

AQA UNIT PSYA2 INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES: ABNORMALITY

Psychopathology - Abnormality

FOR EXAM IN 2014



Exam questions
are highlighted in
yellow

AQA UNIT PSYA2 INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES: ABNORMALITY

Candidates will be expected to:

- develop knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories and studies in relation to individual differences
- develop skills of analysis, evaluation and application in relation to individual differences
- develop knowledge and understanding of research methods associated with these areas of psychology
- develop knowledge and understanding of ethical issues associated with these areas of psychology.

Knowledge and understanding of research methods should be developed through:

- undertaking practical research activities involving collection, analysis and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data
- analysis and evaluation of studies relevant to the content for each area of psychology in this unit.

Individual Differences – Psychopathology (Abnormality)	
Defining and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definitions of abnormality, INCLUDING deviation from social norms, failure to function adequately and deviation from ideal mental health AND limitations of these definitions of psychological abnormality
Explaining psychological abnormality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The biological approach to psychopathology• Psychological approaches to psychopathology INCLUDING the psychodynamic, behavioural and cognitive approaches
Treating Abnormality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biological therapies, INCLUDING drugs and ECT• Psychological therapies INCLUDING Psychoanalysis, systematic desensitisation and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

There will be three compulsory structured questions, one based on the Biological Psychology content; one based on the Social Psychology content and one based on the Individual Differences content.

Questions include short answer, stimulus material and one or more 12-mark questions

Individual differences - An overview

This topic looks at abnormal behaviour, in particular the following aspects:

- How do we decide whether or not behaviour is abnormal?
- How do psychologists try to explain abnormal behaviours?

Think about the following:

- If someone has a very high level of anxiety we consider their behaviour abnormal. However, should we similarly consider a very low level of anxiety as abnormal?
- Do we learn to be abnormal or is it in our genes?
- Homosexuality was considered an abnormal behaviour up until 1980 by the World Health Organisation!