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CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International AS & A Level

PSYCHOLOGY **9990/42**

Paper 4 Specialist Options: Application and Research Methods **May/June 2026**

1 hour 30 minutes

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 Lovell et al. (2006) on the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD):

(a) Describe the procedure for the participants receiving telephone administered behaviour therapy. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** reason why a therapist might **not** find 'telephone therapy' satisfactory. [2]

(c) Explain **two** strengths of using telephone administered behaviour therapy to treat obsessive-compulsive disorder. [4]

2 **(a)** Outline **one** type of delusion. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** way that delusions could be investigated, other than using open questions. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using open questions to investigate the delusions people experience. [4]

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Consumer Psychology

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

3 From the key study by North et al. (2003) on musical style and restaurant customers' spending:

(a) Identify **four** features of the music that were consistent throughout the study. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** dependent variable that could be used to measure the effect of different types of music on the ambience of a restaurant. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using a field experiment to investigate musical style and restaurant customers' spending. [4]

4 **(a)** Explain what is meant by the term 'post-purchase cognitive dissonance', using an example. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** way in which post-purchase cognitive dissonance could be reduced by the person selling the product. [2]

(c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using closed questions to investigate the experience of post-purchase cognitive dissonance. [4]

Health Psychology

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

5 From the key study by Shoshani and Steinmetz (2014) on using positive psychology in schools to improve mental health:

(a) Outline how this study used both repeated measures and independent measures experimental designs. [4]

(b) Suggest **one** reason why it was important for this study to use a longitudinal design. [2]

(c) Explain **one** reason why generalisations can be made from this study and **one** reason why generalisations **cannot** be made from this study. [4]

6 **(a)** Outline what is meant by acute pain, using an example. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** way that a biochemical treatment can be used to treat acute pain. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses of using biochemical treatments to treat acute pain. [4]

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Organisational Psychology

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

7 From the key study on applying self-determination theory to motivational rewards by Landry et al. (2019):

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

(b) Suggest **one** location where this study could be conducted that would improve application to everyday life. [2]

(c) Explain **two** weaknesses with the sample of participants used in this study. [4]

8 **(a)** Identify **two** types of bullying behaviour at work. [2]

(b) Suggest **one** way that bullying behaviour at work could be investigated, other than using a face-to-face interview. [2]

(c) Explain **one** strength and **one** weakness of using a face-to-face interview to investigate bullying at work. [4]

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Section B

Answer **one** question from this section.

Clinical Psychology

9 **(a)** Plan an **experiment** with a **longitudinal design** to investigate the effectiveness of exposure and response prevention (ERP) for obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

Your plan must include details about:

- frequency/interval of testing
- type 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 experiment. [4]

(c) **(i)** Explain **one** reason for your choice of frequency/interval of testing. [2]

(ii) Explain **one** weakness with your choice of frequency/interval of testing. [2]

(iii) Explain **one** reason for your choice of type of data. [2]

Consumer Psychology

10 **(a)** Plan a study using a **face-to-face interview** to investigate gender differences in reasons for store choice.

Your plan must include details about:

- location of the study
- question 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 location for your study. [2]

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

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

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Health Psychology

11 **(a)** Plan a study using a **telephone interview** to gather data about differences in the way that men and women describe pain.

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** strength of using a telephone interview in your study. [2]

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

Organisational Psychology

12 **(a)** Plan an **experiment** to investigate the effectiveness of performance monitoring to reduce social loafing in employees.

Your plan must include details about:

- controls
- dependent variable. [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 experiment. [4]

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

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

(iii) Explain **one** reason for your choice of dependent variable. [2]

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