Changes to the AQA Psychology specification (Version 1.1) and support for these changes

AQA released Version 1.1 of their A Level Psychology specification in June 2019. Most of the changes are very minor. Please refer to the AQA website for more information.

To support you with these changes, this pdf contains replacements for these pages.

4.3 Issues and options in psychology

4.3.3: Gender: AQA has replaced ‘Gender Identity Disorder’ with ‘Gender dysphoria’ to reflect changes made to the DSM.

This affects the following pages:

• p29–31 (Atypical gender development).

The online answers have also been updated.
Atypical gender development

**Specification notes**
Atypical gender development: gender dysphoria; biological and social explanations for gender dysphoria.

1. Which one of the following best describes gender dysphoria? Tick one box only.
   - A A person feels their biological sex is more important than their gender identity.
   - B A person feels their biological sex might not match their gender identity.
   - C A person feels their biological sex matches their gender identity.
   - D A person feels distress because their gender identity does not match their biological sex.

2. Outline one or more biological explanations of gender dysphoria.
   - Brain-sex theory says that ____________________________
   - For example, the size of the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis (BSTc) correlates with ____________
   - Gender dysphoria may be due to innate cross-wiring ____________________________
   - For example, Ramachandran et al. ____________________________

3. Outline one or more social explanations of gender dysphoria.
   - Research suggests that gender dysphoria can be a result of childhood trauma. For example, ____________________________
   - Research also suggests that gender dysphoria is caused by ____________________________
   - For example, ____________________________

**Exam tip**
When a question asks you for ‘one or more’, you can write about one biological explanation in detail, or several biological explanations in less detail.

**Exam tip**
On this kind of question you can adopt a ‘depth’ approach and write about one explanation, or a ‘breadth’ approach and write about more than one explanation, as we suggest here.
4. One method that has been used to study gender dysphoria in children is the Draw-a-Person test. Studies show that children with gender dysphoria tend to draw opposite-sex persons first, and to draw them in more detail compared with their drawing of the same-sex person. The test is reliable, but whether it is a valid measure of gender dysphoria has yet to be established.

(a) Distinguish between reliability and validity.

(b) Explain how the concurrent validity of the Draw-a-Person test might be assessed.

(c) Apart from concurrent validity, identify and briefly outline two other types of validity in psychological research.

5. Outline and evaluate research related to gender dysphoria.

The suggested paragraph starters below will help form your answer:

- Research suggests there might be a transsexual gene… (AO1)
- Brain-sex theory says that… (AO1)
- Gender dysphoria may be due to innate cross-wiring… (AO1)
- Distorted parental attitudes may lead to confused gender identity… (AO1)
- Gender dysphoria may be the result of childhood trauma… (AO1)
- One strength of biological explanations of gender dysphoria is that there is research support for cross-wiring. For example, Ramachandran and McGeoch… (AO3)
- However, one problem with the brain-sex theory is that it is hard to see whether differences are an effect, or a cause, of gender dysphoria. For example, Chung et al.… (AO3)
- One strength of social explanations of gender dysphoria is that there is research support for them. For example, Zucker et al.… (AO3)
However, one issue with trying to explain gender dysphoria is that there are two distinct groups of male to female transsexuals. For example, Furuhashi… (A03)

Another issue with trying to explain gender dysphoria is that it has potential social consequences for individuals with dysphoria. For example… (A03)