



GCE EXAMINERS' REPORTS

**GCE (NEW)
PSYCHOLOGY
AS/Advanced**

SUMMER 2018

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PSYCHOLOGY

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UNIT 1 – PAST TO PRESENT

General Comments

There were some very impressive scripts seen, with candidates showing an astounding breadth and depth of knowledge across all areas of the specification. Candidates should be commended for their efforts. Overall the timing seems to have improved this year, with the majority of candidates attempting every question on the paper and using the mark allocation more carefully to spend the appropriate amount of time on each question. Many candidates could have improved the structure and clarity of their longer answer questions by using paragraphs. This makes answers much easier to read and more straightforward to assess. It is also an important skill to practice in preparation for essays on Unit 3 and in other subjects. There were some common issues with the technique used to approach certain questions, many of which have appeared in previous years and therefore have been addressed in examiners reports and CPD (materials available on the WJEC website). It would be beneficial to ensure that candidates are made fully aware of the feedback that has been given on exam papers from previous sessions. These will be addressed in more detail later in this report but included things like using appropriate examples in assumptions questions and the importance of developing AO2 skills.

- Q.1 (a) & (b)** The assumptions of the positive approach can be more difficult to explain than other assumptions and it was pleasing to see that many candidates were able to distinguish between these two assumptions clearly and use appropriate terminology throughout their answer. Weaker candidates tended to use generic terms like happiness and sometimes mix up the two assumptions being referred to. As with all assumptions questions in previous years, the question clearly stated that an example from psychology was required and unfortunately this was rarely seen. It is worth noting that therapies, classic evidence and theories of relationships would be appropriate, and given the specification requires these to be covered anyway these could be used as examples rather than candidates having to learn lots of extra content. Where examples are used it would be best for it to be made clear how this acts as an example of the assumption. In part (a) in particular, students gave an example of a research study such as Myers and Diener but this was not always made appropriate to the assumption being explained.
- Q.2** There were some very good answers to this question. Candidates were able to identify appropriate evaluation points, link them to the approach and explain why they were a strength or a weakness. However, there was some confusion over key terms (for example being interactionist is not the same as being holistic) and there seemed to be lots of confusion about the recognition of nature within the approach. Many candidates identified relevant points but missed out the evaluative element of the question, for example simply stating that the approach was determinist but not explaining the positive and negative consequences of this. By taking this approach their answer lacked the level of analysis required for the higher mark bands. There was also a tendency for many candidates to veer into evaluating the therapy (such as talking about the ethics of bringing up childhood memories) rather than using the therapy to indicate the usefulness and applications of the approach and therefore this received no credit.

- Q.3** It is clear that many candidates had a detailed and thorough grasp of these therapies and were able to describe them accurately using specialist terminology. Answers on CBT tended to focus on the components given in the textbook such as dysfunctional thought diaries and cognitive restructuring but would have often benefited from specific examples of how these have been used to address a particular problem. These could be taken from areas of the A Level specification such as CBT for schizophrenia or stress inoculation training. In REBT answers there were detailed descriptions of the ABCDE model. However, some candidates did not explain the D and E aspects fully and therefore did not always articulate their understanding of these ideas as part of a therapy. It is important that students appreciate the role of the therapist in the process and are able to explain how the techniques described are used in a therapeutic setting rather than simply describing them.
- Q.4** The simplest approaches to this question often yielded the best answers. These candidates were able to clearly state a similarity or difference, give examples from each approach and indicate what this meant in terms of strengths and weaknesses. There was some confusion over key terms (as in question 2), particularly when applied to the positive approach. There was a particular issue surrounding the positive approaches' stance on the nature/nurture debate. Lyubomirsky *et.al.* (2005) suggest that happiness comes from 50% genetics, 40% ourselves and 10% our circumstances. This could have been used as an example of how the approach incorporates both sides of this debate. Many variations of answers were accepted (such as the positive approach being argued as scientific or non-scientific) but these needed to be justified clearly with examples from the approach. Unfortunately a number of students misread the question and compared the biological and psychodynamic approaches.
- Q.5** (a) As with question 1 there were some very good answers to this question but a similar issue arose with the use of examples from psychology as required by the question. A similar question appeared in the 2016 paper and the same problems were identified. Very few candidates achieved full marks when using schemas and internal mental processes as an appropriate example was often lacking. As with question 1 it would be appropriate to use examples from other parts of the course to illustrate the assumptions. Many candidates also did not fully explain how the example they chose linked to the assumption e.g. the Multi Store Model was often identified but it was not fully explained how it was an example of the computer analogy.
- (b) The best answers used appropriate terminology related to the cognitive approach (e.g. schemas) and linked this clearly to the formation of relationships (usually romantic relationships). Most answers seen referred to the halo effect and matching hypothesis. Weaker answers lacked key terms and did not always make it clear how concepts like schemas were linked to relationship formation; instead simply saying that we form impressions of people based on our schemas without explaining how this might affect a relationship.

- Q.6** As has been the case with similar questions in the past there were some excellent answers here that demonstrated a vast amount of detailed knowledge on this particular study. Using both qualitative and quantitative data helped add both range and depth to candidates' answers, for example outlining the personality types as well as stating how many were in each group. It is worth noting that the use of tables in questions like this is creditworthy and can benefit students in terms of the amount of information that can be given in a short space of time. Unfortunately, some candidates muddled up findings and conclusions and as a result did not receive any credit for parts of their answer.
- Q.7** (a) Unfortunately there were a number of answers that referred to procedure rather than methodology. The specification clearly states that these are both to be covered and despite showing a great amount of knowledge of the study many answers simply did not address the question. There were also many answers that incorrectly referred to the study as a lab experiment. Although Watson and Rayner used this term themselves this study should be described as a controlled observation. Many answers explained clearly why this was the case. Other good answers accurately and thoroughly described the characteristics of Albert and the location and apparatus used in the study.
- (b) This question required the candidates to be able to apply their knowledge of the study to the quotation used as well as being able to write a thorough and relevant evaluation covering methods, ethics and social implications. Sadly few candidates were able to incorporate all of these aspects and so failed to reach the top band. It was clear that many students simply used a pre-prepared answer to evaluate the study and therefore did not make reference to the quote, which is the main assessment objective that is being examined (AO2). Instead their answers focussed largely on ethical problems with the study with occasional reference to issues of population and ecological validity. AO2 skills are a vital part of the specification, particularly as students prepare for A Level. Therefore, it is important that these types of questions are practiced.
- Q.8** Generally this was a well answered question. For both therapies, answers benefited from reference to specific research evidence and mentions of specific side effects to fulfil the requirement of being 'appropriately contextualised'. There was more of a focus on ethics than effectiveness for both therapies. Although they do not have to be covered in equal amounts it is important that both are clearly present in the answer in order to access the higher mark bands. When evaluating psychosurgery there was a tendency for some candidates to describe the different types and history of the therapies with only passing mentions to that fact that modern psychosurgery is more ethical and effective than the first lobotomies. Although this is a relevant point to make, too much description of the methods meant that large parts of some answers did not receive any credit. Evaluation of drug therapy seemed to avoid the issue of too much description but there were occasions when candidates were evaluating placebo studies rather than linking it back to the evaluation of drug therapy itself.

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UNIT 2 – USING PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

General Comments

Overall, many candidates were able to answer the range of questions related to the specification. The contemporary debates question shows that candidates are now engaging with the question stem and not just regurgitating a model answer. Certain areas of the specification still cause some issues such as location of research (Question 5) and the application of research method issues to the two pieces of classical research (Question 4 and Question 7).

- Q.1** It was encouraging to see the confidence shown by many candidates in answering this question. Some candidates managed to construct very impressive essays under exam conditions that really engaged with the question stem that successfully applied most evaluative points to social or cultural diversity and managed to produce original and unique evaluations that moved them firmly into the top band. It is evident that centres are now teaching candidates to engage with the question given, and there were significantly fewer stock answers seen this year.
- Q.2 (a)** Many candidates gave clear and detailed definition for 'Dependent Variable'. It is worth noting the difference between a basic and a clear and detailed definition. The question had 2 marks available so, to reach a detailed definition, two features of a dependent variable were needed (e.g. the variable that is measured, variable not directly manipulated by experimenter, identify if manipulation of IV has any effect on it). Also, candidates need to understand that the IV doesn't always affect the DV and that the DV won't *always* change, so they need to word their answers to reflect this (i.e. manipulating the IV *may* change the DV).
- (b)** Any variable described in Milgram's original paper was accepted here. However, candidates need to take care that they describe the variable in detail to gain the credit e.g. "the number of volts" would not be detailed enough, "the number of volts reached before the participants refused to continue" would be creditworthy. The same is true for behavioural measures; specific examples would be needed – biting of nails for example.
- Q.3** Care was needed here to ensure that candidates clearly differentiated between independent group designs and matched pairs design. The vital feature that needed to be described therefore was that individuals were matched or paired on specific characteristics. The example of its use did not need to refer to a real study (although the large majority of candidates did discuss Raine *et.al.*), however, many candidates failed to link aspects of the example to the features of matched pairs design, e.g. state the two different conditions into which each pair of participants would be placed, or which characteristics would be paired up.

- Q.4** The ethical issues associated with the use of vulnerable children were generally well discussed. Candidates however struggled to gain full marks in this AO2 question because they do not successfully link their discussion with specific references to Kohlberg's study (the age of participants at the start was 10-16, references to specific moral dilemmas such as Heinz). A number of candidates misunderstood the question and gave answers that discussed the validity issues that would have arisen while using children in the study.
- Q.5** Many candidates discussed on-line research as collecting secondary data from on-line sources, instead of the use of the internet as a location to conduct studies and collect data from participants. This area of the specification looks at the location of conducting research, so on-line sources should be seen as such. To gain top band marks, candidates were required to discuss at least one advantage and one disadvantage of on-line research.
- Q.6** (a) Candidates need to make sure that they don't merely repeat the term using different phrasing i.e. internal validity is how valid the study is within itself. The focus should be on describing what internal validity is (e.g. are the changes seen in the DV caused by the IV? Does the study measure what it intends to measure?) Using the resources available at <http://resources.wjec.co.uk> will aid teaching here. Once again, the two marks here required two features to reach the clear and detailed definition band.
- (b) Candidates need to take care and read the question. Many gave a statement that referred to external validity instead of reliability. Once again, the two marks here required two descriptions to reach the clear and detailed definition band.
- Q.7** Many candidates could discuss the issues associated with gender bias and sample bias generically however this was an AO2 application question and a large majority failed to include specific details from Milgram's study (such as sample bias due to being limited to people who read the New Haven paper for example) and apply the discussion to Milgram. References to obedience, males, or self-selected was not enough to gain credit for linking as these were words found in the question. This was also true with linking to the question stem. Many failed to discuss why these choices would have impacted on the application of Milgram's data. Without these, their marks were limited to the lower bands of the mark scheme.
- Q.8** (a) A large proportion of candidates failed to identify the specific dependent variable of the experiment. Many stated 'wider vocabulary' which could not gain the mark as this is not operationalised. The experimenter was measuring score on a **vocabulary test** so this is what needed to be referred to. Occasionally candidates wrote an aim or a conclusion instead of a hypothesis or presented their answer as a question instead of a testable statement. Both conditions of the IV also needed to be stated (Bilingual and Monolingual) to gain credit.

- (b) Using the resources available at <http://resources.wjec.co.uk> will aid teaching here. Teachers should refer to the definitions given to extraneous variables and confounding variables. Extraneous variables are variables that can affect all participants equally, while confounding variables are ones that have only affected some participants (i.e. the variable is different for one group only). Candidates need to take care when explaining their variable as they can end up describing a confounding variable, if they discuss the variable as being different between the monolingual and bilingual groups. If they refer to a variable that could have affected all individuals' performance on the vocabulary test (e.g. 'time of day could have an impact as tired people may not concentrate on the vocabulary test', instead of 'one group did the study in the morning and one did it in the afternoon'), they would have been credited here.
- (c) (i) The majority of candidates clearly knew what snowball sampling was and managed to describe how it would have been used in the study. However, many failed to gain full marks as they forgot to describe how the sample would carry on growing (towards 60 in this instance). To gain the credit for a reasonable and accurate description, candidates needed to refer to the 'snowballing' nature of the sampling technique, so mentioning the friends of participants would then ask their friends, or that the sample would continue to grow in size.
- (ii) A number of candidates failed to expand on why having similar people in the sample would be a problem (i.e. not being able to generalise or apply results to the target population) so could not gain full marks.
- (d) Responses to experimental design questions have improved. Many candidates were able to identify the experimental design as independent groups whereas in previous years, a portion of candidates confused 'experimental design' with 'methodology'. However, this still occurred on occasions. Candidates need to take care that they contextualise their answers in AO2 questions (a good exam technique would be to look for AO2 indicators such as the phrases 'in the above study' or 'in this research'), and many failed to do this (by referencing the fact that each participant could only be in either the monolingual or bilingual group for example, or that they only did the vocabulary test once).

- Q.9** (a) This was very well answered, with many candidates writing clear aims.
- (b) Many candidates stated that a relationship/trend can be easily found as an advantage. This lacks detail, as the advantage is that the DIRECTION and STRENGTH of the relationship can be found. Both of these factors needed to be stated to gain the mark. Candidates were significantly more confident with their discussion of a disadvantage, with most referring to the inability to draw a cause and effect relationship. Again, candidates struggled to then contextualise these points to the study on beard length and attractiveness ratings.
- (c) As with similar AO1 'describe' questions, the number of marks indicated the detail needed in the answer. Three separate features of primary sources were needed to achieve full marks. On the whole, candidates understood that it was the data collected directly by the researcher, but few managed to name other features (such as data being directly relevant to aim of the study) further to this.

- (d)** Again, candidates need to take care when reading the information provided. In the description of the study it is noted that 20 females rated each photograph, and the heading in the table states that the numbers are the mean ratings. This question asked how these figures were calculated, so to gain 3 marks, a description of the mean was required, along with clear links to adding up the females' response to each photograph/male and then divide by 20. Many discussed adding up the figures in the 'attractiveness rating' column and dividing by 10, which could only gain one mark for an accurate explanation of calculating the mean, as it did not link specifically to the question stem.
- (e)**
- (i)** Unfortunately, a surprising number of candidates were not able to draw a clear scatter diagram. Focus needs to be placed on scatter diagrams requiring two linear scales (many wrote numbers out of sequence) and identifying the co-variables being measured (many labelled one axis 'Photograph Number') and that these are what needed to be labelled on the axes.
- (ii)** Students managed to identify the direction of the correlation, but found it difficult to judge the strength (mostly the difference between weak or strong). These marks were dependent on the graph drawn in 9. e) i), so unfortunately, the mark for strength was unavailable to those who had no correlation in their graph. Candidates need to take care in reading the question, as it asks for strength and direction, yet many did not identify the strength.
- (f)** Candidates need to remember that both the validity issue and the way to deal with it needs to be linked to the scenario.

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UNIT 3 – IMPLICATIONS IN THE REAL WORLD

General Comments

Yet again candidates had been well prepared for this unit, particularly for the 'Behaviours' section. Candidates were able to display breadth and depth of knowledge about explanations of behaviour and the methods of modifying them. Answers tended to be structured, including conclusions. Unfortunately, references to the specific scenario / statement / question (where required) were not always made apparent. Answers to the 'Controversies' questions were more mixed. Unfortunately, some candidates relied on pre-prepared material which did not respond to the question posed. It is somewhat worrying that so many candidates have used the text-book alone to prepare for the controversies section. Breadth and depth is needed to improve these responses, especially with reference to the use of non-human animals.

Section A Implications in the Real World

Q.1 Addictive Behaviours

- (a) This question asked for AO1 skills. Most candidates were able to describe social psychological explanations of addictive behaviour, but some made the error of discussing individual differences explanations. 'Peer pressure' and 'role of the media' were most commonly chosen. At the highest level, individuals were able to discuss the explanations in detail with examples of research and displayed an understanding of addiction within psychology. Many used Bandura's Social Learning Theory when discussing 'peer influences' and how alcohol and smoking were glamourised in films for the 'role of the media'. Some candidates lost valuable marks if they described the social psychological explanations without the discussion of psychological evidence.
- (b) AO2 skills were being assessed here. The focus needed to be on how biological explanations could modify addictive behaviour. Most candidates discussed agonist and antagonist substitution and its impact on modifying addictive behaviours. Some candidates tended to describe (AO1) for example, the role of dopamine, which did not gain credit.
- (c) This was on AO3 question to evaluate methods of addictive behaviour. Some candidates were able to evaluate both methods (usually agonist and antagonist substitution and aversion therapy). The best responses discussed the strengths and weaknesses of both methods by making reference to specific research, discussing key debates and the usefulness and effectiveness of the methods. There seemed to be a wider discussion of agonist and antagonist substitution, rather than aversion therapy on the whole. Very few candidates failed to follow the command word in the question and described the methods alone.

Q.2 Autistic Spectrum Behaviours

- (a) The question asked for AO1 skills, with the option to describe any two explanations of autistic spectrum behaviours. Most candidates discussed the biological explanations (amygdala and genetic predisposition). In most cases, one explanation was a stronger response than the other, impacting the top band of two explanations being 'thorough and accurate'. To reach the top band, two explanations of autistic spectrum behaviours along with evidence was needed.
- (b) This question had 10 allocated marks for AO3 and 5 for AO2. On the whole, the evaluation was accurate with examples of studies and discussion of usefulness in top band responses. Few candidates tended to describe the methods of modification throughout the response, but many tended to start their discussion with a description. No credit was given for AO1 in this question. Again, more than one method was asked for in the question. The question stem allowed for detailed AO2 application by linking to Sian and being an LSA or to specific elements of each method which would have suited David and Clare (i.e. PECS for Clare and RDI for David). Unfortunately, many candidates were still only applying AO2 by naming Sian, David and Clare. This skill still needs to be refined in some cases.

Q.3 Bullying behaviours

- (a)
 - (i) Yet again, this behaviour was infrequently chosen. AO2 was needed in this question by explaining how social psychological explanations could modify bullying behaviour (usually CAPSE and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme). There was some tendency to describe rather than applying the explanation.
 - (ii) AO3 was then tested by evaluating the biological explanations of bullying behaviours. Here, the candidates tended to discuss bullying genes and evolved gender differences but at times described the explanations rather than discussing their strengths and weaknesses. The best responses were able to discuss specific studies and evaluate the usefulness of the explanations.
- (b) Finally, candidates were asked to describe two methods of modifying bullying behaviours (AO1). This was the most promising response within this behaviour with CAPSLE being discussed in more detail than Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme.

Q.4 Criminal behaviours

- (a)
 - (i) This 5 mark AO1 question asked for one biological explanation for criminal behaviour. Most candidates discussed role of the amygdala and inherited criminality and included studies or research in the field. At times, some candidates did not link the study and explanation to criminal behaviour rather than any other behaviour.
 - (ii) This question also asked for a description of criminal behaviour from the individual differences perspective. Eysenck's criminal personality was most often discussed, but many candidates failed to move their depth and range beyond a simple discussion of extraversion, neuroticism and introversion.

- (b) This question assessed both AO2 (5) and AO3 (10). Again, there were plenty of application opportunities within the scenario for candidates to discuss - such as the age of the offenders, male clients, violence, theft and young offenders institution. This was not always made apparent, where some candidates failed to move beyond the name 'Rhys' to apply to the scenario. With regards to the evaluation, very few candidates failed to realise that only one method of modification was needed – this didn't impact their marks in the question, but wasted valuable time that could have been spent on another question. Both anger management and restorative justice were chosen equally by candidates, yet anger management seemed to have more evidence and research to discuss from an evaluative viewpoint.

Q.5 Schizophrenia

- (a) This question asked for the description of the characteristics of schizophrenia. Most candidates had an awareness of the characteristics and were able to identify and describe them in some detail. At the bottom end of the marks, candidates tended to list the characteristics without explaining their meaning or a specific example of how it could be seen.
- (b) This question assessed both AO2 (5) and AO3 (10) with the focus on the individual differences explanations of schizophrenia. Most candidates evaluated the psychodynamic approach (including schizophrenogenic mother) and the cognitive approach (including thought disorder) explanations. Many candidates tended to describe the explanations, rather than evaluate them and discuss research that supported or challenged the explanations. Many candidates earned application marks for the mini conclusions at the end of evaluation points which linked back to the question stem.

Q.6 Stress

- (a) Most candidates described beta blockers and stress inoculation training for this response. On the whole, the beta blockers responses were more developed with specific research (i.e. Lockwood 1989). There was a deeper understanding of how the beta blockers worked and modified stress. Stress inoculation training was described, but quite often without depth or psychological knowledge.
- (b) This question assessed AO2 (5) and AO3 (10). Again candidates found it difficult not to describe the biological and social psychological explanations of stress, rather than focussing on the evaluation and application of the question stem. Most evaluative biological points looked at adrenalin and cortisol explanations; whereas the social psychological evaluation points focused on daily hassles and life events. The best examples of AO3 marks provided mini conclusions at the end of each evaluation point which returned to the question stem – without being repetitive.

Section B - Controversies

Q.7 Cultural Bias

On the whole, this answer was a better attempt at the controversies section than question 8 and was chosen by most candidates. Yet, some candidates still found the balance of AO2 (10) and AO3 (15) difficult to grasp. It was necessary to look at both sides of the debate 'whether it is ever possible for psychology to be free from cultural bias'. Unfortunately, some candidates described everything they understood about cultural bias and defined different types of cultural bias. Unless this was connected to an evaluation point, very little credit was given. Many responses felt pre-prepared which possibly impacted the question being answered fully. The best responses were able to discuss specific research that aimed to be free from culture bias or that displayed culture bias. Most often research such as Buss (1985), Myers and Diener (1995), Kohlberg (1968) and Milgram (1963) were discussed.

Q.8 Non-human Animals

This question was selected by less candidates and proved to be the weakest response on the paper. It was clear that many candidates did not read the question carefully. The focus was on the use of 'non-human animals as a therapeutic device'. Unfortunately, many candidates took to describing Harlow, Brady, Lorenz, Pavlov and Skinner's research which did not include animals as therapeutic devices. However, it must be noted that some candidates had been well prepared for a possible question on this theme and moved away from the brief descriptions in the text book. The best responses evaluated the use of non-human animals as a therapeutic devices in areas such as paediatric care, schools (with the focus on reading in particular), prisons and nursing homes. Specific research was also applied and evaluated (i.e. Friedman and Allen). A discussion of the BPS guidelines were able to be credited when linked to animals as therapeutic devices, but not solely as a description of the guidelines in place.

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UNIT 4 – APPLIED RESEARCH METHODS

General comments

Most candidates attempted every question on the paper. The discriminators on the paper seemed to be the personal investigations with the top band answers clearly indicating that the candidates had fully carried out both investigations. The other discriminator was question 3 which depended on how well the candidates could apply research methods to a novel scenario.

Section A

INVESTIGATION ONE

An experiment on the effect of context on an individual's perception.

- Q.1** There were a good variety of ideas which had been operationalised well by the majority of candidates. Many candidates have clearly planned and carried out inventive and interesting pieces of research.
- (a) There were mixed answers on this question with some candidates stating a directional hypothesis ('context will not affect perception'). Credit was given for answers where both the independent and dependant variables and the research aim were clearly stated.
 - (b) Most candidates were clearly able to describe the process of collecting results with detail. Most candidates could justify their choice of statistical test appropriately. Some candidates could explain the significance of their results with clear reference to the data they collected. Some candidates gave lengthy descriptions of general procedure, which was not credit worthy. Some candidates lost credit due to inaccuracies with regards to choice of test and/or accepting the null/experimental hypothesis with reference to the appropriate observed and critical value. Top band answers were made relevant to the experiment, without generic comments that could be applied to any piece of research.
 - (c) This was a generally well answered question with candidates showing an ability to identify more than one valid issue, clearly related to the experiment. Many candidates included detailed examples to aid their explanation of the issue. Most candidates explained an appropriate way of dealing with the issue, again, with clear reference to the experiment. Top band answers were made relevant to the experiment, without generic comments that could be applied to any piece of research e.g. face validity.

INVESTIGATION TWO

An observation on sharing behaviour

- Q.2** There was good use of the research title, with most candidates showing the ability to discuss their creative ideas of observing shared behaviour. Candidates that used primary research instead of secondary research/sources, were able to access, and were better equipped for, all questions.
- (a) (i) Generally, this question was well answered with regards to creating behaviour categories, a clear research aim and relevancy to the research title. Some candidates used content analysis or secondary sources which complicated some explanations.
 - (a) (ii) Most candidates were able to describe an appropriate and relevant extraneous variable. Some candidates described issues that were related to the research aim (e.g. ... could cause more/less sharing behaviour.) Some candidates that had used secondary research/sources referred to extraneous variables that affected the original research/data collection, not the observation they had carried out.
 - (b) Most candidates briefly described their choice of time or event sampling with reference to the research. Event sampling answers were generally of a better standard with clear reference to behaviour categories and procedure. Some candidates used time sampling and described event sampling or provided an inaccurate explanation of time sampling.
 - (c) This question was generally well answered with most candidates being able to identify two relevant and appropriate ethical issues and explain ways of dealing with these issues with relevance to the research title. Most candidates identified deception and informed consent due to the nature of the research method. Unfortunately, some candidates could not access the question due to their choice of using secondary sources, (e.g. "There were no ethical issues as we did not cause the behaviour, we watched a TV programme.") The issue of consent and right to withdraw hindered some candidates with regards to using pre-recorded material as the ethical issues were not relevant to their research.
- Q.3**
- (a) This was the question least-attempted and which elicited a mixed range of answers. Most candidates stated the level of measurement of the data as interval or Nominal. Some candidates were able to state the data as ratio on the basis that both age and weight have a fixed zero, showing reference to the novel scenario.
 - (b) Most candidates could recognise the correct graph illustrating the results. However, few candidates could explain a negatively skewed distribution. Candidates could recognise that the data was not a normal distribution which was used to explain their choice.
 - (c) This was generally well answered and candidates showed an ability to draw a conclusion from either the graph or the table of results. Most candidates could recognise a rise in the obesity, especially among the 26-45 age group. Top band answers stated the difference that the mode weight was above the mean weight.

- Q.4** This was one of the best-answered question on the paper which demonstrates a celebration of good teaching and subject knowledge of general research methods. Candidates showed a clear depth of knowledge and ability to apply it appropriately. Many candidates wrote thorough and detailed descriptions structured by the key elements provided on the examination paper. There were some very creative ideas based on the research aim. Most candidates could form an experimental hypothesis that was relevant to the research aim. The majority of candidates chose a field experiment or an observation within a natural setting with an appropriate choice of sampling method (e.g. opportunity). It was evident that there was a general ability to operationalise variables clearly and appropriately. Extraneous variables were identified and discussed appropriately with reference to the research aim or design by the majority of candidates. Answers were mixed with regards to checking reliability and validity, with some confusion of differences between the two issues, or reliability issues discussed but named as validity. Ethical issues were addressed appropriately, some candidates explaining the issues in great detail and ways in which to overcome. Some candidates included data collection and appropriate analysis that could be used to assess the significance of the results. Most candidates provided enough explanation to be able to replicate and easily carry out the investigation.
- Q.5**
- (a) Most candidates described the length of time the method involves. Some candidates could describe the aim to observe long-term effects of ... on a specific behaviour. Some candidates referred to the novel scenario or to a piece of research e.g. Kohlberg. Some candidates described case studies.
 - (b) This was generally well answered with candidates showing an ability to apply their knowledge of longitudinal studies. Most candidates could identify at least one disadvantage. Some candidates could apply the identified disadvantage to the scenario making a clear reference to the research. Some candidates identified and explained advantages of the method.
 - (c) This was generally well answered with most candidates referring to the ethical consideration of ensuring confidentiality due to the nature of the research. Some candidates explained the need to avoid social desirability bias. Top band answers were thoroughly explained with clear reference to the research content.



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