psych/logic

**AQA A-level Psychology
Unit 1
(7182/1)**

SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Questions + Answers

SAMPLE MATERIAL

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – THE SYLLABUS

CONFORMITY
- Types of conformity – internalisation, identification and compliance
- Asch's research and variables affecting conformity: group size, unanimity and task difficulty
- Explanations for conformity: informational social influence and normative social influence
- Conformity to social roles as investigated by Zimbardo

OBEDIENCE
- Milgram's obedience research and situational variables affecting obedience: proximity, location and uniform
- Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority
- Dispositional explanation for obedience: the Authoritarian Personality

INDEPENDENT BEHAVIOUR
- Explanations of resistance to social influence: social support and locus of control

MINORITY INFLUENCE & SOCIAL CHANGE
- Minority influence including reference to consistency, commitment and flexibility
- The role of social influence processes in social change

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS
CONFORMITY
- **Types of conformity – internalisation, identification and compliance**

Explain what is meant by conformity.
(Total 2 marks)
Straight-forward definition: lines 1-3.

Explain what is meant by majority influence.
(Total 2 marks)
Same thing as conformity. Straight-forward definition: lines 1-3.

Explain what is meant by compliance.
(Total 3 marks)
Straight-forward definition but must give example for 3rd mark: lines 6-11.

Explain what is meant by compliance in the context of conformity.
(Total 2 marks)
Straight-forward definition. Give example to be on the safe side: lines 6-11.

One type of conformity is compliance. What do psychologists mean by compliance?
(Total 3 marks)
Straight-forward definition but must give example for 3rd mark: lines 6-11.

One type of conformity is identification. What do psychologists mean by identification?
(Total 3 marks)
Straight-forward definition but must give example for 3rd mark: lines 12-18.

Explain what is meant by internalisation.
(Total 3 marks)
Straight-forward definition but must give example for 3rd mark: lines 19-23.

Explain what is meant by internalisation in the context of conformity.
(Total 2 marks)

Explain the difference between compliance and internalisation.
(Total 2 marks)

Which two of the following are types of conformity? Shade two boxes only.

A	Agentic state	
B	Compliance	
C	Group size	
D	Identification	
E	Unanimity	

(Total 2 marks)

The following statements are all related to conformity.
  A   Doing what the group does in order to be liked by them.
  B   Doing what the group does because we do not know what else to do.
  C   Going along with the group, even if we do not really agree with what they are doing.
  D   Going along with the group because we accept their beliefs and attitudes into our own cognitions.
In the table below, write which statement, A, B, C or D, describes each type of conformity.

Type of conformity	Statement
Internalisation	
Compliance	

(Total 2 marks)

The following phrases refer to different types of conformity.
Select the two phrases that describe internalisation. Tick two boxes only.

A   The deepest level of conformity. ☐

B   The individual conforms publicly with the rest of the group but may privately disagree with them. ☐

C   The beliefs of the group become part of the individual's own belief system. ☐

D   The individual goes along with the group but does not agree with them. ☐

E   The individual changes his / her beliefs, but it is a temporary change. ☐

(Total 2 marks)

A & C.
Lines 19-23.

Select the phrase that best describes internalisation.
Shade one box only.

A	The individual adopts a role as a member of a group	⬭
B	The individual changes his/her behaviour but it is a temporary change	⬭
C	The individual changes his/her public and private beliefs	⬭
D	The individual goes along with the group but does not agree with them	⬭

(Total 1 mark)

C.
Lines 19-23.

When Josh and Nate first started work they both used their cars to get to work. All the other people in their department were very environmentally aware and used public transport or bikes wherever possible rather than their own cars. Josh is now happy to ride his bike to work every day but at the weekend still uses his car. Nate listened to his colleagues' point of view and now used public transport whenever he can.

Explain which type of conformity Josh is showing and which type of conformity Nate is showing. (Total 4 marks)

Josh = compliance – lines 6-11.
Nate = internalisation – lines 19-23.
Outline the definitions and refer to Josh and Nate's use of bikes/public transport versus cars.

It is Ani's first day in a new job and he spends a lot of time watching to see what his colleagues are doing, so that he will fit in with them and be liked. Explain Ani's behaviour in terms of compliance. (Total 2 marks)

Lines 6-11.
Outline the definition stating that Ani wants to be approved of and accepted by his new colleagues and even if he doesn't privately agree with what they say and do he publicly goes along with them to be accepted in his new job.

Jan and Norah have just finished their first year at university where they lived in a house with six other students. All the other students were very health conscious and ate only organic food. Jan had listened to their point of view and now she also eats only organic food. Norah was happy to eat organic food while in the house, but when she went home for the holidays she ate whatever her mother cooked. Both girls conformed, but for different reasons.
Explain which type of conformity each girl was showing.
(Total 4 marks)

Jan = internalisation; Norah = compliance.
Lines 6-11 & 18-23.
Answer.
"Jan shows internalisation. She has publicly and privately changed her attitudes and now permanently only eats organic food. Norah is showing compliance. She only conformed publicly to her friends' behaviour but had obviously not privately undergone attitude change to eating organic as she reverted to eating non-organic in the holidays. Norah probably conformed to gain group approval and membership whereas Jan believed the other students to be 'right' in their belief that organic food was 'good'."

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

CONFORMITY

- ## Asch's research and variables affecting conformity: group size, unanimity and task difficulty

Describe the procedures and findings of one study into conformity.

(Total 6 marks)

Lines 24-51.

Outline 2 criticisms of Asch's research into conformity.

(Total 6 marks)

Lines 52-63.

Evaluate research into conformity.

(Total 6 marks)

Lines 52-63. Or any of the points between lines 52-73.

Discuss research into conformity.

(Total 8 marks)

Spend ½ the time describing Asch's study: lines 24-46, and ½ the time evaluating Asch's study: lines 52-68.

Outline and evaluate research into conformity.

(Total 16 marks)

Lines 24-73 + 74-77 + 83-87 + 92-95.

Most research into conformity takes place in a laboratory. Outline one strength of conducting research into conformity in a laboratory.

(Total 2 marks)

More of a Research Methods question but needs to be about studying conformity in a laboratory.
Unit 2 Research Methods Syllabus Notes: lines 221-224.
Answer.
"Conducting research into conformity under tightly controlled laboratory conditions allows experimenters to isolate the effect of the independent variable (e.g. 'size of the majority') on the dependent variable (e.g. levels of conformity) to determine cause-effect relationships between the variables they are testing and conformity. Extraneous variables can be controlled or eliminated."

(a) Outline one method that psychologists have used to study conformity. (2)
(b) Explain one limitation of this method. (2)
(c) Suggest an appropriate way of overcoming this limitation. (2)
(Total 6 marks)

Discuss at least two factors that have been shown to affect conformity. Refer to evidence in your answer.
(Total 16 marks)

In an experiment into conformity, an experimenter varied both the number of confederates (stooges) and the ambiguity of the task. The bar chart below shows the findings.

Percentages of conformity for different tasks and size of majority
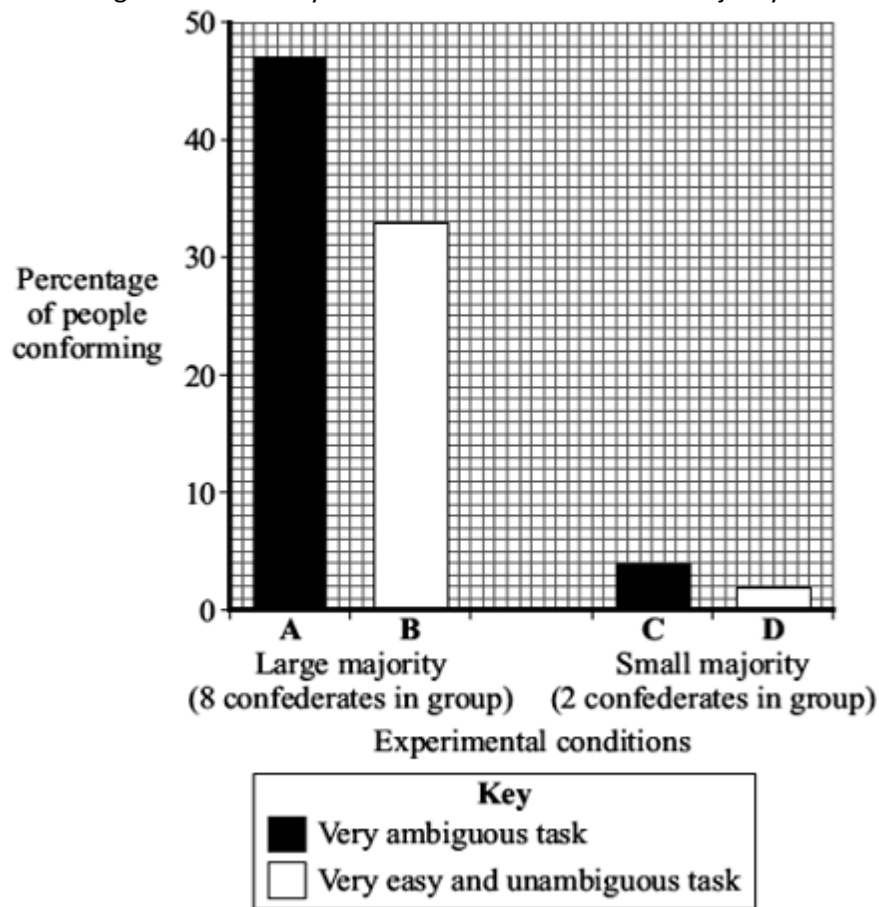
What does the bar chart show about conformity?
(Total 4 marks)

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS

CONFORMITY

- **Explanations for conformity: informational social influence and normative social influence**

Which of the following terms best matches the statements below? Choose one term that matches each statement and write A, B, C, D or E in the box next to it. Use each letter once only.

A	Identification
B	Informational social influence
C	Normative social influence
D	Compliance
E	Internalisation

(a)	Publicly changing behaviour whilst maintaining a different private view.	

(b)	Group pressure leading to a desire to fit in with the group.	

(c)	When a person lacks knowledge of how to behave and looks to the group for guidance.	

(d)	Looks to the group for guidance.	

(Total 4 marks)

A = D (lines 12-18).
B = C (lines 108-119).
C = B (lines 101-107).
D = A (lines 6-11).
Answers B, C & D are obvious. Answer A is a classic example of a badly-phrased question by the exam board and lots of students got this wrong/were confused. If confronted with a badly written question like this in the exam try to get the right answers by elimination – i.e. put down what you know is right first, then go for the least bad option with what's remaining.

Explain what is meant by informational social influence.
(Total 3 marks)
Straight-forward definition. No need to give example.
Lines 108-113.

Explain what is meant by normative social influence.
(Total 3 marks)

Straight-forward definition. No need to give example.
Lines 101-107.

Briefly outline and evaluate normative social influence as an explanation of conformity.
(Total 4 marks)

Outline – lines 102-103 + 105-107.
Evaluate – say that research evidence provides support for this explanation and outline Schultz's study – lines 127-133.

Josie, Hana and Caitlyn have just started new jobs and all three are keen to do well. Josie laughs a lot at the jokes her colleagues tell, even though she does not always find them very funny. Hana observes her colleagues closely and makes sure that she completes the work in the same way that they do, so that she does not make any mistakes. Caitlyn prefers to learn through trial and error. She believes that by trying and by making mistakes, she will really understand what she is doing.
Which girl's behaviour is being influenced by normative social influence and which girl's behaviour is being influenced by informational social influence? Justify both choices.
(Total 6 marks)

Caitlyn is not doing anything – she just there to distract/confuse.
1 mark for simply stating Josie: normative social influence; Hana: informational social influence.
2 further marks for each girl for saying why…
Lines 101-107 for Josie.
Lines 108-119 for Hana.
Your answer needs to explain why they're showing this type of conformity. Josie wants to be liked and accepted and is outwardly conforming. Hana doesn't know how she should act in this 'unclear', 'novel' situation so looks to her more experienced colleagues to know what the 'right' way to act and behave is.

(a)   What is meant by normative social influence? (2)
(b)   Andrea has recently started a new job and on her first day at work she noticed that all her colleagues were much more smartly dressed than she was.
Explain the likely effect of normative social influence on Andrea's behaviour. (2)
(Total 4 marks)

(a) Lines 102-103 + 105-107.
(b) Answer.
"To seek approval from her new colleagues she will start dressing more smartly in an attempt to gain acceptance and avoid rejection. Normative social influence suggests that Andrea is motivated by a desire to avoid social disapproval and seek acceptance and be liked by the group."

Outline and evaluate explanations of conformity.
(Total 8 marks)

Outline = lines 99-113 (edit Informational Social Influence a bit).
Evaluate = lines 126-139 & 144-150.

Read the item and then answer the question that follows.

> Polly always checks what her friends are going to wear before she gets ready to go out because she does not like to be the odd one out.
> Jed watches his colleagues carefully when he starts a new job so that he can work out where to put his things and how long to take for lunch.

Discuss two explanations for conformity. Refer to Polly and Jed in your discussion.
(Total 16 marks)

Lines 99-158.
6 marks for knowledge of informational and normative social influence – lines: 99-119.
6 marks for evaluation/discussion – lines: 120-158.
4 marks for application – i.e. how research can be related to Polly and Jed. As you go through the essay when you come across a point which relates to either of them simply say, "This relates to Polly always checking what her friends are wearing as she wants to be approved of and liked by the group and fears disapproval and embarrassment if she thinks she's not dressed like the rest of her friends", etc. Try and relate material back to Polly 2 times and Jed 2 times. For example, Polly (i) checks what her friends are wearing, (ii) she doesn't like to be the odd one out; Jed (i) watches his colleagues carefully, (ii) so that he can work out where to put things and how long to take for lunch.

Steph and Jeff are student teachers who recently joined other members of staff on a one-day strike. When asked why they decided to do so, Steph replied, 'I never thought I would strike but I listened to the other teachers' arguments and now I have become quite passionate about it'.
Jeff's explanation was different: 'To be honest, everyone else seemed to be striking and I didn't want to be the only one who wasn't'.

Discuss explanations for conformity. Refer to Steph and Jeff as part of your discussion.
(Total 16 marks)

Lines 99-158.
6 marks for knowledge of informational (Steph) and normative (Jeff) social influence – lines: 99-119.
6 marks for evaluation/discussion – lines: 120-158.
4 marks for application – i.e. how research can be related to Steph and Jeff. As you go through the essay when you come across a point which relates to either of them simply say, "This relates to Steph saying that she listened to other teachers' arguments and believed them to be true", etc. Try and relate material back to Steph 2 times and Jeff 2 times. For example, Steff (i) listened to other teachers' arguments and believed them to be true, (ii) she wanted to be 'right' in an ambiguous/novel situation; Jeff (i) everyone else was striking, (ii) he didn't want to be the only one who wasn't.

A group of students has to decide what to do with the money left over in their school fund. Most of them want to give the money to a local charity. However, two students, Lisa and Sean, want to buy a pool table for the common room.

Briefly explain how two factors might affect whether or not Lisa and Sean will conform to the rest of the group.

(Total 4 marks)

Answer. 2 factors only.

- *"They are less likely to conform if they have someone else who goes against the majority (a dissenter). Asch found that the presence of a dissenter reduced conformity to 5.5% (lines 92-96). Asch found that even when a dissenter gave a different but wrong answer to the majority, participants were more likely to show independent behaviour (lines 96-98). Therefore, even if a dissenter went against both groups and suggested buying something different with the money Sean and Lisa may be less likely to conform.*
- *Normative influence theory would suggest that if Lisa and Sean value membership of the group they will be more likely to conform to be liked and accepted by their fellow students and not be disapproved of or rejected by them (lines 101-107). Therefore, they may give in to group pressure and show compliance or identification just to retain group membership and friendship."*

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS
CONFORMITY
- **Conformity to social roles as investigated by Zimbardo**

Which two of the following statements about Zimbardo's prison study are correct?
Shade two boxes only.
The study showed how…

A	Roles affect behaviour.	○
B	People obey authority.	○
C	Unanimity affects behaviour.	○
D	People conform to the majority.	○
E	Behaviour is influenced by loss of identity.	○

(Total 2 marks)
A. Lines 159-160.
E. Lines 160-162.

Outline the procedures and findings of Zimbardo's research into conformity to social roles.
(4 marks)
Lines 163-167 + 170-175.

Briefly discuss two criticisms of Zimbardo's research into conformity to social roles.
(Total 4 marks)
Lines 181-186 – ethics.
Lines 195-199 – ecological validity.

Many people have criticised Zimbardo's prison study.
Identify and briefly discuss two reasons why people have criticised Zimbardo's prison study.
(6 marks)
Lines 181-190 – ethics.
Lines 195-202 – ecological validity.

Describe and evaluate Zimbardo's research into conformity to social roles.
(16 marks)
Lines 159-214.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS
OBEDIENCE

- **Milgram's obedience research and situational variables affecting obedience: proximity, location and uniform**

Explain what is meant by obedience.
(Total 2 marks)
Straight-forward definition: lines 215-216.

Outline the procedures and findings of Milgram's study into obedience.
(Total 6 marks)
Lines 226-240.

Milgram's work can be criticised for being unethical. Describe one way in which his work is unethical.
(Total 2 marks)
Any one of the ethical criticisms: lines 248-261, but I suggest 'consent': lines 248-250.

Describe two ethical issues that can be illustrated by Milgram's research into obedience to authority.
(Total 4 marks)
Any two of the ethical criticisms: lines 248-261, but I suggest 'consent': lines 248-250 and 'deception' lines 251-253.

Some psychologists criticise Milgram's research into obedience to authority in terms of both methodological issues and ethical issues.
Explain two criticisms of Milgram's research.
(Total 6 marks)
Any two of the ethical or methodological criticisms: lines 248-275 but I suggest 'lack of ecological validity' and 'demand characteristics': lines 263-275.

(a) Milgram's experiments into obedience can be criticised as being unethical.
Describe two ethical issues that can be illustrated by Milgram's research. (4)
(b)   Choose one of the ethical issues identified in your answer to (a) and explain
 a way of dealing with it. (2)
(Total 6 marks)

(a) Any two of the ethical criticisms: lines 248-261, but I suggest 'consent': lines 248-250 and 'deception' lines 251-253.

(b) Debriefing (see Unit 2 Research Methods: lines 489-492).

Answer.

"Deception could be dealt with by debriefing participants once the study was complete. The experimenter would explain to the participant why it had been necessary to deceive them (e.g. so that the participant believed that the situation was real). The experimenter would also explain why the study had been conducted, answer any questions that the participant had, and reassure them that their behaviour was not 'bad'/'wrong', etc."

Apart from ethical issues, give one strength and one limitation of Milgram's methodology.
(Total 4 marks)

Lab based experimental research (strength) and lack of ecological validity (limitation).

Answer.

- *"Strength. Conducting research into obedience under tightly controlled laboratory conditions allows experimenters to isolate the effect of the independent variable (for example 'proximity' on the dependent variable (for example, levels of obedience) to determine cause-effect relationships between the variables they want to test and obedience." (See Unit 2 Research Methods: lines 221-224.)*
- *"Limitation...." See lines 264-268 on lack of ecological validity.*

Some research into obedience has been carried out in laboratories. Other studies into obedience have been carried out in the real world, including field experiments and observations.
(a)   Outline one advantage of conducting obedience research outside a laboratory setting.
(b)   Outline one limitation of conducting obedience research outside a laboratory setting.
 (Total 4 marks)

Answer.

- *"Conducting obedience research in the real world, as Hofling did, has high levels of ecological validity. Participants are put into real-life situations where their obedience is tested, so the obedience task they are asked to perform is realistic and findings can be generalised to how people behave in the real world." (See Unit 2 Research Methods Syllabus Notes: lines 235-236.)*
- *A limitation is that there is a lack of control over extraneous variables and the experimenter cannot isolate the effect of the independent variable (e.g. proximity) on the dependent variable (obedience) to determine cause-effect relationships between variables being tested and obedience." (See Unit 2 Research Methods Syllabus Notes: lines 241-243.)*

Which two of the following are situational variables that can affect obedience? Choose two from the options A, B, C, D and E.

    A. Proximity
    B. Flexibility
    C. Identification
    D. Authoritarian personality
    E. Location

(Total 2 marks)

A & E.
Lines 289-293 & 309-313.

The following results are percentages of participants who gave the maximum shock, in variations of Milgram's experiment into obedience to authority.

Condition	% Participants obeying
Experimenter and two obedient confederates are in the same room as the participant.	92.5%
Experimenter is in the same room as the participant.	65%
Experimenter is in a different room from the participant.	20.5%
Experimenter and two disobedient confederates are in the same room as the participant.	10%

What do these results suggest about the power of the confederates in variations of Milgram's study?
(Total 4 marks)

Slight trick question – it only asks about confederate so no need to include material on the experimenter being in the same or a different room.
Relates to disobedience due to social support: lines 502-506, and conformity: lines 101-119.
Answer:
"With 2 disobedient confederates obedience levels were very low (10%) compared to the standard level of obedience Milgram found in his original study (65%). Thus, others who are disobedient may act as role models on whom we base our own behaviour and provide a sense of social support, strength and group opposition to the authority figure.
With 2 obedient confederates obedience levels were very high (92.5%). This can be related to explanations of conformity – participants may have conformed to the confederates obedience out of a desire to be liked and accepted and avoid disapproval (normative social influence), or because they were unsure how to behave and looked to the other confederates for guidance (informational social influence)."

When you are a passenger on a train, you are much more likely to move to another seat if the ticket collector tells you to move than if another passenger tells you to do so.
Use your knowledge of why people obey to explain this behaviour.
(Total 4 marks)

The role of uniform: lines 301-308.
You must relate the syllabus material to the example: e.g. the ticket collector's uniform and passengers obeying him.

Identify two factors that have been shown to affect obedience to authority.
Briefly discuss how each of these factors affects obedience to authority.
(Total 6 marks)

Proximity: lines 289-299.
Uniform: lines 301-308.

Briefly describe how proximity affects obedience.
(Total 4 marks)

Proximity: lines 289-299.

Outline research into the effect of situational variables on obedience and discuss what this tells us about why people obey.
(Total 16 marks)

Start by briefly summarising the procedures and findings of Milgram's original study. Start by saying, 'In Milgram's original study…' & summarise lines 226-240.
Then say, 'To test which variables increased/decreased levels of obedience Milgram conducted variations of his study and fully describe proximity, uniform and location: lines 287-313.
Criticise Milgram's study – should we accept his findings/conclusions..? Summarise lines 248-275.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE – QUESTIONS + ANSWERS
OBEDIENCE
- ## Explanations for obedience: agentic state and legitimacy of authority

Which of the following statements best describe the agentic state?

A	People feel responsible for their actions and act according to their own principles	⬭
B	People feel that they are not responsible for the actions of a group	⬭
C	People make others feel responsible for their actions	⬭
D	People no longer feel responsible for their actions as they are acting for an authority figure	⬭

(Total 1 mark)
D.
Lines 343-347.

Outline two explanations of why people obey.
(Total 4 marks)
Legitimate authority: lines 318-320.
Agentic shift: lines 342-347.

Milgram's work into obedience provided us with valuable insights into why people obey, even though it was carried out in a laboratory.
Outline two explanations of why people obey.
(Total 4 marks)
Legitimate authority: lines 318-320.
Agentic shift: lines 342-347.
No need to refer to Milgram or laboratories.

Explain one or more reasons why people obey authority.
(Total 6 marks)
Legitimate authority: lines 318-327.
Agentic shift: lines 342-351.

Outline two explanations for obedience. (6)
Briefly evaluate one of the explanations that you have outlined in your answer. (3)
(Total 9 marks)

2 explanations. Legitimate authority: lines 318-327; Agentic shift: lines 342-351.
Evaluation: Legitimate authority is supported by research evidence which provides evidence for this
theory: lines 336-340.

Outline and evaluate one or more explanations of why people obey.
(Total 16 marks)

Lines 317-374.

[end of sample questions]