Social Psychological Explanations of Aggression - Mark Scheme

Q1.

Marks for this question: AO1 = 6, AO3 = 10

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge is accurate and generally well detailed. Discussion / evaluation / application is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge is evident. There are occasional inaccuracies. Discussion / evaluation / application is apparent and mostly effective. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology is mostly used effectively. Lacks focus in places.
2	5 – 8	Some knowledge is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any discussion / evaluation / application is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology is used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge is limited. Discussion / evaluation / application is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Please note that although the content for this mark scheme remains the same, on most mark schemes for the new AQA Specification (Sept 2015 onwards) content appears as a bulleted list.

AO1

Candidates are likely to choose either the frustration-aggression hypothesis, social learning theory as applied to human aggression or de-individuation. However approaches such as cue arousal or relative deprivation would also be relevant. The question requires a focus on *one* social psychological *theory* of aggression.

AO3

Research studies would provide an effective route to evaluative discussion, with a variety of studies relevant to the theories. Commentary could also include the artificial nature of many studies and the ability of the chosen theory to explain aggression in the real world. Comparison with alternative approaches, such as the role of neural and hormonal mechanisms, or evolutionary explanations, would earn credit if used as part of sustained and effective evaluation.

Issues relevant to this question include: gender and cultural differences; ethical aspects of studies of aggression; nature-nurture; free will and determinism etc.

Q2.

[AO1 = 6   AO3 = 10]

Level	Marks	Description
4	13 – 16	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is accurate and generally well detailed. Evaluation is thorough and effective. The answer is clear, coherent and focused. Specialist terminology is used effectively. Minor detail and / or expansion of argument sometimes lacking.
3	9 – 12	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is evident. Evaluation is apparent and mostly effective. There are occasional inaccuracies. The answer is mostly clear and organised. Specialist terminology mostly used effectively. Lacks focus on aggression in places.
2	5 – 8	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is present. Focus is mainly on description. Any evaluation is only partly effective. The answer lacks clarity, accuracy and organisation in places. Specialist terminology used inappropriately on occasions.
1	1 – 4	Knowledge of the social learning theory of aggression is limited. Evaluation is limited, poorly focused or absent. The answer as a whole lacks clarity, has many inaccuracies and is poorly organised. Specialist terminology either absent or inappropriately used.
	0	No relevant content.

Possible content:

- emphasis on learning aggression through observation and imitation of role model
- concept of identification and influences on identification – status, attractiveness, similarity etc
- internalisation of aggressive model
- modelling of aggression is influenced by observation of consequences – vicarious reinforcement
- learning of aggression can be internal, taking place without immediate outward demonstration
- concept of self-efficacy – mediational processes, eg attention, retention, motivation, and motor reproduction affect learning, coming between observation of aggressive behaviour and demonstration of that behaviour
- credit detail of Bandura's research on learnt aggression where they contribute to description of theory.

Possible evaluation points:

- use of evidence to support / refute the theory of aggression

- difficulty demonstrating cause and effect – although the Bandura research was able to control variables and did demonstrate that aggression was affected by modelling it is difficult to show cause and effect in real life aggression
- explains some forms of aggression better than others, eg cannot easily explain impulsive aggressive behaviours
- sees behaviour as environmentally determined whereas some behaviours may be innate
- mediating cognitive factors have to be inferred so cannot measure extent of their influence
- comparison with alternative explanations, eg deindividuation or biological approaches.

Credit other relevant evaluation points.

Only credit evaluation of the methodology used in studies when made relevant to discussion of the theory of aggression.