

AQA
YEAR 2 A-LEVEL
Psychology

**BRILLIANT MODEL
ANSWERS**

Forensic Psychology

- ✓ Provides the key knowledge and skills for exam success
- ✓ All types of questions covered
- ✓ Grade A/A* model answers
- ✓ Written by examiners

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psychology exam!*



Nicholas Alexandros Savva

psychologyzone.co.uk

Proven exam
success

Written by
examiners

Concise, detailed and
clearly written model answers

Brilliant Model Answers

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Email us for further information:

info@psychologyzone.co.uk

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Please note: this book is not endorsed by or affiliated to the AQA exam board.

Important information

 *Do not skip this page!*

■ Isn't the exam supposed to be unpredictable?

This guide is part of Psychologyzone's *Brilliant Model Answers* series covering A-level Psychology. Use it alongside the Psychologyzone series Brilliant Exam Notes to get the best out of your learning.

This guide to the 'Forensic Psychology' topic provides a full set of exam-style questions and model answers to help you do well in the exam. After all, your Psychology exam is based on answering questions – what better than to have a book that already has the answers for you?

The exam board has deliberately developed the A-level Psychology specification so that the questions are to some extent 'unpredictable' in order to discourage students from attempting to rote-learn (memorise answers) using pre-prepared questions. This makes it difficult to predict what's going to be asked.

We have tried to make the unpredictable 'predictable'.

There are over 90 model answers in this book. We have covered most of the different types of question they can ask you for each topic on the specification. You can adapt the model answers provided to most types of questions set in the exam.

■ Some of your model answers seem very long. Why?

Some of the answers are much longer responses than you would need to write in the exam to get top marks. **This is deliberate.** We have written them this way to enable you to have a better understanding of the theories, concepts, studies, and so on. If you do not write as much as we have, don't panic! You don't need all of the content to achieve a good grade.

As you may be using this as a study book, we thought we'd write the model answers in a way that means you can also revise from them, so we sometimes expand on explanations or give an example to help you understand a topic better.

Many of the model answers start by repeating the question; in the real exam you don't need to waste time doing this – just get stuck in!

Remember: in your exam, your answers will be marked according to how well you demonstrate the set assessment objectives (AOs). We have tried to provide model responses that show you how to meet these AOs. Each example provides you with 'indicative content' – in other words, the response gives you an idea of points you could make to achieve maximum marks. It doesn't mean these are points you must make! The purpose of these model answers is to inspire you and demonstrate the standard required to achieve top marks.

Exam skills

■ How will my answers be assessed?

Your teachers will have explained that your answers in the examination will be assessed on what examiners call **assessment objectives (AO)**. If you can familiarise yourself with these AOs, this will help you write more effective answers and achieve a higher grade in your exam. There are three assessment objectives: **AO1**, **AO2** and **AO3**.

By now, your teachers should have given you a lot of practice exam questions and techniques for how to answer them. The aim of this book is not to teach you these skills, but to show you how it's done – to model the answers for you.

Just to remind you, below are the AQA assessment objectives:

AO1 Knowledge and understanding

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

What does this mean?

The ability to describe psychological theories, concepts, research studies (e.g., aim, procedures, findings and conclusions) and key terms. The exam questions can cover anything that is named on the specification.

Example

Explain the process of synaptic transmission. **[5 marks]**

Outline the role of the somatosensory centre in the brain. **[3 marks]**

AO2 Application

Apply knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures:

- in a theoretical context
- in a practical context
- when handling qualitative data
- when handling quantitative data.

What does this mean?

Application questions require you to apply what you have learnt about in Psychology (theories, concepts and studies) to a scenario (situation) often referred to as 'stem' material. A scenario will be a text extract or quote given in the question. You are treated as a psychologist, and you need to explain what is going on in the situation from what you have learnt.

Example

Chris suffered a stroke to the left hemisphere of his brain, damaging Broca's area and the motor cortex. Using your knowledge of the functions of Broca's area and the motor cortex, describe the problems that Chris is likely to experience. **[4 marks]**

A02 Evaluation

Analyse, interpret and evaluate scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to:

- make judgements and reach conclusions
- develop and refine practical design and procedures.

What does this mean?

Evaluation simply means assessing the 'value' (hence 'evaluation') of a theory or study you have been describing. There are many ways you can evaluate theories or studies. For students, evaluation often takes the form of the strengths and weaknesses of the theory and/or study, but evaluation can also be in a form of 'commentary' (neither strength nor weakness but more in the form of an 'analysis', which is still an evaluation).

Example

Outline one strength and one limitation of post-mortem examination.

[2 marks + 2 marks]

What are the different types of exam questions?

We have grouped the exam questions into four different types:

Identification questions	Multiple-choice questions, match key words with a definition, tick boxes, or place information in some order or in a box.
Short-response questions	Questions worth up to 6 marks (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 marks). These are often questions asking you to 'outline', 'explain', or 'evaluate' a theory or a study.
Application questions	These require you to apply the psychological knowledge you have learnt (theories, concepts, and studies) to a real-life scenario given in the exam question.
Long-response question	These questions require longer answers and are worth over 6 marks (8, 12 or 16 marks). The long-response answers found in this book will be mainly for 16 mark questions.

How are the model answers structured?

We have tried to structure your learning by breaking down the model answers into four distinct categories:

Key terms, concepts, and theories that are named on the AQA specification are covered by the identification and short-response questions (e.g. explain what is meant by the term...).

Research questions asking you to outline a study, describe a theory or give an evaluation are covered by short-response questions (e.g. briefly outline one study that has...).

Application questions require you to apply your knowledge to a made-up scenario (situation) and are covered under application questions.

Essay questions 'Outline and evaluate', or 'Discuss'-type questions are covered under long-response questions. Some long-response questions also require the application of knowledge.

Specification: Forensic psychology

Forensic psychology

AQA

- Offender profiling: the top-down approach, including organised and disorganised types of offender; the bottom-up approach, including investigative Psychology; geographical profiling.
- Biological explanations of offending behaviour: an historical approach (atavistic form); genetics and neural explanations.
- Psychological explanations of offending behaviour: Eysenck's theory of the criminal personality; cognitive explanations; level of moral reasoning and cognitive distortions, including hostile attribution bias and minimalisation; differential association theory; psychodynamic explanations.
- Dealing with offending behaviour: the aims of custodial sentencing and the psychological effects of custodial sentencing. Recidivism. Behaviour modification in custody. Anger management and restorative justice programmes.

Offender Profiling: Top-down approach

Key terms questions

Q1 Explain what is meant by 'offender profiling'.

[3 marks]

Offender profiling is the tool that is employed by police forces when they investigate serious crimes. This can take either a top-down or bottom-up approach, but both methods will examine elements such as witness reports and crime scene evidence that may have been left behind. The intention of both methods is also the same in that they aim to generate hypotheses about the probable characteristics of the offender such as their age and background to narrow the scope investigation and ultimately aid in catching the perpetrator.

Q2 Explain what is meant by 'organised type of offender'.

[3 marks]

An organised type of offender refers to one of the typologies within the top-down approach to profiling and a specific modus operandi that criminals may have. An organised offender usually plans their crimes and targets a specific demographic in society. In whatever offence they commit, they tend to demonstrate high levels of precision. Such elements of offending are associated with a suspect that may have an above-average intelligence, who may be in a skilled job, and who may have a family.

Q3 Explain what is meant by a 'disorganised type of offender'.

[3 marks]

A disorganised type of offender refers to one of the typologies within the top-down approach to profiling and a specific modus operandi that criminals may have. A disorganised offender can be considered the antithesis to an organised one as their crimes are often spontaneous and less directly targeted. In whatever offences they commit, they are not cautious about leaving any traces – for example, if a disorganised offender was to commit homicide, they may leave the body at the crime scene. Such elements of offending are associated with a suspect that may have a below-average intelligence and who may be unemployed.

Q4 Distinguish between an organised and disorganised type of offender.

[4 marks]

The top-down approach classifies the modus operandi of offenders into two distinct profiles: the organised and disorganised typologies. An organised offender usually targets a specific demographic in society, and in whatever offence they commit, they tend to demonstrate high levels of precision. These offenders typically have an above-average intelligence, a skilled job, and potentially a family. A disorganised offender can be considered the antithesis to an organised

one as their crimes are often spontaneous, usually leaving behind a plethora of evidence. Also contrary to the organised typology, the suspect that may have a below-average intelligence, be unemployed, and have a history of failed relationships.

Short response questions

Q5 Briefly explain how the top-down approach is used to create an offender profile. **[6 marks]**

In the top-down approach, also known as the typology approach, offender profilers who use this method will match what is known about the crime and the offender to one of two pre-existing typologies that were created from the work of the FBI's Behavioural Science Unit. This stage is referred to as 'crime scene classification' and outcomes would differ depending on what typology the offender is classified as. So, for example, if the crime scene shows few pieces of evidence left behind and shows signs of being a planned event, then the profiler can classify the perpetrator as an organised offender. This classification would inform the subsequent police investigation as it would allow police forces to narrow down their field of inquiry to someone who matches organised offender traits, such as above-average intelligence, employment in a skilled job, and the ability to maintain relationships. On the other hand, if the crime scene is riddled with evidence and appears to be spontaneous, then the profiler would classify the perpetrator as a disorganised offender. In this case, as disorganised offenders are predicted to be individuals who may have a below average intelligence who struggle to maintain employment and relationships, police forces would be able to focus their search by looking for someone who has these traits.

Q6 Explain one strength of the top-down approach to offender profiling. **[3 marks]**

A strength of the top-down approach to profiling is that there is evidence to support the organised typology. An example of this is the research of David Canter et al., who used smallest space analysis to analyse data from 100 murders in the USA. The details of each case were examined with reference to 39 characteristics thought to be typical of organised and disorganised typologies, and the findings suggested evidence that there is indeed a distinct modus operandi which fits a subgroup of offenders, allowing them to be classified within the organised typology. As there is evidence to support aspects of the top-down approach to profiling, the method benefits from having a strong degree of credibility.

Q7 Explain two limitations of the top-down approach to offender profiling. **[6 marks]**

An issue with the top-down approach to profiling is that it is only suited to crime scenes that reveal important details about the suspect, such as rape and murder. More common offences such as burglary do not lend themselves to the top-down approach to profiling because the resulting crime scene reveals little about the offender. As a result, the stage of crime scene classification, where the criminal under investigation is compared to created typologies, is not possible, and so a profile cannot be made. The approach is therefore hindered with its limited degree of practicality.