

PSY1250/PSYC1220 Exam Autumn 2022

General information on how to grade:

In this guidance, an ideal answer and a minimum answer will be described. The minimum answer is what we expect as an answer to include to pass the course. The ideal answer is just that – an ideal, and we can therefore not expect the students to include all the topics from this ideal answer. Remember that the exam only lasts for two hours, and this will limit how much the students can include in their answer.

If a student has written a good answer, which also includes many of the points/topics from the ideal answer, this should be rewarded with the best grade. The ideal answer describes several relevant elements. However, other elements can also be included in a good answer, even if it is not mentioned in this guidance.

This guidance is not a checklist, remember that this is an essay exam and not multiple choice. The student should be rewarded for having a clear structure, including an introduction and conclusion.

The students must answer two questions out of three. The grade of the exam is the average of those two. If there is doubt, the average should always be calculated in favour of the student.

If one of the answers is assessed to fail, the entire exam is failed.

It is necessary with knowledge of the curriculum to grade the exams. Check the literature on the curriculum if you have doubts. The curriculum for the course is:

Personality psychology: domains of knowledge about human nature Forfatter: Larsen, Randy J.
Bidragsyter/medforfatter: Buss, David M.; Wismeijer, Andreas; Song, John; Berg, Stéphanie van den ©2021
Third edition.

Chapter: 1-6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19

Revisiting Our Reappraisal of the (Surprisingly Few) Benefits of High Self-Esteem Perspectives on Psychological Science. Forfatter: Baumeister, Roy F ; Vohs, Kathleen D. 2018. Volum: 13. DOI: 10.1177/1745691617701185

What Accounts for Personality Maturation in Early Adulthood? Current Directions in Psychological Science.
Forfatter: Bleidorn, Wiebke. 2015. Volum: 24. DOI: 10.1177/0963721414568662

Natural selection: Introduction. Kapittelforfatter: Reznick, D. Boktittel: *Encyclopedia of life sciences.* John Wiley & Sons Incorporated. New York. 2009

Three Laws of Behavior Genetics and What They Mean Current Directions in Psychological Science Forfatter: Turkheimer, Eric. 2000. Volum: 9

Classification, assessment, prevalence, and effect of personality disorder The Lancet Forfatter: Tyrer, Peter ; Reed, Geoffrey M ; Crawford, Mike J. 2015. Volum: 385.

Question 1:

Beskriv de grunnleggende tilnærmingene for å identifisere viktige personlighetstrekk. Beskriv kort de fem faktorene i femfaktormodellen.

Describe the basic approaches to identifying important personality traits. Describe shortly the five factors in the five-factor model.

Ideal answer:

- Introduction explaining what personality traits are.
- Describes the need to be able to identify important personality traits rather than relying on each individual researcher having his or her own list of what traits he or she finds important.
- Explains the lexical, the statistical and the theoretical approaches, and that they can be used in combination.
- Explains the assumptions in the lexical hypothesis – synonym frequency and cross-cultural universality. Discusses pros and cons with the lexical approach, including potential for studying personality cross-culturally, but at the same time that important words describing personality may not always be adjectives.
- Explains the idea behind factor analysis. Discusses problems with the statistical approach, for example that what you feed into the analysis limits what results you will get. If you for example translate a test from one language to another, and then run a factor analysis without having performed a lexical analysis in that culture, you risk missing out on important cultural differences. It is not necessary, but could be relevant, to mention that some studies have found six factors – HEXACO.
- Describes how the lexical and the statistical approaches have been used to find the five-factor model, and that this has been replicated many times.
- Describes the theoretical approach and provides examples.
- Discusses problems with the theoretical approach.
- Discusses how the lexical and statistical approaches together, without a theoretical approach, lead to personality models without a theoretical base, and what this may mean for personality psychology. An advantage can be that researchers from different theoretical traditions can relate to the same model, while a disadvantage can be that such a model will not help us understand personality – only describe it. This is not explicitly mentioned in the book and requires that the student can reason about this independently. Hence, it cannot be expected that this point is included in the answer.
- Each of the five traits are described, and the answer includes examples of what characterizes high and low scores on the different traits.
- The answer also includes a discussion of what the fifth factor is (i.e., Openness), that it has somewhat different interpretations in different cultures.
- Mentions that the five factors are insufficient to describe a person, and that each of the traits has several facets contributing with nuances.

Minimum answer: A minimum answer describes each of the three approaches for identifying personality traits. The answer also includes a description of all the five factors in the five-factor model.

Question 2:

Hva er arvelighet (h^2)? Forklar hvordan tvillingstudier kan lære oss om den relative betydningen av arv og miljø for personlighet.

What is heritability (h^2)? Explain how twin studies can teach us about the relative importance of heritability and environment regarding personality.

Ideal answer:

- Definition of heritability: Proportion of observed variance in a trait explained by genetic differences in a certain population ($h^2 = \text{genetic variance} / \text{total variance}$). Some students may use a^2 instead of h^2 , and this is perfectly fine.
- Explains how heritability estimates can be interpreted. For example, a heritability score of 0.5 means that 50% of the variance in the relevant trait can be explained by variance in peoples' genes.
- Explains that heritability says something about variance at the group level, and does not say anything about one individual. Explains that this is not an exact statistic, and that it can vary across circumstances.
- Describes and discusses heritability estimates from different kinds of studies. For example, twin studies give higher heritability estimates than estimates from molecular genetic studies. This is not necessary to include, as the question asks about twin studies.
- Shows the equation $h^2 = 2(r_{MZ} - r_{DZ})$ and explains what this means. Alternatively, $1 \times \text{correlations between MZ twins reared apart}$ or $2 \times \text{correlation between siblings/dizygotic twins reared apart}$. Alternatively, $(\text{polygenic variation (SNPs)}) / (\text{phenotypic variation})$.
- Describes the logic in twin studies, that monozygotic twins share 100% of their genes while dizygotic twins share 50%. You can then compare correlations between MZ twins to correlations between DZ twins for the relevant trait. Higher correlations among MZs than DZs indicate genetic effects.
- Describes how contributions from shared and non-shared environment can be estimated in twin studies.
- Explains the difference between shared and non-shared environment. Explains that it is the effect of the environment that decides if it is classified as shared or non-shared: if the twins become similar because of the environment, it is by definition shared. If the twins do not become similar because of the environment, it is by definition non-shared.
- Discusses the assumptions in twin studies (are they representative, equal environment assumption).
- Twin studies have for many years shown that all complex human traits are heritable. This also applies to personality traits. Turkheimer (2000) used the term "The first law of behaviour genetics" for this phenomenon.
- If traits were not heritable, they could not evolve through natural selection.
- The heritability estimate does not say anything about the mechanisms of how genetics affect traits (e.g., gen-environment correlation).

- Genes are more important than shared environment (second law of behavioural genetics).
- Non-shared environment is important for personality, like it is for many other traits. This is described in the third law of behavioural genetics as much of the variation in human complex traits is not explained by genetics of family.

Minimum answer: It explains that heritability is defined as the proportion of observed variance of a trait explained by genetic variance. It describes that twin studies take advantage of the fact that MZ and DZ twins share 100% and 50% of their genes, respectively. You can then compare the correlations among MZ to the correlations among DZ twins to estimate how much of the observed variance can be explained by genetic variance. Twin studies can also teach us about environmental effects and differentiate between shared and non-shared environment. All the five personality traits are affected by genes and by environment.

Question 3:

Beskriv og drøft forskjellen mellom å diagnostisere personlighetsforstyrrelser som dimensjoner versus kategorier.

Describe and discuss the difference between diagnosing personality disorders as dimensions versus categories.

Ideal answer:

- An introduction explaining what is meant by personality disorders.
- The answer discusses the differentiation between what is normal and what is not, and that the categorical approach assumes that there is a qualitative difference between having versus not having a personality disorder.
- The answer includes a description of the categorical approach to personality disorders and mentions at least some of those disorders. It is relevant to include that this approach has been used for many years and has been the standard approach in DSM and ICD until recently. It is **not** expected that the student goes into detail about the different personality disorders, the different clusters, or about the DSM versus the ICD.
- Discussing problems with the categorical approach. Several points are relevant here: that one person often meets the criteria for several personality disorders (comorbidity), that two persons with the same personality disorder diagnosis can have different symptoms and appear very differently (heterogeneity), that the categorical approach lacks empirical support.
- The dimensional/trait-based approach assumes that personality pathology is a continuum from no pathology to very severe pathology. Personality functioning is evaluated on a continuum.
- The dimensional approach evaluates people on several personality traits to be able to say something about what kind of problems the person has.
- Several researchers think that personality disorders can be described by the big five, as extreme variants of those traits. However, others have shown that this is not sufficient. Trait

models and questionnaires for DSM-5 and ICD-11 are developed to measure problematic personality traits. Detailed knowledge about these trait models is **not** expected.

- The dimensional approach to personality disorders is different in DSM-5 (where it is an alternative model) and in ICD-11 (where it has replaced the categorical approach). It is **not** expected that the student knows the details of this. Nevertheless, an ideal answer will describe that the traits in ICD-11 and DSM-5 are similar to the big five traits, but that they describe problems more than the big five traits do.
- The understanding of the conceptual differences between the categorical and dimensional approaches is much more important than knowing the details of the approaches. The students may have an A even if they do not describe such details.

Minimum answer: The answer includes a description of the categorical and the dimensional/trait approach, and makes some of the differences between them clear.