

Oxford Revise | AQA A Level Psychology | Answers

Chapter 2

All exemplar answers given would achieve full marks or the top level.

1. Marks for this question: AO1 = 1

0–30 seconds, peaking at 18 seconds.

2. Marks for this question: AO1 = 4

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of one component of the cognitive interview is clear and accurate. • There is clear explanation of how it improves the accuracy of eyewitness testimony. • The answer is mostly coherent with effective use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of one component of the cognitive interview is briefly stated with little elaboration. • The explanation of how it improves eyewitness testimony may be partial or absent. • The answer may include inaccuracies and be poorly organised. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Context reinstatement: a witness tries to mentally recreate an image of the crime, including their surroundings and feelings at the time of the incident. These may all act as cues/triggers to recall. The answer may include information on the encoding specificity principle.
- Report everything: the interviewer encourages the witness to report all details about the event, even though these details may seem unimportant, as they may highlight something that has been ‘overlooked’. Causes the domino effect where one memory triggers another.
- Recall in reverse order: the witness is asked to describe the scene in a different chronological order, e.g. from the end to the beginning, to verify accuracy. This is very difficult to do so increases concentration, which may enhance recall. It blocks schemas from interfering with real memories.
- Recall from a changed perspective: the witness tries to mentally recreate the crime from different points of view, e.g. describing what another witness present at the scene would have seen. This promotes a more ‘holistic’ view of the event, which may enhance recall. It is very difficult to do so increases concentration, which may enhance recall. It blocks schemas from interfering with real memories.

Credit other relevant material.

3. Marks for this question: AO1 = 3

3 marks for a clear, coherent explanation using appropriate terminology.

2 marks for an explanation that lacks some clarity or detail.

1 mark for a brief or muddled explanation.

Possible AO1 content:

- Retrieval failure means that we forget because although the memory is available, we don't have the cues to access it.
- The encoding specificity principle is the theory that more can be remembered if cues that are encoded at the same time as the initial learning are present at recall.
- Cues can be encoded meaningfully (e.g. creating mnemonics to aid recall) or not meaningfully (they relate to external context or internal state).
- Context-dependent forgetting is when external cues in the environment are absent at the time of recall.
- State-dependent forgetting is when a person's internal mental state is different at time of recall.
- Credit relevant material embedded in an example or study, e.g. the scuba diving study or the alcohol recall study.

Note: answers couched in terms of remembering rather than forgetting are limited to 2 marks.

4. Marks for this question: AO2 = 4

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of how anxiety affects the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is clear and mostly accurate. • The material is applied appropriately. • The answer is generally coherent with effective use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some knowledge of how anxiety affects the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is evident. • Application is not always appropriate. • The answer lacks accuracy and detail. • Use of specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriate.
	0	No relevant content

Possible AO2 application:

- Anxiety may have made Benny's recall worse because of the weapon focus effect, where people focus attention on the weapon rather than the surrounding details.
- A weapon focus effect study found 49% accuracy of recalling a perpetrator with no weapon compared to 33% when the man had a weapon.

- Anxiety may have made Angelica’s recall better because of heightened focus. Answers could reference studies such as the Swedish bank robbery study, where the victims had the best recall of the event.
- Could be explained by the Yerkes–Dodson law, where anxiety causes recall to get better up to a point but then when someone is overwhelmed, they forget. Angelica may have had a more stable personality so she was not overwhelmed as quickly and could recall more details. Benny may have had a neurotic personality and therefore could not recall the details as he was overwhelmed more quickly.

Credit other relevant applications.

5. Marks for this question: AO1 = 6

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the multi-store model of memory is clear and generally accurate. • Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the multi-store model of memory is evident but there may be some omissions/lack of clarity. • There is some appropriate use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the multi-store model of memory is evident but there may be serious omissions and/or inaccuracies. • Specialist terminology is either missing or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- The purpose of the model is to explain how sensory information is processed into memory.
- Capacity, duration, and coding of the separate stores:
 - Sensory register – unlimited capacity, duration of milliseconds, coding is sensory dependent.
 - Short-term memory (STM) – capacity of 7 + or – 2, duration of 0–30 seconds, coding is acoustic.
 - Long-term memory (LTM) – unlimited capacity, duration of 2 minutes to forever, coding is semantic.
- If we pay attention to the sensory information, it will be processed to the STM store.
- Maintenance rehearsal keeps information in STM. Repeating the information enough will move it to LTM.
- Information is lost through decay or displacement.

Credit an accurately annotated diagram. Credit other relevant material.

6. Marks for this question: AO3 = 2

2 marks for a clear, coherent strength or limitation of the working model of memory, using appropriate terminology.

1 mark for a brief or muddled strength or limitation of the working model of memory.

Possible AO3 evaluation:

- The working model of memory (WMM) was developed to account for dual task performance. Research support for dual-task performance – e.g. difficulty in tracking a light while describing the letter F – suggests that the phonological loop (PL) and visuo-spatial sketchpad (VSS) are separate stores in STM.
- Case studies of brain-damaged patients, such as KF, provide evidence for different stores (PL and VSS) in STM.
- The case study of LH, who had difficulty with visual imagery but not spatial tasks, suggests different components of the VSS.
- There are confounding variables in case studies of those with brain damage due to brain trauma.
- Evidence for the PL and articulatory process: the word-length effect refers to people being able to recall a list of short words like ‘egg’ better than long ones like ‘specification’.
- The central executive (CE) is thought to be the most important part of the WMM but the least understood. There may be more than one component of the CE and it’s thought its role is more complex than simply diverting attention to the slave systems.

Credit any valid strength or limitation.

7. Marks for this question: AO1 = 3, AO3 = 5

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of capacity in short-term memory is accurate with some detail. • Discussion is thorough and effective. • Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. • The answer is clear, coherent, and focused. • Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of capacity in short-term memory is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies or omissions. • Discussion is mostly effective. • The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. • Specialist terminology is used appropriately.

2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited knowledge of capacity in short-term memory is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion is of limited effectiveness. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy, and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of capacity in short-term memory is very limited. Discussion is limited, poorly focused, or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies, and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Capacity refers to how much information we can hold in our memory.
- The capacity of short-term memory (STM) is 7 + or – 2.
- Key study: participants recalled a list of single digit numbers that increased and changed with each trial to investigate the capacity of STM. The average digit span was 9.3 items, but further research concluded capacity is 7 + or – 2.
- Chunking refers to putting ‘chunks’ of information into a unit, so, for example, recall of 5 words is the same as recall of 5 letters.

Possible AO3 discussion:

- The capacity of STM is overestimated – a later review concluded the capacity of STM is likely limited to 4 chunks, especially if information is visual.
- The size of the chunk matters – syllables within words may act as a chunk, so eight-word phrases are harder to recall than eight one-syllable words.

Credit other relevant material.

8. Marks for this question: AO1 = 3, AO2 = 2, AO3 = 3

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of interference theory as an explanation of forgetting is accurate with some detail. • Application is effective. • Discussion is thorough and effective. • Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. • The answer is clear, coherent, and focused. • Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of interference theory as an explanation of forgetting is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. • Application/discussion is mostly effective. • The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. • Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge of interference theory as an explanation of forgetting is present. • Focus is mainly on description. • Any application/discussion is of limited effectiveness. • The answer lacks clarity, accuracy, and organisation in places. • Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of interference theory as an explanation of forgetting is very limited. • Application/discussion is limited, poorly focused, or absent. • The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies, and is poorly organised. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Interference theory refers to one memory blocking or distorting another memory, which we experience as forgetting.
- Proactive interference (PI) is when an older memory blocks or distorts a newer one.
- Retroactive interference (RI) is when a newer memory blocks or distorts an older one.
- Similarity of material increases interference.
- An RI study found that all groups of people had RI when recalling a new list of words, but those who learned synonyms had the worst recall due to similarity of material.

Possible AO2 application:

- Chloe experienced RI.
- The new information of ‘Mrs Watkins’ blocked the old surname of ‘Miss Donnelly,’ causing forgetting.

Possible AO3 evaluation:

- Thousands of highly controlled laboratory experiments provide evidence for both PI and RI, which suggests that interference is a valid explanation of forgetting.
- There is a lack of mundane realism in laboratory tasks that use meaningless tasks like word lists. Forgetting in the real world may be different if the tasks are meaningful and/or have consequences.
- There are differences in how interference affects individuals. Participants with a greater working memory span were less susceptible to PI. A greater working memory span gave people conscious control of processing, which counteracted the effects of PI.
- Interference does occur, but retrieval failure may be a better explanation for forgetting because people can overcome PI with a cue.

Credit other relevant material.

9. Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of research into the effect of misleading information on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is accurate and generally well detailed. • Discussion is thorough and effective. • Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. • The answer is clear, coherent, and focused. • Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of research into the effect of misleading information on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. • Discussion is mostly effective. • The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. • Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge of research into the effect of misleading information on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is present. • Focus is mainly on description. • Any discussion that is present is of limited effectiveness. • The answer lacks clarity, accuracy, and organisation in places. • Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.

1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of research into the effect of misleading information on the accuracy of eyewitness testimony is very limited. • Any discussion is limited, poorly focused, or absent. • The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies, and is poorly organised. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content for leading questions:

- Smash/hit study: estimates of the cars’ speeds were based on changing the verb in the critical question: ‘How fast were the cars going when they ___ into each other?’
- Response-bias explanation – leading questions do not affect memory, just how a person chooses to answer.
- Follow-up broken glass study: participants in the ‘smashed’ condition were more likely to recall seeing broken glass, even though there wasn’t any.
- Substitution bias/explanation – question wording distorts memory.

Possible AO1 content for post-event discussion:

- Pairs of participants discussed a crime. Researchers found 71% of participants mistakenly recalled information they had acquired from the post-event discussion, rather than from the crime itself.
 - Memory contamination – co-witnesses mix (mis)information.
 - Memory conformity – witnesses go along with others for social approval.
- Accept other relevant theories/studies.

Possible AO3 discussion:

- The use of artificial materials in studies, e.g. a video of a car accident, is less anxiety-inducing than witnessing the event in real life. There are a lack of consequences in lab studies compared to real life.
- Researchers found that real witnesses to a bank robbery in Canada had very accurate recall four months later, despite two initial leading questions. This suggests that misleading information may have less influence in real life.
- Elderly people are more prone to the effects of misleading information. Although their memory for the event is unimpaired, they can’t remember the source of the information.
- Research support for the substitution explanation, such as the Bugs Bunny study.
- Research studies are biased against older people – they use younger people in identification tasks; it could be that older people are just as accurate, but the stimulus is biased against them.
- Real-world application: the criminal justice system used to rely heavily on EWT, but objective evidence is now crucial for determining a verdict, which helps stop miscarriages of justice.
- Real-world application: links to the cognitive interview.

- Demand characteristics in lab studies reduce their validity.

Credit other methodological issues in studies, e.g. sample bias.

Credit ethical issues if made relevant to the discussion.

Accept other relevant discussion points.

10. Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO2 = 4, AO3 = 6

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
4	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of different types of long-term memory is accurate and generally well detailed. • Application is effective. • Discussion is thorough and effective. • Minor detail and/or expansion of argument is sometimes lacking. • The answer is clear, coherent, and focused. • Specialist terminology is used effectively.
3	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of different types of long-term memory is evident but there are occasional inaccuracies/omissions. • Application and/or discussion is mostly effective. • The answer is mostly clear and organised but occasionally lacks focus. • Specialist terminology is used appropriately.
2	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge of different types of long-term memory is present. • Focus is mainly on description. • Any discussion and/or application is of limited effectiveness. • The answer lacks clarity, accuracy, and organisation in places. • Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of different types of long-term memory is very limited. • Discussion and/or application is limited, poorly focused, or absent. • The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Episodic memory refers to personal memories for ‘episodes’ (events) in our lives. Usually ‘time stamped’ and the emotion of the event is recalled. Can be consciously recalled.
- Semantic memory refers to shared knowledge about the world and the meanings of words. Not ‘time stamped’ or emotional. Added to through learning and experiences.
- Procedural memories are involved in the performance of tasks and skills. Referred to as ‘muscle memory’ because the memory becomes automatic with practice – it is recalled without conscious thought.
- Examples of different types of LTM, e.g. episodic (remembering first day at college), semantic (remembering terminology from psychology), procedural (remembering how to ride a bike).

Possible AO2 application:

- Shilpa remembering Tom’s leaving party (personal, emotional) is episodic memory.
- Shilpa remembering that the Eiffel Tower is in Paris (shared knowledge of the world) is semantic memory.
- Shilpa can’t recall swimming because it’s procedural memory (automatic).

Possible AO3 discussion:

- Brain scans found that episodic and semantic memories are associated with the hippocampus and temporal and frontal lobes. Procedural memory is associated with the cerebellum, limbic system, and basal ganglia. This suggests that different types of LTM are separate and rely on different areas of the brain.
- The case study of HM supports different types of LTM – he improved at a mirror-drawing task with practice (procedural) but had no memory of doing it (episodic), which suggests that procedural memory is a separate type of LTM that does not rely on the hippocampus.
- A fourth type of LTM is the perceptual-representation system (PRS) related to priming. A study of Alzheimer’s patients found they had their procedural and PRS memories intact, but not their explicit LTMs. The PRS is considered a fourth type of implicit LTM and suggests the original theory of LTM is too simplistic.
- Distinguishing between types of LTM means we can develop specific treatments for impairments of long-term memory. Older people with mild cognitive impairments were given training for episodic memory training tasks and later showed better recall than a control group that did not receive training.
- Problems with evidence from brain-damaged patients: the part of the brain that is damaged could be working as a ‘relay station’, which means that damage to the relay station would also impair performance.

Credit other relevant material.

Questions on previous content

1. Marks for this question: AO1 = 3

3 marks for a clear, coherent explanation using appropriate terminology.

2 marks for an explanation that lacks some clarity or detail.

1 mark for a brief or muddled explanation.

Possible AO1 content:

- Legitimacy of authority plays a role in obedience because a person is influenced to obey another due to that person's perceived social control in a situation, not because of their personal characteristics.
- The person being obeyed will usually have a 'badge' of authority such as a uniform or job title that indicates they are in charge.
- Credit other relevant material, e.g. Milgram believed people enter all situations with a shared expectation that someone is in charge. People allow the legitimate authority figure to 'define the situation'. If harmful orders are to be obeyed, the legitimate authority figure should have an institution to back them up, such as the military or university.

2. Marks for this question: AO3 = 3

3 marks for a clear, coherent limitation of Asch's research into conformity to the majority, using appropriate terminology.

2 marks for a limitation of Asch's research into conformity to the majority that lacks some clarity or detail.

1 mark for a brief or muddled limitation of Asch's research into conformity to the majority.

Possible AO3 evaluation:

- Issues with external validity: Asch's study had a low population validity (participants were white, middle-class, educated students). It had low mundane realism (no real-life consequences for conforming). It had low ecological validity (the laboratory environment could have demand characteristics).
- The Asch experiment took place during McCarthyism (when there was high conformity in the USA for fear of being labelled a communist). A UK replication in 1981 only had one count of conformity in 396 trials.
- Researchers found there are individual differences in conformity due to self-efficacy. A UK replication in 1981 only had one count of conformity in 396 trials because engineering students had high self-efficacy.
- Cultural beta bias: Asch's research missed that conformity varies between cultures.

Credit any valid limitation.

3. Marks for this question: AO1 = 4

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the role of locus of control in resisting social influence is clear and accurate. • The answer is mostly coherent with effective use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the role of locus of control in resisting social influence is briefly stated with little elaboration. • The answer may include inaccuracies and be poorly organised. • Specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Locus of control refers to the extent to which a person feels in control of the events that influence their life.
- The locus of control questionnaire identifies someone on a continuum from high internal to high external.
- High internal locus of control is when a person believes they are in control of their actions and are responsible for their successes and failures and have the power to resist social influence.
- Personality characteristics of a high internal are the '3As': achievement-orientated, able to resist coercion, active seekers of information.
- The 3As allow the person to resist social influence because they are confident in their decisions, can stand up for themselves, and are likely to be leaders instead of followers.

Credit other relevant material.

Note: the answer should focus on internal locus of control because the question is asking how people resist social influence. Content on external locus of control is creditworthy to Level 1 if there is no mention of how having an internal locus of control allows people to resist social influence. If external locus of control is used to compare to internal locus of control and the focus is on resisting social influence, Level 2 can be achieved.

4. Marks for this question: AO1 = 4

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the procedure AND findings of one study used to demonstrate minority influence is clear and accurate. • There is appropriate use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the procedure AND findings of one study used to demonstrate minority influence is muddled or briefly stated with little explanation. • Use of specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriate.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO1 content:

- Procedure: four naïve participants and two confederates were shown a series of 36 blue slides and asked to say whether the slides were blue or green. In condition 1, the confederates were consistent and said 'green' for every slide. In condition 2, the confederates were inconsistent and said 'green' for two thirds of the slides.
- Findings: there was 8% conformity in the consistent condition and less than 1% conformity in the inconsistent condition (virtually the same as the control group).
- Conclusion: for a minority to have any influence at all, they must be consistent.

Credit any relevant study.

5. Marks for this question: AO3 = 4

This question is level-marked:

Level	Marks	Description
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the role of social influence processes in social change is clear, appropriate, and effective. There is appropriate use of specialist terminology.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of the role of social influence processes in social change is limited or muddled. Use of specialist terminology is either absent or inappropriate.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible AO3 content:

- In one study, messages were displayed on front doors in California for a month. The experimental condition had a normative message that most people are trying to reduce their energy use, whereas the control just had an environmental message about the benefits of doing so. There were decreases in energy use in the experimental condition, providing evidence that majority influence does help bring about social change.
- However, in another study, researchers found that despite students receiving normative information that corrected their misperceptions of drinking norms, they continued to self-report binge drinking, and social change did not occur.
- A limitation of social norms interventions is the boomerang effect, which is when social norms interventions achieve the opposite of what they intended. For example, a group aims to increase pro-environmental behaviours by providing a normative message of what the majority are doing, but anyone already going further than the majority reduces their pro-environmental behaviour to fit in.
- It is harder to persuade a majority to convert to a minority viewpoint. Social change through minority influence *has* brought about permanent social change in the real world, however, change may be very gradual.

Credit other relevant evaluations.