FREE PREVIEW · 3 OF 22 ESSAYS INSIDE

MODEL ANSWERS

Social Psychology

Description (AO1) + Evaluation (AO3) answers

22 MODEL ESSAYS

TOPIC A: SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

8 MARKS EACH

4 FOR AO1 · 4 FOR AO3

AO1 + AO3

DESCRIPTION + EVALUATION

a complete model answer for every question

2016–2026

COMPREHENSIVE PAST-PAPER

questions, most recent session first

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22 MODEL ESSAYS · 8 MARKS EACH

EVERY QUESTION, MOST RECENT EXAM SESSION FIRST

Q1	Interviews in social psychology	MAY 2026	
Q2	Asch (1951) and the 1952 group-size variation	JAN 2026	SAMPLE
Q3	Agency theory in real life	JAN 2025	
Q4	Social power theory: how well it accounts for obedience	MAY/JUN 2024	
Q5	How well has conformity research developed our understanding?	JAN 2024	
Q6	Individual differences, situation and culture in conformity	MAY/JUN 2023	
Q7	Personality and gender as influences on obedience	MAY/JUN 2022	
Q8	Questionnaires in social psychology research	MAY/JUN 2021	
Q9	Agency theory: how well it explains obedience in society	JAN 2021	
Q10	Can social psychology fully meet ethical guidelines?	OCT 2020	
Q11	Moscovici et al. (1969): consistent minority, colour perception	JAN 2020	
Q12	Asch (1951): the line judgement study	OCT 2019	SAMPLE
Q13	Burger (2009): 'Replicating Milgram'	MAY/JUN 2019	
Q14	Is social power theory a complete explanation of obedience?	OCT 2018	
Q15	Agency theory as an explanation of obedience	MAY/JUN 2018	
Q16	Questionnaire practical: gender and obedience	JAN 2018	
Q17	Research into conformity: Asch (1951) and variations	OCT 2017	
Q18	Social power theory as an explanation of obedience	MAY/JUN 2017	
Q19	Was breaching ethical guidelines necessary? Milgram, Asch, Burger	JAN 2017	
Q20	Moscovici (1976): how a minority can influence a majority	MAY/JUN 2016	
Q21	Normative and informational social influence in conformity	SPECIMEN	
Q22	Yi Huang et al. (2014): conformity in face ratings over time	SPECIMEN	

OBEDIENCE · CONFORMITY · MINORITY INFLUENCE · METHODS & ETHICS

Answers built to score full marks

Every page is one past-paper question and one complete 8-mark model answer.

22
MODEL ESSAYS
Topic A, every question

8
MARKS EACH
4 for AO1 · 4 for AO3

2016–26
PAST PAPERS
most recent first

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8 OBEDIENCE

7 CONFORMITY

2 MINORITY INFLUENCE

5 METHODS & ETHICS

PAST PAPER · OCT 2019

Q12 Evaluate Asch's (1951) research into conformity.

8 MARKS
AO1 4 · AO3 4

AO1 · DESCRIPTION

4 MARKS

Asch (1951) investigated **majority influence** by testing whether individuals would **conform** to a group giving clearly wrong answers. **123 male American college students** were told they were taking part in a **visual perception** study. Each sat with **six to seven confederates** and judged which of **three comparison lines** matched a **standard line**. There were **18 trials**. On **12 critical trials**, the confederates gave the **same wrong answer**, and the real participant answered **last or second to last**. The task was easy, as a control group made fewer than **1%** errors. Participants conformed on **32%** of critical trials. **75%** conformed at least once, while **25%** never did. Afterwards, Asch **interviewed** the participants about their answers.

AO3 · STRENGTH

LINK: VALIDITY

One strength is that Asch **interviewed participants** afterwards, which gave rich insight into why people conformed. Many said they **doubted their own judgement** and assumed the group was right, while others went along to **avoid ridicule**. This is a strength because these reasons led to later explanations of conformity, **informational and normative social influence**. Therefore, the study has good **validity**, as it helps to explain the behaviour as well as measure it.

AO3 · WEAKNESS

LINK: ETHICS

One weakness is that the study breached **ethical guidelines**. Participants were **deceived**, as they were told it was a vision test and did not know the others were confederates. Many also felt **anxious and uncomfortable** when disagreeing with the group. This is a weakness because deception prevents **informed consent**, and the stress could cause **psychological harm**. Therefore, the research is open to criticism on **ethics**, even though participants were debriefed.

BALANCED CONCLUSION

Overall, Asch (1951) gave strong evidence that people conform to a unanimous majority, and his interviews helped to explain why. However, the **deception and distress** involved mean the research is open to serious **ethical** criticism.

EXAM TIP

Give the baseline numbers in AO1: **123** men, **18** trials, **12** critical, **32%**. Then use one methodological point and one ethical point.

MEMORY HOOK

123 men, 12 of 18, 32/75/25

123 men. **12** of **18** trials were critical. **32%** conformed, **75%** at least once, **25%** never.

KEY TERMS TO USE

- Standard line
- Comparison lines
- Confederates
- Critical trials
- Unanimous majority
- Informed consent
- Deception

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✕ Mixing up the 1951 baseline with the later variations.
- ✕ Forgetting that the sample was male students.
- ✕ Calling the confederates 'participants'.

WATCH

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PAST PAPER · JAN 2026

Q2

Evaluate Asch's research into conformity, including his 1952 variation study.

8 MARKS

AO1 4 · AO3 4

AO1 · DESCRIPTION

4 MARKS

Asch (1951) aimed to see whether people would **conform** to a **majority** giving the wrong answer. **123 male American students** judged which of three lines matched a standard line. Each sat with **confederates** who gave the **same wrong answer** on **12 of 18 trials**. **75%** conformed at least once, and the **overall conformity rate** was **37%**. In the **1952 variation**, Asch changed the **group size**. With **one** confederate, conformity was very low, but with **three** confederates it rose to about **32%**, and more confederates added little. Asch's participants said afterwards that they conformed to **fit in** or because they **doubted** themselves.

EXAM TIP

Cover **both** the 1951 baseline and the **1952 variation** in AO1, since the question names it. Give the **figures** (75%, 37%, about 32%).

MEMORY HOOK

75 · 37 · 32

AO3 · STRENGTH

LINK: RELIABILITY

One strength is that Asch used **controlled procedures**. The same line task was used each time, and the **1952 variation** changed only the **group size**. This is a strength because it shows **cause and effect** between group size and conformity, and it makes the study easy to replicate. Therefore, the research

The rest of this answer is in the full pack

Strength · Weakness · Balanced conclusion
Memory hook · Key terms to use · Common mistakes

GET THE FULL PACK

Every page is this complete

A glimpse of six more answers waiting in the full pack.



Q4
Social power theory: how well it accounts for obedience



Q11
Moscovici et al. (1969): consistent minority, colour perception



Q7
Personality and gender as influences on obedience



Q16
Questionnaire practical: gender and obedience



Q19
Was breaching ethical guidelines necessary? Milgram, Asch, Burger



Q3
Agency theory in real life

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