

Please write clearly in block capitals.

Centre Number

Candidate Number

Surname _____

Forename(s) _____

Candidate signature _____

A-level

PSYCHOLOGY

A-level topic mock · Based on AQA
Psychology

Paper 2 · Section A focus paper ·
Approaches in Psychology

2026

Time allowed: 1 hour

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- a black ink or black ball-point pen.

Instructions

- This paper is for **A-level only**. It includes the psychodynamic and humanistic approaches and a comparison-of-approaches essay, which are not assessed at AS.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen. Fill in the boxes above.
- Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided. If you need extra space, use the lined pages at the end.
- Cross through any rough work you do not want marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets. This paper covers **Approaches in Psychology** (A-level, AQA spec 4.2.1).
- **Maximum mark: 48**. The paper includes an 8-mark comparison essay (Q10) and a 16-mark essay (Q11).
- Answer in continuous prose. You will be assessed on use of good English, clear organisation and specialist vocabulary.

For Examiner's Use	
Question	Mark
01	
02	
03	
04	
05	
06	
07	
08	
09	
10	
11	
TOTAL	

Section A

Approaches in Psychology

Answer all questions in this section.

0 1

Which one of the following is an example of **negative reinforcement**? Write A, B, C or D in your answer book.

- A A child is given a sweet for tidying their room, and tidies more often.
- B A teenager takes painkillers to remove a headache, and so takes them more often.
- C A worker has their phone confiscated after being rude.
- D A driver receives a speeding fine after driving too fast.

[1 mark]

0 2

Which one of the following best describes the **Superego** in Freud's psychodynamic approach? Write A, B, C or D in your answer book.

- A The primitive, instinctual part of the psyche that operates on the pleasure principle.
- B The rational, executive part of the psyche that mediates between competing demands.
- C The internalised moral compass of the psyche that judges right and wrong.
- D An unconscious memory store of unresolved childhood conflicts.

[1 mark]

0 3

Which one of the following best describes **self-actualisation** in Maslow's humanistic approach? Write A, B, C or D in your answer book.

- A The need for food, water and shelter at the base of the hierarchy.
- B The need to feel safe, secure and free from fear.
- C The realisation of one's full potential at the top of the hierarchy.
- D The unconditional positive regard received from a therapist.

[1 mark]

0 4

Outline what is meant by **conditions of worth** in humanistic psychology.

[3 marks]

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0 5

10-year-old Olivia watches her older sister Maya tidy her bedroom. Their mother praises Maya enthusiastically, gives her a chocolate bar, and tells her she can have an extra hour on her tablet. Over the next few days, Olivia begins tidying her own bedroom without being asked, even though no one has spoken to her about it.

Use **social learning theory** to explain Olivia's behaviour. Refer to **vicarious reinforcement** and at least **one mediational process** in your answer.

[4 marks]

0 6

Adam has had a stressful day at work. His manager criticised him in front of his colleagues, and he is feeling angry but cannot show this anger at work. When he gets home, his children are watching television loudly. Adam shouts furiously at the children for "always being so noisy" and storms upstairs to his bedroom.

Use the **psychodynamic approach** to explain Adam's behaviour. Refer to **one defence mechanism** in your answer.

[4 marks]

0 7

Outline the role of **genotype**, **phenotype** and **evolution** in the biological approach.

[3 marks]

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0 8

Briefly outline **Maslow's hierarchy of needs**. Refer to at least **three** of the levels in your answer.

[3 marks]

0 9

Outline what is meant by **cognitive neuroscience**. Refer to one example of research that uses cognitive neuroscience in your answer.

[4 marks]
