

Types of Conformity

You must...

- Define different types of conformity
- Identify different types of conformity from research studies
- Identify different types of conformity from real life situations

You should...

- Explain why examples from research and real life illustrate particular types of conformity

Task 1 – Different Types of Conformity

Not all conformity is the same. People conform in different ways and for a variety of reasons, depending on the situation they are in. Some different types of conformity are:

- Normative conformity
- Informational conformity
- Compliance
- Identification
- Internalisation

Using your textbook or another source of information, find out the meaning of each of these terms, and then complete the table below:

Term	What does it mean?
Normative influence	
Informational influence	
Compliance	
Identification	
Internalisation	

Task 2 – Conformity in Research Studies

By now you know about three important studies of conformity. For each study, identify which type(s) of conformity were demonstrated by the researcher. You should try to explain your answers.

Research Study	Which type(s) of conformity were demonstrated? Why do you think this?
Jenness (1932)	
Sherif (1935)	
Asch (1953)	

Task 3 – Conformity in Real Life

Here are some real-life examples of conformity. For each one, identify the different type(s) of conformity that are happening. You should try to explain your answers.

Sam has just started work in an office. On his second day there, his colleagues had a discussion about asylum seekers coming to the UK. His colleagues thought that they received favourable treatment from the government and that this should stop. Sam doesn't agree with this view, but when he was asked what he thought, he said that his colleagues were right.

Type of conformity:

Parvinder is a police officer. Her friends have remarked that when she is off duty, she is a relaxed and easygoing person but when she is in uniform she becomes much more serious and authoritative. In fact, it's almost as if she was two different people.

Type of conformity:

Emma is a student. When she first went to university, she made friends with a group of students who were passionate about animal rights. At the time, Emma didn't have very strong opinions on animal research but over the past few months she has become very much against it. Now she has joined a campaign against animal research and has started attending public demonstrations with her friends.

Type of conformity:

It is Jim's first day of college, but he has arrived late and missed the part where a lecturer told all the new students what they should do during induction. He sees a group of students filing off towards a corridor and decides to follow them.

Type of conformity:

And if you finish that...

Think up three real-life examples of conformity of your own. You could invent them, or perhaps draw on your own experiences. Each example should illustrate a different type of conformity process. For each example, you should explain what type of conformity it is and why.