



SAMPLE ASSESSMENT TASKS

PSYCHOLOGY
ATAR YEAR 12

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Sample assessment task

Psychology – ATAR Year 12

Task 2 – Unit 3

Assessment type: Project

Conditions

Period allowed for completion of the task:

- two weeks research on theories and processes of learning
- two lessons in class to produce a training manual under supervised conditions

Task weighting

7.5% of the school mark for this pair of units

Training manual for the family pet

(42 marks)

The RSPCA has assigned you the task of creating a training manual to be given to people who adopt cats and dogs. This manual needs to be informative and provide clear instructions for owners to use when training their new pets.

Your manual will need to include:

- an introduction, including the purpose of the manual and a brief description of what is included
- background information on three theories and processes of learning, including:
 - classical conditioning
 - operant conditioning
 - observational learning
- a step-by-step guide of how each theory of learning (listed above) can be applied to allow a cat or dog to learn a desired behaviour
- conclusions about the effectiveness of each training method by referring to its strengths and/or limitations
- a list of references using APA conventions.

Marking key for sample assessment task 2 – Unit 3

Description	Marks
Introduction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a plausible purpose of the manual 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly summarises the major points of the manual 	1–2
Subtotal	3
Background information – three theories and processes of learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a clear and descriptive outline of each theory or process of learning (up to 3 marks for each theory or process) 	1–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly outlines the theory or process of learning (up to 2 marks for each theory or process) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly comments on some parts of the theory or process of learning (1 mark for each theory or process) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides clear summaries of studies/research used to support the theory of learning (up to 3 marks for each theory or process) 	1–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> outlines studies/research used to support the theory of learning (up to 2 marks for each theory or process) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly comments on some parts of studies/research used to support the theory of learning (1 mark for each theory or process) 	
Subtotal	18
Step by step guide for the application of each theory or process	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to a suitable behaviour for each theory or process to demonstrate the application of the learning theory (1 mark for a behaviour for each theory or process) 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct application of each theory or process, demonstrated through clear steps used to train the pet (up to 3 marks for each theory or process) 	1–9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> application of each theory or process is attempted through steps used to train the pet (up to 2 marks for each theory or process) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> steps used to train the pet do not always reflect the learning theory or process (1 mark for each theory or process) 	
Subtotal	12
Conclusion about the effectiveness of each theory or process	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly outlines the usefulness of using each training method to train a pet, referring to limitations and/or strengths (up to 2 marks for each theory or process) 	1–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly comments on the usefulness of using a training method to train a pet (1 mark for each theory or process) 	
Subtotal	6
References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes a range of relevant references using correct APA referencing conventions 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes references using correct APA referencing conventions 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes some references, without referencing conventions 	
Subtotal	3
Total	42

Sample assessment task

Psychology – ATAR Year 12

Task 3 – Unit 3

Assessment type: Investigation

Conditions

Time for the task:

- one week to conduct the investigation, collect the data and research the evidence for the role of serial position effect in short-term memory
- one lesson to write the scientific report in class under supervised conditions

Materials required for writing the scientific report:

- data (tables and graphs)
- list of references
- questionnaire and responses
- a half-A4 page of notes

Task weighting

7.5% of the school mark for this pair of units

Examining short-term memory through the serial position effect

(46 marks)

You will be examining your short-term memory through the serial position effect. Specifically, you will investigate whether your ability to recall items from a list reflects the pattern suggested by the serial position effect, i.e. more items from the start and end of a list are recalled correctly than items in the middle of the list.

Participants in this investigation will be required to remember and recall as accurately as possible sets of 10-digits in the order they are presented. Participants will be presented with five sets of digits and will be given the chance to recall the digits at the end of each set on a provided data sheet. The data collection for this investigation will take place during regular class time.

Using your class notes and library research, make succinct notes on the theories and evidence related to this topic. You are permitted a half-A4 page of notes to write your scientific report.

Your scientific report will include:

- an abstract – provide an overview of the investigation, including the aim, hypothesis, main features of the method, summary of results and conclusion/s
- an introduction – provide information and research related to the topic for the investigation
- method – describe the participants, materials and procedures so that the investigation can be replicated
- results – represent data in a written summary, tables and graphs
- discussion and evaluation
 - discuss the results of the investigation and how they relate to relevant psychological theories
 - evaluate the design of the investigation and explain how the investigation could be improved
 - discuss how ethical issues were addressed
 - explain the relevance of the results to the population from which the sample was drawn, and to theory or other research
- conclusion – relate the results to the hypothesis or research question
- references – provide an alphabetical list of any references used in the report
- appendix – attach your data sheet.

Marking key for sample assessment task 3 – Unit 3

	Marks
Abstract	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> states an aim/hypothesis hypothesis is operational 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> briefly describes the method, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the participants materials used how the task was administered 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> states the results of the research draws a relevant conclusion 	1–2
Subtotal	7
Introduction	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes a relevant statement about short-term memory (STM), describing its main features 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes some comments about STM 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains the serial position effect describes the serial position effect briefly comments on the serial position effect 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supports above information with reference to relevant research refers to some research without making links to the topic 	1–2
Subtotal	7
Method	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes participants in sufficient detail to be replicated, e.g. number, age, gender describes the selection process 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes materials provides sufficient detail to be replicated 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes the procedure, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses anonymity describes task in sufficient detail to be replicated describes the collection, collation and presentation of results 	1–3
Subtotal	7
Results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> organises all relevant data logically in correctly labelled tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> correctly organises table correctly labels table, including units, where appropriate includes relevant data 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> presents data in a graph <ul style="list-style-type: none"> correctly graphs data uses appropriate labelling uses appropriate titles 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> states results of the investigation provides an accurate summary of the data 	1–2
Subtotal	8

Discussion and evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses the results of the investigation, relates the results to the hypothesis and explains how they relate to relevant psychological theories 	1–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses the results of the research, comments on the hypothesis and describes relevant psychological theories 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes what happened in the investigation and cites relevant psychological theories 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describes what happened in the investigation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses any methodological flaws and explains how the investigation design could be improved, and explains ways to ensure reliability 	1–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains how variables are controlled and suggests ways to improve reliability 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> states that variables need to be controlled and suggests how to improve reliability 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses ethical issues and describes how these were addressed 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refers to ethical issues that were considered in the investigation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses relevance of results to the population from which the sample was drawn as well as to theory or other research referred to in the introduction 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suggests how the investigation might be of relevance to science or society 	
Subtotal	11
Conclusion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes accurate conclusions that relate to the hypothesis or research question 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> forms an accurate conclusion but does not relate it to the hypothesis or research question 	
Subtotal	2
References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lists relevant references includes a range of references lists references alphabetically 	1–3
Subtotal	3
Appendix	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> appends data sheet 	1
Subtotal	1
Total	46

Sample assessment task

Psychology – ATAR Year 12

Task 10 – Unit 4

Assessment type: Response

Conditions

Time for the task: one hour

Task weighting

5% of the school mark for this pair of units

Topic test: Social psychology

1. Define the following terms:

(a) Social facilitation

(1 mark)

(b) Social inhibition

(1 mark)

2. Describe the process of group polarisation and provide an example of where this process is seen.

(3 marks)

3. (a) Define what is meant by the term 'attribution' in psychology.

(2 marks)

(b) Describe the contributions made to the attribution theory by:

(i) Heider

(4 marks)

(ii) Kelley

(4 marks)

4. (a) Tamara and Jamie both smoke cigarettes for the first time. Tamara believes that smoking cigarettes is 'fun'. Jamie believes that smoking cigarettes is 'unhealthy'. Which person will experience the greater cognitive dissonance? Provide a brief reason for your answer.

(2 marks)

- (b) Explain, using cognitive dissonance theory, why a person who is paid \$5 to complete a very boring task might rate the task as more interesting than someone who is paid \$100.

(3 marks)

5. Extended answer (32 marks)

Tim has nominated himself to become a school leader. Teachers begin to observe his behaviour to see if he would be suitable for the role. They make some interesting observations. They notice that, on some occasions, Tim conforms to the behaviour of those around him while, at other times, he does not conform. They also notice that Tim is not always obedient.

Discuss **six** factors that determine whether Tim will conform and obey at school. Support your response with reference to studies by Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo.

Your response should include:

- definitions of conformity and obedience
- outline of studies by Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo [method, results and conclusions]
- descriptions of **three** factors which determine whether Tim will conform
- descriptions of **three** factors which determine whether Tim will obey.

Marking key for sample assessment task 10 – Unit 4

1. Define the following terms:

(a) Social facilitation

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase or boost performance when in the company of others 	1
Total	1

(b) Social inhibition

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lessening of performance when in the company of others OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> lessening of performance when performing complex tasks 	1
Total	1

2. Describe the process of group polarisation and provide an example of where this process is seen.

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> individuals in a group with others who hold similar attitudes or beliefs will have opinions strengthened 	1–2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> examples include: KKK, terrorist groups, gangs, football crowds (or any other logical and correct answer) 	1
Total	3

3. (a) Define what is meant by the term ‘attribution’ in psychology.

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making a decision about a behaviour decision is based on the perceived cause of behaviour 	1–2
Total	2

(b) Describe the contribution made to the attribution theory by:

(i) Heider

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heider believed people make two types of attributions internal attributions, such as attributing the behaviour to personality or emotional stability external attributions, such as attributing the behaviour to the situation or environmental factors internal attributions are usually made when explaining the behaviour of others while external attributions are usually made when explaining our own behaviour 	1–4
Total	4

(ii) Kelley

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kelley's theory suggests individuals take in three types of information when making decisions about whether a person's behaviour is due to internal or external factors consensus – whether others act the same way in a similar situation distinctiveness – whether the individual acts the same way in other situations consistency – whether the individual always acts the same way when the situation occurs again 	1–4
Total	4

4. (a) Tamara and Jamie both smoke cigarettes for the first time. Tamara believes that smoking cigarettes is 'fun'. Jamie believes that smoking cigarettes is 'unhealthy'. Which person will experience the greater cognitive dissonance? Provide a brief reason for your answer.

Description	Marks
Jamie (will experience the greater cognitive dissonance)	1
Any correct explanation of cognitive dissonance theory acceptable for one mark, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> because her behaviour of smoking a cigarette is inconsistent with her belief that smoking is unhealthy because her behaviour is not consistent with her attitude (about smoking) 	1
Total	2

- (b) Explain, using cognitive dissonance theory, why a person who is paid \$5 to complete a very boring task might rate the task as more interesting than someone who is paid \$100.

Description	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct explanation of cognitive dissonance theory the person who was paid only \$5 would be less likely to be able to justify doing the task due to the payment and would experience cognitive dissonance to reduce this cognitive dissonance, the person would be likely to rate the task as more interesting 	1–3
Total	3

5. Extended answer

Discuss **six** factors that determine whether Tim will conform and obey at school. Support your response with reference to studies by Asch, Milgram and Zimbardo.

Description	Marks
Definitions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conformity – changing behaviour and attitude in response to group pressure (to fit in) obedience – changing behaviour in response to instruction or direct request by an authority figure 	1–2
Subtotal	2
Asch’s (1951) line judgement experiment	
Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> naive participants were asked to judge the length of lines in a room with seven confederates who agreed to give the incorrect answers they were all asked to answer aloud which comparison line was most like the original line 	1–2
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of participants conformed and gave the incorrect answer at least once 	1
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> this shows that, when in a group setting, individuals are likely to conform to the pressure of the group 	1
Subtotal	4
Milgram’s (1963) obedience experiment	
Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participants believed they were randomly assigned the role of teacher while another participant (confederate) was assigned the role of learner the experimenter was dressed in a lab coat and asked the teacher to administer electric shocks with increased volts every time the learner made a mistake the experimenter also urged the teacher to continue when they began to resist giving the shocks 	1–2
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of participants continued to shock the learner to the highest voltage of 450 (all participants reached 300 volts) 	1
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people tend to obey authority figures 	1
Subtotal	4
Zimbardo’s (1973) prison experiment	
Method <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigated conformity to social roles by setting up a role-play situation that replicated prison life participants were randomly assigned the role of guard or prisoner and were given appropriate uniforms 	1–2
Results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> guards became more aggressive and demanded greater obedience; prisoners gradually became more submissive 	1
Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> people will conform to the social roles expected of them, taking on the typical behaviour 	1
Subtotal	4

Factors which determine whether Tim will conform	
<p>Descriptions of three factors which determine whether Tim will conform 1 mark for identification of factor 1 mark for elaboration of factor 1 mark for application to Tim in a school setting</p> <p>Answer could include, but is not limited to:</p> <p>Group size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conformity is at the highest when a group is between 3–5 members Tim might conform to leaving rubbish on the oval when he is with three other friends and they all leave their rubbish behind <p>Unanimity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conformity reduces if one other person in the group behaves differently Tim might pick up his rubbish if one other person also picks up rubbish <p>Normative conformity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> conforming to fit in or to not be rejected Tim may conform to picking up his rubbish so that his friends don't think he is careless <p>Any other suitable responses, for example: status of majority of group, difficulty of task, anonymity, lack of knowledge or ambiguous situation (informational conformity), expectations of a social role (identification conformity)</p>	1–9
Subtotal	9
Factors which determine whether Tim will obey	
<p>Descriptions of three factors which determine whether Tim will obey 1 mark for identification of factor 1 mark for elaboration of factor 1 mark for application to Tim in a school setting</p> <p>Answer could include, but is not limited to:</p> <p>Authority of the person giving the instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the greater the perceived authority, the more likely Tim will obey Tim may be seen to not obey when he is being asked to do something by another student but does obey when he is asked by the principal <p>Proximity of the person giving the instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the closer the instructor is, the more obedient Tim will be Tim may be disobedient when a teacher asked him to pick up rubbish from across the oval rather than when the teacher is standing next to him <p>Lack of personal responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tim may be less obedient if he does not feel personally responsible he may not obey to pick up rubbish because it was not his rubbish 	1–9
Subtotal	9
Total	32