



Research methods 3: experiments - errors & controls

Module

PSYB2

PSYB1

Sections A, B & C

Section C

Important: this material is examined on **both AS modules**. On **PSYB2** it is examined through the social psychology (social influence), cognitive psychology (remembering and forgetting) and individual differences (anxiety disorders) topics. On your PSYB2 paper, **one** of the three topics (you cannot predict which) will contain questions that test your knowledge and understanding of research methods, to the value of **6 marks** (10% of the marks available). On your **PSYB1** paper, there is an entire section on research methods, to the value of **20 marks** (33% of the marks available).

What we will be learning about

In this topic we will look at sources of error. We will identify a range of extraneous variables that can affect experiments and try to sort the ones that matter from the ones that don't. We will be revisiting a range of research from the social, cognitive and individual differences topics.

What you could be tested on

	A01 – knowledge & understanding	A02 – application, analysis & evaluation	A03 – methods, statistics & ethics (how science works)
You must be able to...	Define control, extraneous and confounding variables.	Analyse examples to identify variables that have been controlled.	Demonstrate these knowledge, understanding and skills in the context of material drawn from the PSYB2 topics (social, cognitive, individual differences).
You should be able to...	Explain the need for controls in experiments.	Distinguish between extraneous and confounding variables. Analyse examples to identify extraneous or confounding variables. Explain the requirement to control particular variables in given contexts. Suggest ways of controlling extraneous variables.	As above.
You could be able to...	Outline the types of variable most likely to affect/confound investigations in different areas of psychology.	Analyse examples to identify confounding variables (distinct from extraneous). Explain the probable effect of given confounding variables. Consider , for given examples, which variables it is necessary to control and which can be ignored.	As above.

