

## **Examiners' Reports**

---

**June 2011**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of pupils of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

© OCR 2011

Any enquiries about publications should be addressed to:

OCR Publications  
PO Box 5050  
Annesley  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG15 0DL

Telephone: 0870 770 6622  
Facsimile: 01223 552610  
E-mail: [publications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:publications@ocr.org.uk)

## CONTENTS

### General Certificate of Secondary Education

### Psychology (J611)

#### EXAMINERS' REPORTS

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
Chief Examiner's Report	1
B541 Studies and Applications in Psychology 1	2
B542 Studies and Applications in Psychology 2	6
B543 Research in Psychology	10

## **Chief Examiner's Report**

This was the first series where unit marks were aggregated and where candidates were awarded a final grade in the new GCSE Psychology qualification. Pleasingly, pass rates were commensurate with those on the legacy specification showing no change in quality of candidature, or in the rigour of assessment.

B542 produced the best performance – not surprisingly given the fact the majority of candidates were Year 11 students at the end of their course. B541, where a good number of candidates were Year 10 students presumably sitting their first examination in the subject, still produced a good A\*-C pass rate in line with previous series. Interestingly, candidates who sat both B541 and B542 this series performed remarkably similarly across both units, showing they offer the parity of assessment that the qualification aims for. Indeed, the grade boundaries for both units (using raw marks) are well matched.

B543 was the most challenging unit for the majority of candidates completing all three. This is to be expected given that this unit expects them to contextualise their learning – firstly by applying it to a study they have no knowledge of until the exam, and then by applying it in designing their own investigation. However, this unit continues to assess important skills which prepare GCSE students well for A-Level and beyond. At 20%, it does have the least impact on the final grade but, at the same time, allows the most able candidates to demonstrate their research skills and increase their chance of achieving the highest grades. This was reflected in this series' results.

# B541 Studies and Applications in Psychology 1

## General Comments

The performance on this unit was commensurate with previous series. Again, examiners were impressed with how many questions were tackled by a candidature with a wide range of ability. Attempts at the 10 mark essay were particularly impressive. If anything, it was questions carrying three or four marks which challenged candidates – possibly because many of these require some level of explanation and coherency for full marks to be awarded. Some candidates were hampered by their ability to express themselves. A particular strength in performance on this unit was candidates' ability to demonstrate AO2 and AO3 skills as well as the more straightforward AO1 skills. However, some candidates still need to be clearer on the distinction between theories, studies and applications – especially as this is a theme which runs through all topics.

## Comments of Individual Questions

### Q1(a)

Nearly all candidates could correctly identify the two types of uniform used in Bickman's study.

### Q1(b)

Most candidates earned both marks here. Failure to earn marks was rarely to do with lack of knowledge but more to do with candidates' answers not being specific enough. For example, it is not enough to state that one order was 'to put money in a meter' – it needed to be made clear that this money was for someone else's parking to gain credit. Candidates need to be clear on the details of the core studies – in this case, exactly how obedience was measured.

### Q1(c)

Almost every candidate got this right showing accurate knowledge of Bickman's key finding.

### Q2

Most candidates scored at least one mark here with many earning both marks. Responses covered a range of limitations – however, candidates found it easier to explain some limitations (e.g. cultural bias, ethical problems) than others (e.g. gender bias in choice of confederates, lack of control). Weaker responses described features of the study (e.g. it was a field experiment, it was done in New York) rather than elaborating on why these were limitations.

### Q3

Very few candidates did not earn both marks here. Where there were errors, it was with matching the definition of 'defiance' rather than 'obedience'.

### Q4(a)

Most candidates were able to earn two out of three marks here, primarily for identifying a setting which promotes obedience and then comparing it with one that does not. Only a minority of candidates managed to take this further by explaining why certain settings promote higher rates of obedience e.g. they are more formal or have more prestige. Where candidates scored zero it tended to be due to vague responses (e.g. people obey more in certain settings) or due to responses focus on other situational factors (e.g. the presence of others).

**Q4(b)**

As with Q4(a), most candidates were able to earn two out of three marks. Again, the third mark eluded many candidates because they are unable to explain why or how authority leads to higher rates of obedience. However, there were some good responses which referred to concepts such as 'power to punish' and 'fear of consequences'. Weaker responses referred to types of people that are usually obeyed but did not explicitly state that these people had authority nor why they did.

**Q5**

This question presented few problems for candidates and there were no obvious patterns where mistakes occurred.

**Q6**

This question was designed to be challenging and, not surprisingly became a good differentiator. A number of candidates scored zero for two main reasons – either they simply described the primacy and recency effect (i.e. what the graph showed) rather than explaining it, or they gave a general outline of the multi-store model without applying it to the findings. The best responses explained the primacy and the recency effect (and sometimes the poor recall in between) by using a range of key concepts from the multi-store model e.g. the role of LTM, the role of STM, effects of rehearsal, effects of decay, effects of displacement.

**Q7**

Nearly all candidates understood what was meant by a limitation but some offered responses that were not creditworthy e.g. sample size was too small or gender biased. Some candidates gained credit for general limitations e.g. lack of ecological validity while others gained credit for more specific limitations e.g. commercials are usually watched with many other distractions. Weak responses described features of the Terry study (e.g. it was a lab experiment) rather than stating why they were a limitation.

**Q8**

A significant minority of candidates failed to answer this question suggesting they had no or limited knowledge of this alternative theory to the multi-store model. Of those responses that gained credit, the majority scored two. Most candidates could identify deep and shallow processing as the key levels of processing and went on to outline what they involved. However, only a minority of candidates clearly stated which level of processing led to better recall which was a requirement before awarding full marks, otherwise any description would have been incomplete.

**Q9**

A surprising number of candidates did not answer this common question, despite a range of possible creditworthy responses. Cues were the most popular memory aid offered, but few responses explained their use well enough for three marks. Indeed, explanation was absent from many responses making two the modal score for candidates who did earn marks.

**Q10**

Candidates had few problems defining arachnophobia but defining social phobia caused more problems. Although most candidates demonstrated a some knowledge of this phobia, definitions were not clear nor specific enough for the mark available. Candidates need to go beyond using the word 'social' in their definition e.g. by referring to 'others' or, at least, by defining what people with social phobias may have a fear of doing or happening in public.

**Q11**

The responses to this series of part questions were not as well rehearsed as examiners expected. The questions elicited a range of responses. The weakest answers could not even distinguish between stimuli and responses. Better answers at least recognised the response should be the same, but there was a lot of confusing of different stimuli. A common problem was that candidates offered two answers in one e.g. stating the CR was 'fear of the rat' which included both the answer to (c) and (d), and therefore could not be credited. Some candidates made the mistake of noting referring to the source and identifying stimuli and responses using their own terms rather than what was given.

**Q12**

Most candidates dealt with this question well and earned both marks. Commonly quoted limitations included the small sample size, low ecological validity and problems of ethics. Candidates whose limitations both referred to ethics did not always make a clear enough distinction to earn both marks. Indeed, candidates should be clear how studies are unethical rather than just outlining aspects of the procedure e.g. Watson & Rayner did not counter-condition Albert.

**Q13**

This was designed to be one of the most demanding questions on the paper which may explain why it was omitted more than many other questions. However, candidates should expect to have to evaluate any of the core theories – even when not describing it, as was the case with this question. A common error was for candidates to only describe the behaviourist theory of atypical behaviour – for which there were no marks available. On this basis, some candidates wasted their time describing the theory before evaluating it. A number of candidates earned one mark (possibly by chance) as they drew comparisons between nature and nurture as part of their description. The best responses focused immediately on the criticisms of the theory, usually covering a range. Another common error was to describe what is meant by atypical behaviour rather than trying to explain it.

**Q14**

This question saw some good responses with many candidates scoring two or three marks. Most candidates chose to describe flooding, and descriptions showed sound understanding of the main processes involved. Candidates could earn marks through general descriptions or through illustrations of a relevant therapy. The main reason why more candidates did not earn full marks was because they were not always clear or explicit about the end product of behaviour therapy e.g. forming new associations.

**Q15**

Most candidates did well on this question, scoring all three marks. Where errors occurred, it was more to do with confusing the insecure attachments rather than not being able to identify the secure attachment.

**Q16**

Candidates either tended to earn both marks on this question or no marks at all. Candidates who recognised the other measure was stranger anxiety earned their first mark either by simply using the term or by outlining the use of a stranger as part of the measure. However, not all candidates focused enough on the reference to measuring attachment and gave definitions of stranger anxiety rather than how it could be observed, monitored or assessed. A common error was to offer another measure which still focused on separation protest rather than another way of measuring attachment.

**Q17**

It was surprising that more candidates were not better prepared for a question on applications in this research area. A significant minority of candidates omitted this question, or instead offered a study. Even candidates who knew what was required by the question wrote brief and muddled answers. However, there were some very pleasing responses which were accurate and detailed, focusing clearly on a relevant application. The most common area of application was hospital practice regarding the care of children, but there were also some good answers that described policies and processes used in nurseries. Candidates only tended to score full marks if they could offer some level of explanation which made a link between research and application.

**Q18**

There were some impressive responses to this question. Indeed, candidates that did earn marks here tended to earn four or more. Some limited themselves to four marks – mainly because they did not offer any evaluation points or because the quality of the response was not of the standard required for the top band. However, many other candidates did give a detailed account of Bowlby's theory which included the proposed effects of deprivation and/or privation, and then went on to offer a series of pertinent criticisms which challenged Bowlby's key ideas. A common error was to describe a study into attachment – mainly Ainsworth's work or the core study for this topic (i.e. Hazen & Shaver) – rather than describe the theory required.

**Q19**

Most candidates understood they needed to use the source for this question, and therefore had few problems earning both marks. A surprising number of candidates used the source for part (a) but then offered their own reasons for part (b) and so only earned one of the marks.

**Q20**

The vast majority of candidates scored full marks here. The main reason for not scoring full marks was candidates misattributing the chromosome patterns to each sex.

**Q21**

This question elicited a full range of responses. The modal score was two – largely earned from two brief criticisms, or ones that had not be adequately expanded on. Where candidates did attempt to expand on criticisms, they often repeated themselves rather than outlining the point further. A common error was for candidates to make statements without explaining how it challenged the biological theory of gender development e.g. people are more androgynous now than in the past. Another common error was for candidates to suggest the biological theory cannot explain examples of atypical gender development e.g. it does not explain why some males are feminine. On this point, although the specification refers to the biological theory of typical gender development, candidates should understand (for the purposes of evaluation) that it can adequately explain atypical gender development.

**Q22**

Candidates performed well on this question in general, although the full range of marks were elicited. Most candidates demonstrated an awareness of the key features of the study but some did over-simplify the Diamond & Sigmundson case or include some inaccuracies e.g. the idea it was an experiment. One common response was to just describe the case (in some instances in much more detail than necessary). Such responses were limited to five marks (the maximum AO1 marks). The other common response was a detailed description of the study coupled with some simple evaluative commentary which limited the essay to seven marks. Only a minority of candidates scored in the top band, and they tended to offer evaluation that added both breadth and depth to their essays. It is worth noting here that candidates should only be describing features of the case that relate to gender development. For example, references to David Reimer's suicide or his twin brother's mental instability are not directly relevant and would not have been credited.

## **B542 Studies and Applications in Psychology 2**

### **General Comments**

The performance of this paper was strong in key areas – most notably the extended responses at the end of Sections D and E. It was also encouraging to see so many candidates attempting all or most of the questions – often with a good degree of success. Candidates seemed most challenged by questions that asked about applications, frequently responding with common sense rather than psychological ideas. Another area for improvement is limitations of studies. Too many candidates appeared to be producing formulaic responses – sometimes these happened to be relevant to the study under evaluation but rarely were they contextualised. A final issue is that there were still some candidates who seemed unclear on the distinction between theories and studies – yet this is key to the structure of the specification. It can also lead to a serious loss of marks given the number of questions which make reference to each of these key concepts. Overall though, candidates demonstrated sound knowledge and understanding of psychological material and some ability to analyse and evaluate.

### **Comments on Individual Comments**

#### **Q1**

This question presented few problems for candidates with the vast majority correctly identifying the first statement as true and the second as false.

#### **Q2**

Again, this question presented few problems. Although errors were rare, the most common was to mismatch the 'self concept' with 'the idea you can make your own choices in life.'

#### **Q3**

Most candidates earned both marks here. It was part (b) that caused more problems than part (a) – with a significant minority of candidates identifying the phrase 'Levi is a teenage boy who often gets into trouble' as one that refers to self actualisation.

#### **Q4**

Many candidates found this question challenging, resulting in more non responses than other similar questions. A large number also failed to score, offering descriptions of humanistic theory instead or criticisms which were basically wrong (e.g. it ignores the effects of other people on self). Some candidates managed to score one mark – usually due to muddled responses or due to brief responses (e.g. it is not very scientific). Two mark responses clearly identified a weakness of the theory and then expanded on it – for example, explaining why the theory is unscientific. Some candidates attempts at evaluation were not explicit enough – for instance, examiners made a distinction between statements such as 'it focuses on the individual' (a description gaining no credit) and statements such as 'it does not allow for generalisation' (evaluative and therefore creditworthy).

#### **Q5**

The possible marks on this question were distributed quite evenly between candidates. Some candidates scored nothing, having no real knowledge of the study and offering, what seemed like, guesses (e.g. the sample size was too small). Candidates scoring one often offered two limitations but one was not right, not clear or a repetition of the first. Candidates scoring both marks offered limitations which were obviously distinct from each other and were offered as evaluation points (rather than descriptions, such as 'the participants were American').

**Q6**

This question was not well answered in general with too many over-generalised responses which referred to ideas such as 'talking to therapists about problems' and 'getting people to understand themselves better' – ideas which could apply to other therapies and were not specific enough to counselling. Neither were they specific enough to adequately demonstrate psychological knowledge and understanding. Despite this, most candidates managed to score at least one mark – usually by identifying an outcome of counselling or a client group it could be used on. Even better responses did little more than list key features of counselling, and only a minority of candidates were able to give a detailed and coherent account of one way in which counselling can help an individual. There was a problem with candidate simply re-iterating terms from previous questions within the section and, although concepts such as unconditional positive regard and self actualisation are clearly relevant to counselling, examiners were looking for them to be contextualised before giving them credit.

**Q7**

The majority of candidates could identified the definition which referred to perceptual set.

**Q8**

Many candidates seem well prepared for this common type of question and consequently scored full marks easily. At the other extreme, there were candidates who seemed to have no real idea what was being asked for – offering constancies rather than depth cues, for example. A common error was for candidates to identify two relevant depth cues but then simply describe them rather than apply them to the picture as required by the question. There were also candidates who attempted to apply the depth cues to the pictures but did so very vaguely or very briefly – for example, using phrases such as 'like with the fence' or 'this depth cue is used on the trees'. To earn the second mark for each depth cue, candidates were expected to refer to more distant or nearer objects in the relation to the depth cues. It was noted that a number of candidates confused depth cues in the sense that they would identify one but then outline another when applying it to the picture – this was especially the case with height in plane and relative size.

**Q9**

The full range of marks was elicited by this question. The best responses outlined participants ability to estimate the distance of objects in each of Haber & Levin's conditions and then draw a general conclusion from this relating to the role of past experience. At the other end of the scale were responses scoring zero because they referred to a different study, or were too muddled and vague to be credited. Common errors were to not focus enough on the findings (as required by the question) or to not refer to the different conditions accurately enough e.g. the objects of fixed/invariant size were often simply identified as 'familiar objects' or 'everyday objects'.

**Q10**

Candidates tended to do well on this question (and score two) or do poorly (and score zero). In other words, if candidates knew a limitation they could normally expand on this by explaining it in the context of the study. The most commonly offered limitations were those to do with the composition and size of the sample. Weak responses were simply wrong either because the limitation was not relevant to the study, or because it was not a limitation but a description of a feature of the study. Candidates who tried to address the issue of ecological validity often got into a muddle given the unusual nature of the setting of this experiment.

**Q11**

Like Q10, this one tended to divide candidates into those that scored both marks or those that scored none. Many candidates clearly had a good understanding of the key principles of constructivist theory with the majority questioning the role of experience in perception. Weak responses either described a feature of the theory, mistook the theory for nativist theory, or gave a criticism which related to a study rather than a theory.

**Q12**

Although candidates could describe any way in which research into perception can be applied in real life, not surprisingly, many chose advertising or more specific examples of advertising e.g. subliminal advertising. However, many candidates could not adequately go beyond this, with many vague or muddled descriptions which showed little psychological content. The best responses made clear links between what psychologists know about perception (especially perceptual set) and how this can be used by advertisers to promote products. A common error was for candidates to misunderstand the meaning of 'application' and describe everyday routines relating to perception e.g. crossing the road, climbing stairs, catching a ball – functions which occur regardless of research into perception!

**Q13**

The vast majority of candidates were able to accurately complete the table and score full marks. The most common error was to enter 'concrete operational' and 'formal operational' the wrong way around.

**Q14**

Most candidates earned both marks here. There were slightly more correct responses for (a) compared to (b).

**Q15**

Although most candidates understood this question well enough to attempt it, too many responses were vague and largely common sense. Only a minority of responses demonstrated real psychological knowledge of cognitive development and how it might be useful in education. Too many responses relied on the examiner making the links between research and practice, and should have been more explicit.

**Q16**

This question elicited a range of responses. Most candidates demonstrated some awareness of the particular Piaget study being asked for although some decided to describe others. The best responses went beyond the basics of how counters were manipulated and what was asked, and made references to findings and conclusions. Many candidates would have benefitted by being clearer on details of the sample in this study.

**Q17**

There were a range of responses to this question, both in terms of the limitations offered and the quality of answer. A number of candidates limited themselves to one mark by giving a generic response rather than one that was clearly in the context of the study. Candidates who focused on the issue of Piaget asking the same question twice often only earned one mark because they struggled to explain the actual consequence of this on results.

**Q18**

This was supposed to be a straightforward question and most candidates treated it as such with most scoring both marks.

**Q19**

As with Q18, most candidates scored both marks on what was supposed to be a straightforward question in the first place.

**Q20**

Most candidates scored three marks here finding it relatively easy to extract the necessary information from the source. Failure to score full marks was largely down to candidates giving their own examples of non-verbal communication for parts (b) and (c).

**Q21**

Nearly all candidates scored both marks here by correctly identifying the two terms associated with social learning theory. Candidates very rarely ticked 'biology' by mistake although 'bottom-up processing' was selected by a minority of candidates.

**Q22**

Many candidates scored five or six on this question, showing not only sound knowledge of Yuki et al's study but the ability to evaluate it too. Some candidates were limited to four marks – either because their answer did not have the quality to be awarded a top band mark or, on some occasions, because there were no evaluation points offered. Nearly every candidate demonstrated some knowledge of the study with most knowing something about the sample and broadly what the findings were.

**Q23**

Most candidates scored full marks here by ticking the right three boxes. The most common error was to tick the box for the last statement.

**Q24**

Most candidates scored both marks here but some were limited to one, mainly due to brief responses or limitations which were not contextualised clearly enough. For example, a number of candidates suggested that criminal records can be unreliable but were not clear on the impact of this on Mednick et al's findings.

**Q25**

Some candidates were clearly well prepared for this question given succinct but accurate definitions, often with examples of criminal traits. Other candidates struggled – for example, offering tautological answers or definitions of criminal behaviour rather than criminal personality. A significant number of candidates made the mistake of trying to explain the origins of criminal personality rather than what it is. Interestingly, there were a number of examples where candidates failed to score on this question yet in the essay on Q27 gave a reasonable description of a criminal personality.

**Q26**

The range of marks was distributed relatively evenly across responses to this question, possibly reflecting the many different ways in which it was answered. Better responses tended to focus on more than one way of reducing crime but there was still some expectation of a level of description before full marks were awarded. Responses that simply listed ways of reducing crime did not score above two. The weakest responses were based more on general knowledge and there was little evidence of psychological background. Although most responses targeted the question, some were considered too vague to be creditworthy.

**Q27**

This question elicited the full range of marks. It was common for candidates to score seven – in most cases because the evaluation was brief in comparison to description (where candidates frequently earned all five AO1 marks). A number of candidates were also limited to seven because, although offering detailed responses, they did not always have the quality to be awarded a top band mark. The best essays seemed to be those that focused on the biological theory. Although there were some good efforts to discuss social learning theory, the evaluation was often weak – probably because this is an alternative theory on the specification and not the core theory. Candidates who chose to describe the biological theory often covered a breadth of ideas (e.g. genes, heritability, brain dysfunction, facial features) but only a few related these to each other in a coherent way. Evaluation relied more on a making many brief points but some of the best responses showed candidates could explain criticisms well. A common error was for candidates to describe the core study in this topic area – occasionally there were creditworthy points within these descriptions (e.g. stating criminal behaviour is inherited) but, by and large, they scored very little if at all.

## **B543 Research in Psychology**

### **General Comments**

A significant number of candidates showed a good level of knowledge and understanding of conducting research in psychology.

A very high proportion of candidates attempted all the questions on the paper thus demonstrating the paper was accessible to almost all candidates. It was pleasing to see a high number of candidates using a good level of psychological terminology in their responses. Candidates are encouraged to pay particular attention to their usage of psychological key words as these were often confused, such as the names of experimental designs or complex concepts such as validity and reliability, which were muddled as were methods of investigations such as correlations and experiments.

A key feature of this paper is application. Whilst the number of candidates successfully drawing information from the source material is high, the absence of contextualisation was significant in this paper.

In section A, candidates should be encouraged to utilise the source material more effectively. Key features of the source can be used to illustrate responses and to demonstrate a good level of understanding throughout.

In section B, candidates are encouraged to contextualise their responses to their own research design as directed by the source material. When asked to evaluate the method of investigation, for example, the evaluation must be linked to features of their design to gain full marks. Candidates are also encouraged to avoid repetition when answering questions in this section of the paper.

Candidates are also encouraged to pay particular attention to the directive words in questions and go beyond defining key concepts where a description, a level of interpretation or explanation is required. Likewise the use of circular definitions should be avoided.

### **Comments on Individual Questions**

#### **Q1**

Almost all candidates scored full marks here, successfully identifying the aim of the study from the source material.

#### **Q2**

Candidate responses ranged on this question. Whilst a number of candidates scored full marks, correctly identifying the variables and that a null hypothesis predicts no difference, some responses gave an alternate hypothesis or an aim or a statement. The reference to a correlation or a relationship was also frequently seen.

#### **Q3**

A well answered question with the majority of candidates naming an appropriate sampling method. Where errors were made, candidates referred to a self-selected (volunteer) sample from the source or to a method of investigation (such as a field experiment or using an observation).

**Q4**

The majority of candidates successfully identified the independent and dependent variable from the choices given. Candidates are encouraged to cross out mistakes as the drawing of three lines was commonly seen.

**Q5**

A well answered question with the majority of candidates identifying quantitative data from the source material.

**Q6**

Many candidates were able to re-state the findings from the source material and thus give a partially correct response to this question. Those that achieved full marks accurately interpreted the findings.

**Q7**

Many candidates gave acceptable reasons for why the participants were tested individually thus demonstrating their understanding that this was a form of control. Only a minority of candidates could elaborate on their responses, showing how it acted as a control, or could contextualise their answers to the source material.

**Q8(a)**

Many candidates, though able to describe a strength of using an independent groups design, failed to contextualise their answer to the study described in the source material. Many candidates drew incorrect links between an independent groups design and being tested individually and so gave responses that were best suited for Q7.

**Q8(b)**

A well answered question with many candidates naming an alternative experimental design to that used in the source. The most common error seen was the referral to a dependent groups design.

**Q9(a)**

Many candidates could explain that a laboratory experiment is either conducted in a controlled environment, manipulates an independent variable or measures a dependent variable; establishing cause and effect, very few candidates could offer two of these failing to provide an accurate explanation of the method. The reference to an experiment being conducted in a laboratory was also frequently seen.

**Q9(b)**

The majority of candidates were able to identify a disadvantage of using a laboratory experiment and many candidates gave detailed descriptions of lacking ecological validity, not reflecting real life, or the increased presence of demand characteristics. Few candidates could contextualise their answer as required by the question and so only gained partial marks.

**Q10(a)**

A well answered question with the majority of candidates stating a feasible extraneous variable that could have occurred in the study described in the source. Where errors were made, candidates referred to extraneous variables not suitable for the study as they contradicted features of the study already present within the source, such as different experimenters dropping the ruler or the participant getting better at the task due to practice.

**Q10(b)**

Responses varied on this question. Whilst a good number of candidates were able to offer an appropriate solution to a possible extraneous variable, few were able to expand on their suggestion to show how this would act as a control. As with Q10(a), candidates referred to features of the study already present within the source such as being tested individually or only attempting the test once was commonly seen.

**Q11**

This was one of the lowest achieving questions with only the minority of candidates encompassing the entire concept of validity. A number of candidates were able to describe ecological validity or offered responses relating to population validity. Many candidates referred to validity as relating to truthfulness or to results being correct in investigations. Candidates often confused validity with reliability describing consistency of findings.

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**1 Hills Road**  
**Cambridge**  
**CB1 2EU**

**OCR Customer Contact Centre**

**14 – 19 Qualifications (General)**

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: [general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

**[www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)**

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

**Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations**  
**is a Company Limited by Guarantee**  
**Registered in England**  
**Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU**  
**Registered Company Number: 3484466**  
**OCR is an exempt Charity**

**OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)**  
**Head office**  
**Telephone: 01223 552552**  
**Facsimile: 01223 552553**

© OCR 2011

