

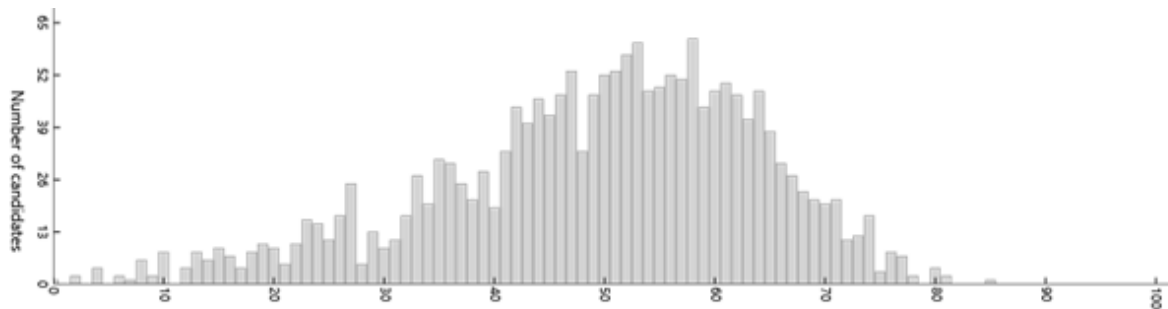


## Summary report of the 2020 ATAR course examination: Psychology

Year	Number who sat	Number of absentees
2020	1839	49
2019	1950	22
2018	2108	30
2017	1916	29

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, with syllabus terminology applied in the formation of questions. There was a focus on examining areas of the syllabus either not covered in recent examinations or in a way not examined before (e.g. Biological Influences as an extended response question).

Attempted by 1837 candidates                      Mean 49.16%                      Max 85.39%                      Min 0.00%

Section means were:

Section One: Research methods Attempted by 1836 candidates	Mean 45.39% Mean 9.08(/20)	Max 16.94	Min 0.00
Section Two: Short answer Attempted by 1837 candidates	Mean 50.38% Mean 27.71(/55)	Max 50.66	Min 0.00
Section Three: Extended answer Attempted by 1807 candidates	Mean 49.51% Mean 12.38(/25)	Max 22.12	Min 0.00

### General comments

The examination was accessible with the maximum possible mark reached for every question, including all components of the extended answer questions. It is noted that a quarter of candidates (or more) struggled with simple recall/define style questions. The majority of candidates were able to complete all of the paper in the given time.

### Advice for candidates

- Syllabus dot points are the basis of the examination questions and should be the template and main reference for any revision.
- Any and all parts of the syllabus are examinable content.
- Knowledge of syllabus theorists related to psychology covered in the syllabus is imperative to an understanding of 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.
- 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 as well.
- Ensure you are answering the question being asked.
- Make an attempt at all question parts.
- If using diagrams in extended response section, ensure they are referred to in the body of the text.

*Advice for teachers*

- There are varying levels of questioning in all examinations, students need to be able to recall, explain and apply elements of the syllabus.
- Use the most up-to-date syllabus.
- Do not rely solely on one textbook; use a range of 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 which covered syllabus content on planning, conducting, processing, and evaluating psychological research. The average of 45.39% was marginally lower than 2019 with weaker candidates demonstrating limited or generic understanding for some of the syllabus content. Statistics tended to be the area that weaker candidates completed poorly, including scientific/non-scientific method/s of displaying data.

**Section Two: Short answer (95 Marks)**

Section Two was designed to cover content from Units 3 and 4 evenly across seven questions. Stronger candidates did well across the section, demonstrating a more in-depth understanding of most concepts. The weaker responses lacked depth which demonstrated a lack of understanding.

**Section Three: Extended answer (52 Marks)**

The mark allocation for each question part was a positive change allowing candidates to have a clearer expectation of the length and depth of the response that is required. Question 11 had more non-attempts compared with Question 10.