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

every answer is written to the mark scheme

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

WHY STUDENTS CHOOSE IT

See full marks
Know exactly what a top-band answer looks like.

Stop guessing
Understand what examiners want to read.

Revise faster
One question and one answer on every page.

EXAM TIP

What examiners reward

A focused tip on this exact command word and question.

MEMORY HOOK

Recall it under pressure

A short phrase that locks the key idea into memory.

KEY TERMS

The words that earn marks

Seven precise terms to build into your own answer.

COMMON MISTAKES

What costs students marks

Three traps to avoid, taken from how students go wrong.

EVERY COMMAND WORD

Assess, evaluate, discuss

Questions of every style from the past papers are covered.

CLEAR LANGUAGE

Simple and formal

Key terms in bold so the examiner sees them straight away.

ALSO INSIDE

A practical investigation answer, built from a real report

Plus specimen questions, a back-cover guide to booking classes, and links to answer-writing videos.

COVERS ALL FOUR TOPIC AREAS

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

Still unsure how to write this answer?
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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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