study. [2]

Organisational Psychology

12 **(a)** Plan a study using a **semi-structured interview** to investigate which type of bullying is most common in a food factory.

Your plan must include details about:

- question format
- analysis of data. [10]

(b) For **one** piece of psychological knowledge on which your plan is based:

(i) Describe this psychological knowledge. [4]

(ii) Explain how you used **two** features of this psychological knowledge to plan your study. [4]

(c) **(i)** Explain **one** reason for your choice of question format. [2]

(ii) Explain **one** weakness with your choice of question format. [2]

(iii) Explain **one** reason for the way you chose to analyse your data. [2]

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