

FREE REVISION RESOURCE

A-level Psychology

Social Influence Diagnostic

An original 30-mark mini-test for knowledge, application and evaluation.

30 minutes · 30
marks

Complete the questions without notes. Mark your work honestly using the guide, then use your result to choose what to revise next.

Name	
Date	
Score	/ 30

Skills checked AO1 knowledge · AO2 application · AO3 evaluation

This resource is independently produced and is not an official AQA paper or endorsed by any awarding body.

Section A · Core knowledge

Answer every question. Be precise: psychological vocabulary earns more credit than vague everyday language.

1a. Define *normative social influence*.

2 marks

1b. Explain one difference between compliance and internalisation.

2 marks

1c. Identify one situational variable investigated in research on conformity.

1 mark

1d. Explain why breaking the unanimity of a majority can reduce conformity.

3 marks

Section A total

8 marks · primarily AO1 knowledge and understanding

Section B · Apply your knowledge

Scenario: A researcher asks six students to judge which of three comparison images matches a target image. Five students are working with the researcher and deliberately choose the same incorrect answer. The genuine participant answers aloud. In a second condition, one of the five gives the correct answer. In a third condition, answers are written privately.

2a. Identify the psychological phenomenon being investigated.

1 mark

2b. Using your knowledge of social influence, explain why the participant may agree with the incorrect majority in the first condition.

3 marks

2c. Explain the likely effect of the correct-answering student in the second condition.

3 marks

2d. Predict how private written answers may affect conformity and justify your prediction.

3 marks

Section B total

10 marks · mainly AO2 application

Section C · Extended thinking

A strong answer makes a clear claim, supports it with accurate evidence, explains why the evidence matters, and reaches a reasoned judgement.

3. Discuss two variables that affect conformity. Refer to relevant psychological research in your answer.

12 marks

Optional planning grid

Variable 1	Variable 2
Key finding / evidence	Key finding / evidence
Evaluation / implication	Evaluation / implication
Overall judgement	Overall judgement

Answer and marking guide

Award marks for clear, accurate ideas expressed in the student's own words. Equivalent valid wording should receive credit.

Section A · 8 marks

1a (2): Normative social influence is conforming to gain social approval, fit in or avoid rejection. One mark for social approval/acceptance; one for fitting in/avoiding rejection.

1b (2): Compliance is a public, temporary change without private acceptance. Internalisation is a genuine public and private change that may persist. Credit one accurate feature of each.

1c (1): Any valid variable, such as group size, unanimity, task difficulty or whether responses are public/private.

1d (3): A dissenter provides social support, breaks the majority's unanimity and makes an alternative response appear possible/legitimate, reducing pressure to conform.

Section B · 10 marks

2a (1): Conformity/majority influence.

2b (3): The majority is unanimous and answers publicly, creating pressure to avoid standing out or rejection (NSI); uncertainty may also encourage the participant to treat the group as a source of information (ISI). Credit explicit application.

2c (3): The correct dissenter breaks unanimity, offers social support and reduces the perceived cost of disagreeing; conformity should fall.

2d (3): Conformity should fall because privacy reduces direct normative pressure and fear of visible rejection. Credit justified alternative predictions.

Extended response guidance

Question 3 (12 marks): Award up to 6 marks for accurate knowledge of two variables and relevant research, and up to 6 for discussion/evaluation. A top-band response is accurate, organised, evidence-led and ends with a reasoned conclusion.

Indicative content:

- **Group size:** conformity generally rises as the majority grows, before levelling off. Discussion might question whether a small laboratory majority represents real groups.
- **Unanimity:** a dissenter can sharply reduce conformity by offering social support. Discussion can distinguish a dissenter who gives the correct answer from one who merely disagrees.
- **Task difficulty:** uncertainty can increase informational social influence, although expertise and confidence may moderate the effect.
- **Public versus private responding:** private answers reduce normative pressure, supporting an explanation based on impression management.

Your result

Score	What it suggests	Your next move
24-30	Strong foundations	Practise timed extended responses and precision.
17-23	Developing well	Target the skill or concept where most marks were lost.
0-16	Build the foundations	Revisit core terms, then retry without the answer guide.

Want focused
feedback?

Bring your answers to a free 15–20 minute introductory call with Oxana Visnevskaja, PGCE Psychology & Social Sciences. psychologywithoxana.com · oxana.sasha@yahoo.com