

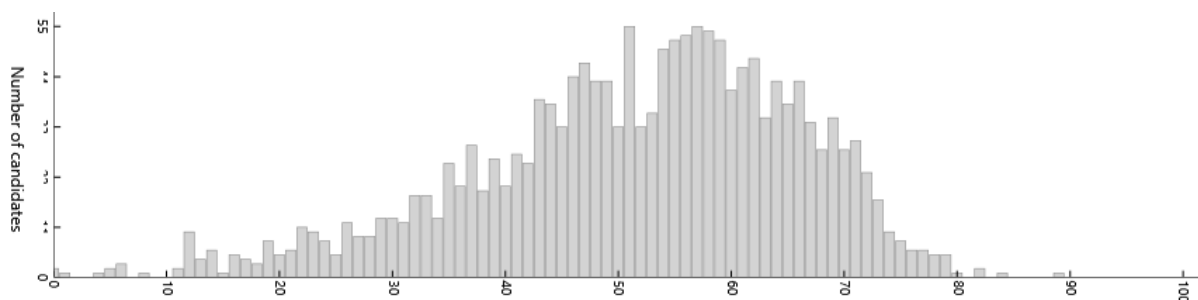


Summary report of the 2022 ATAR course examination report: Psychology

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2022	1700	57
2021	1824	48
2020	1839	49
2019	1950	22

The number of candidates sitting and the number attempting each section of the examination can differ as a result of non-attempts across sections of the examination.

Examination score distribution–Written



Summary

The examination followed the design brief, utilising syllabus terminology to formulate the questions. The examination incorporated empirical data as stimuli for questions. Research methods were assessed in the Extended answer section. The examination used a range of verbs to allow for candidate achievement at varying levels of difficulty. While the overall mean of this examination decreased from 53.89% in 2021, the means of Sections One and Three both increased.

Attempted by 1700 candidates Mean 51.40% Max 88.57% Min 0.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Research methods	Mean 55.97%		
Attempted by 1697 candidates	Mean 11.19(/20)	Max 18.06	Min 0.00
Section Two: Short answer	Mean 50.39%		
Attempted by 1699 candidates	Mean 27.71(/55)	Max 49.39	Min 0.00
Section Three: Extended answer	Mean 49.97%		
Attempted by 1674 candidates	Mean 12.49(/25)	Max 22.36	Min 0.00

General comments

The examination was accessible with the maximum possible mark reached for all but three questions, including all components of the Extended answer questions. The examination allowed for discrimination between the candidates and there was a balance of questions from across the syllabus. The majority of candidates could complete all of the paper in the given time. It was observed that a significant proportion of candidates struggled with the 'define' style questions, often giving non-psychological, everyday definitions, instead of psychological definitions.

Advice for candidates

- Use syllabus content points as the primary reference for any revision.
- Remember that any and all parts of the syllabus are examinable content.
- Know the syllabus theorists related to psychology covered in the course.
- Do not rely on one particular textbook, as it may not provide all the information needed to succeed and may not address all syllabus content.
- Use psychological language correctly and often.
- There is an expectation that you can understand, explain, and apply your learning. There is also an expectation that you can recount the simpler understandings.
- Ensure you are answering the question being asked and avoid pre-prepared responses.
- Pay attention to the verb of the question and respond accordingly. Take time to learn the command verb as defined in the *Glossary of key words used in the formulation of questions*, which is available online through the course page.
- Care needs to be exercised when reading any context or scenario for a question. You should highlight the key components in the scenario to assist with your responses to the questions.
- Attempt all question parts.
- If using diagrams in the Extended answer section, ensure they are referred to in the body of the text.
- Plan your Extended answer responses to maximise marks.

Advice for teachers

- There are varying levels of questioning in all examinations; emphasise the need for students to recall, explain, and apply elements of the syllabus.
- Refer to the *Glossary of key words used in the formulation of questions* and provide opportunities for students to practise identifying the key course terms, isolating the question verb and applying their response.
- Do not rely solely on one textbook; use various resources and textbooks to cover the syllabus.

Comments on specific sections and questions

Section One: Research methods (36 Marks)

Section One consisted of two questions covering syllabus content on planning, conducting, processing, and evaluating psychological research. The average of 55.97% was higher than in 2021 (53.73%). Some candidates demonstrated limited or generic understanding of areas of the syllabus content. The difference between experimental, non-experimental and non-scientific research and knowledge of the ethical issues as outlined in the Units 3 and 4 syllabus were areas of weakness identified in this examination.

Section Two: Short answer (103 Marks)

Section Two's mean was lower than the 2021 examination. While most candidates did well in lower-order questions requiring recall, they struggled with application style questions. Some theories appeared to be superficially understood, and more depth of knowledge is required to be able to apply the theories and research to unknown scenarios or experimental data. In addition, candidates need to ensure they read the question carefully and concisely to formulate their responses.

Section Three: Extended answer (52 Marks)

The mean for Section Three was slightly higher than the 2021 examination. Candidates who did poorly were not coherent in their responses, and their answers did not flow well. This often made it difficult to award marks. Candidates would have benefited from planning their

answers, ensuring they answered the questions being asked, and not use rote-learned information without applying it to the question or use pre-prepared responses. Application to a situation or context was a requirement of the examination. The practice of applying psychological concepts and understandings should have formed part of candidate's examination preparation. Stronger candidates used psychological terminology correctly and regularly. Handwriting was often an issue and made it difficult to read and award marks.