

Mark Scheme
(Pre-Standardisation) Summer 2026

Pearson Edexcel International Advanced Subsidiary level In Psychology
Biological Psychology, Learning Theories and Development
WPS02/01

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Section A

Question Number	Answer	Mark
1(a)	**AO1 (2 marks)** Credit **one** mark for each accurate statement. For example: • Raine et al. (1997) aimed to see if there were brain differences between those who pleaded not guilty by reasons of insanity (NGRIs) and a control group of non-murderers (1). • One aim was to see if other brain areas which have been implicated in psychiatric conditions, such as the caudate, were no different between NGRIs and the control group (1) **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
1(b)	**AO1 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification of a conclusion (AO1). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the conclusion (AO3). For example: • Raine et al. (1997) concluded that reduced activity in the bilateral prefrontal cortex was a cause of aggression in those pleading not guilty by reasons of insanity (NGRIs) (1), as they found that the NGRIs had lower glucose metabolism in the bilateral prefrontal cortex compared to the non-murderers (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
1(c)	**AO1 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for accurate identification of a strength (AO1). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the strength (AO3). For example: • The control group was matched to the not guilty by reasons of insanity group (NGRI) in terms of age, gender and factors such as brain injury increasing validity (1), as Raine et al. (1997) can be more certain that it was differences in brain activity which led to the violence rather than other factors such as differences in brain injury (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
2(a)	**AO2 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for a closed question in relation to the scenario. For example: • How many sweets does your child eat in a day? 0, 1, 2, 3 + (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points. Generic** **answers score 0 marks.**	**(1)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
2(b)	**AO2 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for identification of a weakness in relation to the scenario (AO2). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the weakness (AO3). For example: • As Hikaru used a volunteer sampling technique only those parents who thought their child was not very aggressive may have replied to him by email and his sample may be biased (1), so his results may not be representative of the effect sugar has on aggression and may not be generalisable due to a biased sample (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points. Generic** **answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
2(c)	**AO2 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for identification of an ethical issue in relation to the scenario (AO2). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the ethical issue (AO3). For example: • As Hikaru is investigating aggression in children, he must make sure that the children cannot be identified and keep their data confidential (1), he can do this by giving each questionnaire its own unique number and removing any details such as the parents email address to maintain the privacy of the children (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

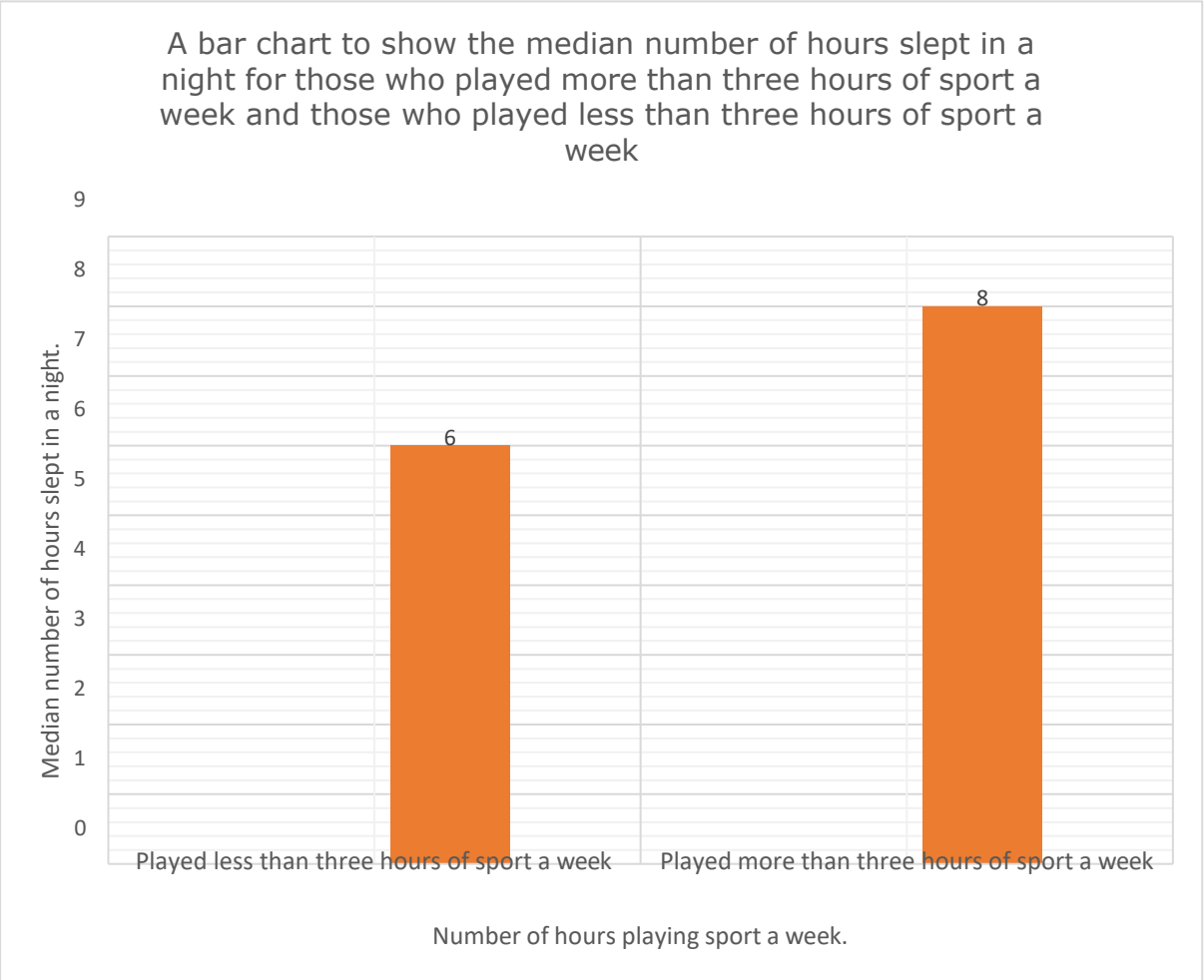
Question Number	Answer	Mark
2(d)	**AO2 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for accurate use of the data (AO2). Credit **one** mark for a conclusion (AO3). For example: • The children who had 30 grams or more of sugar a day demonstrated 7 more aggressive acts a week on average (1), so it can be concluded that the amount of sugar children eat does affect the number of aggressive acts they demonstrate in a week (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
2(e)	**AO2 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for identification of an improvement in relation to the scenario (AO2). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the improvement (AO3). For example: • Hikaru could have gathered parents from a variety of sources, such as schools, and playgroups rather than just one parenting website (1), which would make his sample more representative of all parents including those not on parenting websites so his results would be more generalisable (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
3(a)	**AO2 (3 marks).** Credit up to **three** marks for an accurate description in relation to the scenario. For example: • If the pre-frontal cortex is damaged, then Shaima may not be able to delay gratifying her impulses and so becomes aggressive when she cannot borrow her sister's clothes (1). When the amygdala is stimulated, we go into fight or flight mode, so Shaima became aggressive if she goes into fight mode when she was bumped into by a stranger (1). If damaged the amygdala may misinterpret a situation as threatening when it is not, so leading to aggressive behaviour such as Shaima shouting at her teacher (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(3)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
3(b)	**AO2 (2 marks), AO3 (2 marks)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification of a strength and a weakness in relation to the scenario (AO2). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the strength and the weakness (AO3). For example: Strength • Holtz et al. (2023) found that those with disruptive behavioural disorders (DBDs), such as Shaima shouting at a teacher, had differences in the development of brain structures such as the amygdala (1), as they found there was higher age-related activity in the amygdala compared to controls who did not have DBDs so it is a credible explanation of why Shaima may shout at her teacher (1). Weakness. • Brain functioning as an explanation of Shaima's aggression can be said to be reductionist as it ignores other factors such as the effect of nurture on her kicking a wall when she cannot borrow her sisters' clothes (1), as social learning theory would argue that aggression is due to imitating the aggressive behaviour of our role models so Shaima may have seen her sister kick a wall in anger previously (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(4)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
4(a)	**AO2 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification in relation to the scenario. For example: • The independent variable (IV) is whether the participants played less than three hours of sport a week or more than three hours of sport a week (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(1)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
4(b)	**AO2 (3 marks)** **One** mark for an appropriate title **One** mark for correct labelling of axes **One** mark for correct plots  **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(3)**

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Question Number	Indicative content	Mark
5	**AO1 (4 marks), AO3 (4 marks)** **AO1** • Exposure to excess testosterone whilst in the womb can affect the developing brain of the foetus which may lead to an increase in aggression. • After birth testosterone sensitises some neural circuits and may stimulate cell growth in the amygdala which can lead to aggression. • Low levels of cortisol can lead to an under aroused autonomic nervous system so people may be aggressive to increase arousal. • Adrenaline when released activates the flight or fight response, with the fight response leading to an increase in aggression. **AO3** • Calvete and Orue (2024) found that adolescents with high testosterone and cortisol or low testosterone and cortisol responded with more aggressive behaviours when peers provoked or victimised them. • Brendgen et al. (2005) found that genes and environment both played a part in physical and social aggression, so hormones are not a complete explanation of aggression. • The study of hormones and aggression is scientific as it is empirical, as levels of hormones and aggressive acts can be directly observed, making it a credible explanation of aggression. • Cerda-Molina et al. (2023) found that testosterone was not linked to aggression in stump tail macaques during times of social stability, so testosterone seems to interact with the environments when it comes to aggressive behaviours. **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(8)**

Level	Mark	Descriptor
AO1 (4 marks), AO3 (4 marks) Candidates must demonstrate an equal emphasis between knowledge and understanding vs evaluation/conclusion in their answer.		
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1-2 Marks	Demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge and understanding. (AO1) A conclusion may be presented, but will be generic and the supporting evidence will be limited. Limited attempt to address the question. (AO3)
Level 2	3-4 Marks	Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Candidates will produce statements with some development in the form of mostly accurate and relevant factual material, leading to a superficial conclusion being made. (AO3)
Level 3	5-6 Marks	Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Arguments developed using mostly coherent chains of reasoning leading to a conclusion being presented. Candidates will demonstrate a grasp of competing arguments but evaluation may be imbalanced. (AO3)
Level 4	7-8 Marks	Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Displays a well-developed and logical evaluation, containing logical chains of reasoning throughout. Demonstrates an awareness of competing arguments, presenting a balanced conclusion. (AO3)

Section B.

Question Number	Answer	Mark
6(a)	**AO1 (4 marks)** Credit up to **four** marks for an accurate description. For example: • Imitation involves being able to copy the actions of a role model when the circumstances allow (1). A behaviour is demonstrated by a role model that the observer looks up to because they are similar to the role model (1). If the observer puts the actions needed to perform the behaviour into their memory, they have retained the behaviour (1). The behaviour will be imitated if the observer is motivated to do so, which could be due to seeing the role model rewarded for their behaviour (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(4)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
6(b)	**AO1 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark).** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification of a strength (AO1). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the strength (AO3). For example: • Bandura, Ross and Ross (1961) support the idea that children will imitate the aggressive behaviour of adults giving the theory credibility (1), as they found that those children who saw a male aggressive model performed 33 mean imitative acts compared to only 3.2 in the control group (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
7(a)	**AO2 (2 marks)** Credit up to **two** marks for an accurate description in relation to the scenario. For example: • Magnus used an independent groups design as he went to two different factories to see the effects of rewards on work rate (1). He investigated workers at two different factories where one factory gave a paid hour off work at the end of the month and the other gave no reward, so each worker was in only one condition (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.** **Generic answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

<table>
<tr><th>Question Number</th><th>Answer</th><th>Mark</th></tr>
<tr><td>7(b)</td><td>
AO2 (4 marks)

Credit one mark for correct completion of O-E column to two decimal places.
Credit one mark for accurate completion of (O-E)^2 column to two decimal places.
Credit one mark for accurate completion of (O-E)^2/E column to two decimal places.
Credit one mark for correct chi-squared to two decimal places = 43.26

For example:
<table>
<tr><th></th><th></th><th>Observed</th><th>Expected</th><th>O-E</th><th>(O-E)^2</th><th>(O-E)^2/E</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Factory gave paid hour off work at the end of the month as a reward</td><td>Sewed extra clothes every day</td><td>35</td><td>19</td><td>16</td><td>256</td><td>13.47</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sewed the correct number of clothes every day</td><td>17</td><td>33.5</td><td>-16.5</td><td>272.25</td><td>8.13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sewed fewer clothes every day</td><td>9</td><td>8.5</td><td>0.5</td><td>0.25</td><td>0.03</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Factory gave no reward at the end of the month</td><td>Sewed extra clothes every day</td><td>3</td><td>19</td><td>-16</td><td>256</td><td>13.47</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sewed the correct number of clothes every day</td><td>50</td><td>33.5</td><td>16.5</td><td>272.25</td><td>8.13</td></tr>
<tr><td>Sewed fewer clothes every day</td><td>8</td><td>8.5</td><td>-0.5</td><td>0.25</td><td>0.03</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Look for other reasonable marking points.</td><td colspan="2">Chi squared =</td><td>43.26</td></tr>
</table>
</td><td>(4)</td></tr>
</table>

Question Number	Answer	Mark
7(c)	**AO2 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for identification of an improvement in relation to the scenario (AO2). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the improvement (AO3). For example: • Magnus could have gone to different types of factories that produced other goods not just clothes (1), which would make his results about the effects of rewards on work rates more representative of different types of work so they would be more generalisable (1). **Look for other reasonable answers. Generic** **answers score 0 marks.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
8(a)	**AO1 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate statement of an aim. For example: • Watson and Rayner (1920) wanted to see if a fear of rats could be classically conditioned into a young child (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(1)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
8(b)	**AO1 (3 marks)** Credit up to **three** marks for an accurate description. For example: • Watson and Rayner (1920) conducted emotional tests on Little Albert when he was nine months old by presenting him with a variety of stimuli, such as a white rat (1). When Little Albert was eleven months old Watson and Rayner presented Little Albert with a white rat, and at the same time hit a metal bar with a hammer (1). A few days after presenting only the rat Watson and Rayner presented Little Albert with similar stimuli, such as a white rabbit or a dog (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(3)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
8(c)	**AO1 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification of a weakness (AO1). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the weakness (AO3). For example: • Watson and Rayner (1920) could be deemed to be unethical as they deliberately caused distress to Little Albert (1), as shown by the fact he eventually cried when he saw the white rat and tried to move away (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
9(a)	**AO1 (4 marks)** Credit up to **four** marks for an accurate description. For example: • Observations involve a researcher defining what behaviours the psychologist is investigating and creating a tally chart to record their data (1). The observation may be conducted in a structured environment where the situation is set up so the behaviours are more likely to be observed, such as in Bandura's studies (1). A covert observation is when the participants do not know they are being observed as the researcher is hidden (1). The researcher may become part of the group being observed to get a more detailed understanding of the group's behaviour (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(4)**

Question Number	Answer	Mark
9(b)	**AO1 (1 mark), AO3 (1 mark)** Credit **one** mark for an accurate identification of a strength (AO1). Credit **one** mark for justification/exemplification of the strength (AO3). For example: • If the observation is covert the participants' behaviour will not be affected by the presence of a researcher as they do not know they are being observed (1), so the results will be more valid as the behaviour of the participants will be more natural and realistic of everyday life (1). **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(2)**

Question Number	Indicative content	Mark
10	**AO1 (4 marks), AO2 (4 marks)** **AO1** • Operant conditioning works on the principle that if a behaviour is reinforced then that behaviour is more likely to be repeated. • Positive reinforcement is receiving a desired object as a reward for performing a desired behaviour. • Positive reinforcement can be primary and satisfy a basic need, or secondary and allow access to something that satisfies a basic need. • Punishment involves giving something undesirable and will discourage an undesired behaviour but does not encourage the desired behaviour. **AO2** • Shakira is reinforcing one group of children by praising them for their dancing, so they quickly learnt the dance routine. • The children who have learnt the dance have been positively reinforced as they are receiving stickers which they want. • The piece of food the children get after collecting four stickers is a primary reinforcer as it satisfies the basic need of hunger. • The children who have not learnt the dance are being punished by Shakira shouting at them, which may stop them making the same mistakes but does not teach them the right dance moves. **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(8)**

Level	Mark	Descriptor
AO1 (4 marks), AO2 (4 marks) Candidates must demonstrate an equal emphasis between knowledge and understanding vs application in their answer.		
	0	No rewardable material
Level 1	1–2 Marks	Demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Provides little or no reference to relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures). (AO2)
Level 2	3–4 Marks	Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Discussion is partially developed, but is imbalanced or superficial occasionally supported through the application of relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures). (AO2)
Level 3	5–6 Marks	Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Arguments developed using mostly coherent chains of reasoning. Candidates will demonstrate a grasp of competing arguments but discussion may be imbalanced or contain superficial material supported by applying relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures (AO2)
Level 4	7–8 Marks	Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Displays a well-developed and logical balanced discussion, containing logical chains of reasoning. Demonstrates a thorough awareness of competing arguments supported throughout by sustained application of relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques or procedures). (AO2)

Section C

Question Number	Indicative content	Mark
11	**AO1 (4 marks), AO2 (4 marks), AO3 (4 marks)** **AO1** • The sleep-wake cycle is a circadian rhythm as it lasts 24 hours. • The suprachiasmatic nucleus (SCN) detects how light or dark the environment is through information from the optic nerve. • When it is dark the SCN causes the production of melatonin as it stimulates the pineal gland. • The SCN regulates body temperature on a 24-hour cycle, lowering it at night time and increasing it at day time. **AO2** • Liesel's sleep-wake cycle has not adjusted to her new 24-hour schedule which is why she is tired at work. • When Liesel is trying to sleep in the morning it is light outside, so her SCN detects the light affecting her sleep. • Because it is dark outside when Liesel is at work her pineal gland is producing melatonin making her tired. • Liesel's body temperature has not adjusted to her working shifts, so it is high in the afternoon which is why she wakes up in the middle of the afternoon. **AO3** • Knowing what affects our internal pacemakers means Liesel can do things to help her sleep, such as use blackout curtains in the daytime to stimulate the production of melatonin showing the role of internal pacemakers has good application. • Skeldon et al. (2023) found that the preferred sleep timing of individuals is due to both internal pacemakers and external factors such as exposure to light patterns, so internal pacemakers on their own do not account for Liesel's sleep-wake cycle. • Ralph et al. (1990) found that hamsters changed to a 21-hour sleep wake cycle when the SCN of hamsters that naturally had a 21-hour cycle were implanted into their brains, showing that internal pacemakers do affect our sleep-wake cycle. • A lot of research on humans and the sleep-wake cycle uses case studies, such as Siffre (1975), so the results may only be true for the participants not Liesel, so limiting how generalisable the findings about the sleep-wake cycle are. **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	**(12)**

Level	Mark	Descriptor
AO1 (4 marks), AO2 (4 marks), AO3 (4 marks) Candidates must demonstrate an equal emphasis between knowledge and understanding vs assessment/conclusion in their answer. Application to the context is capped at maximum 4 marks.		
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3 Marks	Demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Provides little or no reference to relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures). (AO2) Generic assertions may be presented. Limited attempt to address the question. (AO3)
Level 2	4–6 Marks	Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Line(s) of argument occasionally supported through the application of relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures). (AO2) Candidates will produce statements with some development in the form of mostly accurate and relevant factual material, leading to a generic or superficial assessment being presented. (AO3)
Level 3	7–9 Marks	Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Line(s) of argument supported by applying relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures). Might demonstrate the ability to integrate and synthesise relevant knowledge. (AO2) Arguments developed using mostly coherent chains of reasoning. leading to an assessment being presented which considers a range of factors. Candidates will demonstrate understanding of competing arguments/factors but unlikely to grasp their significance. The assessment leads to a judgement but this may be imbalanced. (AO3)
Level 4	10–12 Marks	Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Line(s) of argument supported throughout by sustained application of relevant evidence from the context (scientific ideas, processes, techniques or procedures). Demonstrates the ability to integrate and synthesise relevant knowledge. (AO2) Displays a well-developed and logical assessment, containing logical chains of reasoning throughout. Demonstrates an awareness of the significance of competing arguments/factors leading to a balanced judgement being presented. (AO3)

Question Number	Indicative content	Mark
12	**AO1 (6 marks), AO3 (10 marks)** **AO1** • Light therapy is used by people who have seasonal affective disorder (SAD), where they sit in front of a light box for 30 to 60 minutes a day. • The light box should be about 41 to 61 centimeters away from the face and should emit 10,000 lux. • If a dawn simulator is used then the light will gradually increase in order to represent the start of the day. • Systematic desensitisation is an exposure therapy that is used to help people who have phobias through associating the phobic object with relaxation. • At the beginning of the therapy the therapist will conduct a functional analysis to determine what triggers the phobia and how it presents in the client. • The client will learn relaxation techniques before gradually moving up their hierarchy of fear until they are relaxed. **AO3** • Golden et al. (2005) found that light therapy is an effective treatment for both seasonal affective disorder and non-seasonal depression. • Light therapy is a reductionist therapy as it focuses on infradian rhythms and the effect of light, it ignores social factors that may affect seasonal affective disorder, such as being more isolated during the winter months. • Light therapy is not effective for everyone with SAD as people who have eye problems cannot use it as it can make their eye problems worse. • Costello et al. (2023) found that light therapy influenced brain functioning including in terms of neuroplasticity, and this caused a change in behaviours associated with SAD, showing it is an effective treatment. • Psychoanalytic therapies would argue that neither light therapy nor systematic desensitisation get to the root cause of the problem so neither would be a permanent cure for the issue. • Both systematic desensitisation and light therapy are quick therapies compared to other alternatives such as object relations therapy, so they are better for those who need an improvement in a short period of time. • Systematic desensitisation is primarily used for the treatment of phobias so it is a limited treatment as it cannot treat other disorders such as schizophrenia.	**(16)**

	• Egara and Mosimege (2024) found that systematic desensitisation did reduce anxiety over mathematics and increase performance in Nigerian students. • Capafóns et al. (1998) found that systematic desensitisation did reduce fear of flying showing that it is an effective treatment of phobias. • If phobias are caused by an imbalance in neurotransmitters, then systematic desensitisation will not cure phobias as it does not change the imbalance in the neurotransmitters. **Look for other reasonable marking points.**	

Level	Mark	Descriptor
AO1 (6 marks), AO3 (10 marks) Candidates must demonstrate a greater emphasis on evaluation/conclusion vs knowledge and understanding in their answer. Knowledge & understanding is capped at maximum 6 marks.		
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1-4 Marks	Demonstrates isolated elements of knowledge and understanding. (AO1) A conclusion may be presented, but will be generic and the supporting evidence will be limited. Limited attempt to address the question. (AO3)
Level 2	5-8 Marks	Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Candidates will produce statements with some development in the form of mostly accurate and relevant factual material, leading to a superficial conclusion being made. (AO3)
Level 3	9-12 Marks	Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Arguments developed using mostly coherent chains of reasoning, leading to a conclusion being presented. Candidates will demonstrate a grasp of competing arguments but evaluation may be imbalanced. (AO3)
Level 4	13-16 Marks	Demonstrates accurate and thorough knowledge and understanding. (AO1) Displays a well-developed and logical evaluation, containing logical chains of reasoning throughout. Demonstrates an awareness of competing arguments, presenting a balanced conclusion. (AO3)