

2019 Summer Highlights



Things that went well

Candidates are improving in terms of using a context in their answers, particularly in referencing research methods and the context for the research proposal in Paper 1.

In Paper 2 and Paper 3 it is clear that students are well prepared and can show a good amount of knowledge on Core studies and Key studies.

Students are getting better at using their time effectively, as more students are answering/attempting all the questions.



Exam Tips

- In the Research Methods Paper (H567/01) candidates should be encouraged to use examples to illustrate points, convey understanding better and help elaboration.
- Read all questions carefully, circling command terms, such as “in this study” or “show your workings” to ensure that you are answering all parts of the question.
- Where a question is worth 3 or 4 marks and students have a choice of possible answers, it is useful for students to think through their possible responses and choose one that allows them to elaborate the most, with examples. E.g do not give the first answer that comes to mind as a responses to one difference or one similarity when comparing Piliavin et al and Levine et al’s study.
- In Psychology A Level some questions are unpredictable and require you to think and apply your understanding. Candidates need to be careful to read and think what the question is actually asking for rather than making assumptions based on previous questions they may have encountered (this is relevant this year to Paper 2 and Paper3 2019)
- When candidates are using key concepts and terms – these should be defined/explained, rather than just stated. E.g In Paper 3 and the Crime optional topic e.g. depersonalisation; pathology of power; pathological prisoner syndrome – this then shows good understanding if the concepts are defined and explained.



Areas for improvement

- Some candidates found it difficult to use terminology appropriately and some were unable to give definitions of terminology from the specification. Candidates need to use key research method terms and concepts in their answers. We recommend keeping an up to date glossary of key terms and definitions.
- Candidates should learn a range of strengths and weaknesses of the different types of data collected by psychologists so they can apply these in different scenarios
- In the Practical Applications section C for Paper 2 – Candidates should read the source carefully to start with, to decide how the content can be related to what they already know. Do not start with a feature, and try to then find the feature in the source.