

FREE SAMPLE SET | IGNOU GUESS PAPER | DECEMBER 2026 TEE

MCO-01 Organisation Theory and Behaviour

What three IGNOU papers asked, three repeat themes solved in full, and plans for the rest

Course: MCO-01 Organisation Theory and Behaviour, 6 credits (Common Prospectus July 2026)

Programme: M.Com (MCOM)

December 2026 paper: Wednesday 9 December 2026, 10 AM to 1 PM (IGNOU tentative date sheet dated 21 September 2026)

Built from: IGNOU MCO-01 papers of December 2020, December 2023 and December 2025, read on IGNOU's servers on 29 September 2026

STUDY REFERENCE

WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS

NOT AN IGNOU PUBLICATION

How IGNOU sets the MCO-01 paper

- **Time and marks.** The December 2025 paper gives 3 hours for 100 marks.
- **Weightage.** The paper itself prints "Weightage: 70%", so the term-end paper counts for 70 percent of the course result.
- **Choice.** Attempt any five questions; all carry equal marks (20 each).

Many questions are split into parts (10+10, 12+8, 15+5). Answer every part and give each part space roughly in proportion to its marks. The last question is usually "write notes on any two" at 10 marks each.

Repeat map: what came back

A tick means the topic was asked in that paper as a full question, a part or a note. Only what we could read is counted; two questions in the middle of the December 2025 paper were only partly visible to us.

Topic	Dec 2020	Dec 2023	Dec 2025	Papers
Classical theory: scientific management, administrative theory, bureaucracy	Q1	Q1	Q2(a)	3 of 3
Perception: process and influencing factors	Q3	Q3	none seen	2 of 3
Organisation structure and the organising process	Q2	Q2	none seen	2 of 3
Stress: causes and a stress-free environment	none seen	Q4	note (d)	2 of 3
Organisational change and resistance to change	Q7	none seen	a change question	2 of 3
Managers: functions and roles	none seen	none seen	Q1, note (a)	1 of 3
Learning: classical and operant conditioning, social learning	none seen	none seen	Q4, note (c)	1 of 3
Contingency theory; organisational effectiveness	none seen	none seen	Q2(b), Q3	1 each

Topic	Dec 2020	Dec 2023	Dec 2025	Papers
Communication process; levels of conflict	none	Q5, Q6	none	1 each
Motivation: Maslow	none seen	none seen	note (b)	1 of 3
Multinational organisations; organisational climate; need to study OB	notes	none	none	1 of 3

What the map says. Classical theory came back in all three papers. Perception, organisation structure, stress and change came back in two. The three themes solved below cover the strongest repeats.

Before your exam, add the June 2025 and June 2026 papers, which are on ignou.ac.in (the June 2026 list shows MCO-001).

Three repeat themes, solved

1. Explain the classical theory of organisation through its three streams. Does scientific management raise productivity?

Covers December 2020 Q1, December 2023 Q1 and December 2025 Q2(a). For a 12+8 split, write the theory first and the productivity judgement second.

Introduction. The classical theory of organisation developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when large factories and public offices needed efficiency and order. It treats the organisation as a rational, formal structure and developed in three streams: scientific management, administrative theory and bureaucracy.

Scientific management (F. W. Taylor). Taylor set out his ideas in *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1911). Their core is that every task has one best way, which can be found by study rather than by rule of thumb.

- Time and motion study to find the best method and a fair day's work.
- Standardisation of tools, methods and working conditions.
- Scientific selection and training of workers.
- A differential piece-rate, paying more for work above the standard.
- Functional foremanship, splitting supervision among specialists.
- Cooperation between management and workers, which Taylor called a "mental revolution".

Administrative theory (Henri Fayol). Fayol looked at the organisation from the top. He named five functions of management: planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling. He offered fourteen principles, among them division of work, authority with responsibility, unity of command, unity of direction, scalar chain, centralisation, equity and esprit de corps.

Bureaucracy (Max Weber). Weber described an ideal type of organisation built on legal-rational authority. Its features are:

- a hierarchy of offices;
- division of work by specialisation;
- written rules and records;
- impersonal treatment of people;

- appointment and promotion by technical competence.

He saw it as the most efficient form for large organisations.

Does scientific management raise productivity? Yes, within limits.

- *For*: studied methods, standard tools, training and incentives cut waste and raised output. Taylor's own experiments in handling materials reported large gains.
- *Against*: it treats workers as parts of a machine and ignores social needs and the informal group, which the later human relations studies brought out. It can breed monotony, fatigue and resistance, which reduce productivity over time.

The balanced answer is that it raises productivity in routine, measurable work, and it works best when combined with attention to motivation and group behaviour.

Conclusion. The three streams gave organisations structure, rules and method. Their common weakness, a narrow view of human behaviour, led to the behavioural and systems approaches that the rest of the course develops.

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2. Describe the process of perception and the factors that influence it. Why does it matter to managers?

Covers December 2020 Q3 and December 2023 Q3 (10+10).

Introduction. Perception is the process by which people select, organise and interpret sensory information to give meaning to their environment. People act on what they perceive, not on reality as such, which is why perception is central to organisational behaviour.

The process of perception.

1. *Stimuli and attention.* Of the many stimuli around us, we notice only a few. Selection depends on intensity, size, contrast, repetition, movement and novelty, and on our own needs and interests.
2. *Organisation.* The selected information is arranged into patterns. We group by similarity and nearness, close gaps to see a whole (closure), and separate figure from background.
3. *Interpretation.* Meaning is given to what has been organised, based on past experience, expectations, values and motives.
4. *Response.* Attitudes, decisions and behaviour follow from the interpretation.

Factors that influence perception.

- *The perceiver*: attitudes, motives, interests, past experience and expectations.
- *The target*: novelty, motion, sound, size, background and nearness to other objects.
- *The situation*: time, work setting and social setting.

Common errors.

- Selective perception: seeing what fits our interests.
- The halo effect: one trait colours the whole judgement.

- Stereotyping: judging by group membership.
- Projection: seeing our own traits in others.
- Contrast effects.

Why it matters to managers. Perception shapes selection interviews, performance appraisal, communication and conflict. A manager who knows these errors can use structured interviews, several raters, clear criteria and feedback, and can check assumptions before acting.

Conclusion. Because behaviour follows perceived reality, managing perception fairly and accurately is part of managing people.

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3. What causes stress inside an organisation, and how can a stress-free work environment be created?

Covers December 2023 Q4 and the December 2025 note on creating a stress-free environment.

Introduction. Stress is a person's response to demands that he or she sees as exceeding the resources available to meet them. Moderate pressure can improve performance, but prolonged stress lowers health, morale and efficiency.

Intra-organisational causes of stress.

- *Task demands:* work overload or underload, time pressure, repetitive work, poor working conditions.
- *Role demands:* role conflict (incompatible expectations), role ambiguity (unclear duties) and role overload.
- *Interpersonal demands:* poor relations with superiors or colleagues, lack of social support, harassment.
- *Structure and policy:* rigid rules, excessive centralisation, lack of participation in decisions, unfair appraisal and pay.
- *Leadership and culture:* an autocratic style, fear-based control, constant change without explanation.
- *Career concerns:* job insecurity, slow promotion, skills becoming outdated.

For example, a sales executive with targets raised mid-year, unclear authority to offer discounts and a critical manager faces task, role and interpersonal stress at once.

Consequences. Physiological symptoms such as fatigue and illness, psychological ones such as anxiety and low satisfaction, and behavioural ones such as absenteeism, errors and turnover.

Creating a stress-free environment.

- *Organisational measures:* realistic workloads and goals; clear job descriptions to reduce role ambiguity; participation in decisions; fair appraisal and rewards; supportive supervision and open communication; training; flexible work arrangements; employee assistance and wellness programmes.

- *Individual measures:* time management, exercise and rest, relaxation techniques, and building social support.

Conclusion. Much of workplace stress is produced by the organisation itself, so the organisation can design much of it out through clear roles, fair systems and supportive leadership.

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Answer plans for the other repeat themes

Organisation structure and the organising process (December 2020 Q2, December 2023 Q2)

- Components: work specialisation, departmentation, chain of command, span of control, centralisation and decentralisation, formalisation.
- Steps in organising: identify activities, group them, assign duties, delegate authority, coordinate.
- End with how a sound structure supports continuity and efficiency.

Organisational change and resistance to change (December 2020, December 2025)

- Forces for change.
- Lewin's unfreeze, change and refreeze.
- Individual and organisational sources of resistance.
- Ways to overcome it: communication, participation, support, negotiation, and timing.

Learning theories (December 2025 Q4, 12+8)

- Classical conditioning (Pavlov): learning by association, an involuntary response.
- Operant conditioning (Skinner): voluntary behaviour shaped by its consequences, through positive and negative reinforcement, punishment and extinction, with examples from work.
- The difference: reflex versus voluntary behaviour, and stimulus before versus consequence after.
- Social learning (Bandura): learning by observing models.

Functions and roles of managers (December 2025 Q1)

- Functions: planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling.
- Mintzberg's ten roles in three groups:
- interpersonal: figurehead, leader, liaison;
- informational: monitor, disseminator, spokesperson;
- decisional: entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, negotiator.
- Link each group to efficiency.

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Short notes worth preparing

Contingency theory. There is no single best way to organise. The right structure depends on environment, technology and size: mechanistic structures suit stable settings and organic ones suit changing settings (Burns and Stalker).

Maslow's theory of motivation. A hierarchy of five needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation. A satisfied need no longer motivates. It is useful but criticised for its rigid order.

Social learning. People learn by watching others and the consequences others receive, through attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. Mentoring and role models use it at work.

Organisational effectiveness. The degree to which an organisation achieves its goals. Approaches include the goal, system-resource, internal-process and stakeholder views; its determinants include structure, people, technology and environment.

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Practise these in your own words

These practice prompts are ours, written to match the repeat themes above. They are not IGNOU questions.

1. Compare Taylor's and Fayol's contributions to management thought.
2. "People behave on the basis of their perception of reality." Discuss with workplace examples.
3. How does role ambiguity create stress, and how can it be reduced?
4. Why do employees resist change? Suggest ways to manage it.
5. Distinguish between operant conditioning and social learning with examples.

Use this set in the last three weeks

- **Week 3:** write the three solved themes from memory, about 500 words each, in 35 minutes.
- **Week 2:** turn each answer plan into a full answer, keeping to the part-marks split.
- **Final week:** learn the four notes and add two of your own, such as Herzberg and communication.
- **Last two days:** time one full paper using a recent IGNOU paper from ignou.ac.in.

What this free set is, and is not

This set covers three MCO-01 themes that repeated across the three papers above. The complete MCO-01 set, with every repeat theme and note solved, costs ₹49 as a PDF or ₹100 as a printed copy, plus a one-time ₹100 courier charge per printed order. Order on WhatsApp +91 93546 37830.

IGNOU does not publish guess papers, and no guess paper can tell you which questions will be set. Use the official study material and IGNOU's own past papers (ignou.ac.in, Student Services, Downloads, Previous Year Question Papers) as your first sources.

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