



# Psychology

**A Level**

**Psychology**

Unit G544

Exemplar Candidate Work  
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## SECTION A, QUESTION 1

Your task is to answer questions about how a piece of research related to the passage below could be conducted.

Psychologists use a range of methods to collect their data including experiments and observations. Behaviourists believe that the subject matter of psychology should be observable behaviour and experiments can sometimes include the use of observational techniques. The presence of others can be studied experimentally by measuring what participants are doing rather than what they are thinking.

You must choose one of the options (a)-(g):

Option (c) The effect of the presence of others on mathematical skill, is used in these exemplar answers.

You must use an independent measures design experiment and plan to collect data which measures observable behaviour. It must be a practical project that could be conducted.

Question 1.

State the null hypothesis for your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

There will be no difference in mathematical skill as measured by the ability to answer GCSE level maths questions between participants being observed by an audience of 10 of their peers and participants alone with the questioner.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The answer “follows logically from the option” ie “the effect of the presence of others on mathematical skill”. The dependent and independent variables have been clearly operationalised. The candidate has stated a two tailed hypothesis which is a null hypothesis.

#### **What the candidate did well**

An excellent answer. Good operationalisation of both variables, rather than just a restatement of the option choice.

#### **General performance on the question**

Most candidates achieved two out of three for a null hypothesis but it was often not always fully operationalised.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 2

### Question 2.

Describe the method you would use to conduct your practical project.

13 marks are awarded for replicability and appropriateness and 6 for the quality of the design and its feasibility. (13 + 6)

### SAMPLE ANSWER

I would gather a sample of 30 year 13 students at Arthur Memorial school. Some would be 18 and some would be 17 years old. I would gather them by opportunity sampling by approaching the first 20 year 13 pupils to walk through the entrance on a Monday morning so there would be boys and girls. If anyone refused I would carry on approaching people until I had 30 participants. All participants would be told the aim and procedure of the study so that they have given fully informed consent.

My experiment would use an independent measures design, meaning different participants would take part in the two conditions. I would put all the 30 names in a hat and the first 10 participants drawn out would be in the 'no audience' condition, the next 10 names drawn out would be in the 'audience' condition and the last 10 names would act as the audience.

I would ask the 10 participants in the 'no audience' condition to stay after school on the next day and ask them to sit in 10 different maths classrooms – rooms M1- M10. Each participant would be handed the same 2010 GCSE maths paper with questions such as 'How would you calculate the radius of a circle?' and what is  $14 \times 12$ ? The experimenter would enter the room at 5pm, exactly one hour after they had started the paper and they would be thanked for their time. The second ten participants in the 'audience' condition and the audience participants would be asked to come to M1 classroom at 4pm on the following day ie Wednesday. The same procedure would follow ie the same 2010 GCSE maths paper and the same time allowed in which to complete it. However, this time, although the experimenter stays in the corridor outside the classroom, the participants are all seated at separate desks in the same room with an audience of 10 of their peers seated behind them watching. The audience have been told not to bring anything with them or talk but just to watch the participants. All the participants would be thanked for their time.

The experimenter would collect the 20 answer papers together and mark each paper out of 100 using the published mark scheme. A score out of 100 would be recorded for each participant as the mathematical skill and this score could be compared between the two groups audience and no audience.

**Mark band - Top band for replicability and design.**

## COMMENTARY

### **What the candidate did well**

This is a very clear description of an independent measures design experiment. The design of putting different groups of participants in separate conditions is clearly described. The procedure is fully replicable as it is described in sufficient detail with information on the content of the examination, testing conditions and scoring. It is also very clear how the sample was obtained and who they were.

### **How the answer could be improved**

Although this may be dependent on time, the candidate could have described the test situation more fully, for example stating any instructions given to participants.

### **General performance on the question**

Most candidates fell into the mid band as there were major omissions to the description of sample and /or procedure. However, most candidates were able to perform well on design and could devise an independent measures design experiment which was measuring observable behaviour.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 3

### Question 3.

Outline one advantage of using the experimental method in your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

An advantage of using the experimental method in my project was that I was able to implement a high level of control over the variables. For example, I was able to give all the students the same maths test and give them the same length of time to complete it. This means that I can infer a cause effect relationship between the IV and DV and assume that it is the effect of an audience producing a difference in maths scores.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

#### What the candidate did well

In accordance with the mark scheme, an "Advantage is clearly outlined in the context of this practical". The context is fully embedded in the answer and not just mentioned. No improvements are needed in this answer.

#### General performance on the question

Performance was generally, however some candidates lost marks by failing to fully contextualise their answer.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 4(a)

### Question 4 (a)

Explain one strength of using the independent measures design in your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

A strength of using the independent measures design in my practical project was that I could avoid order effects. In my study the participants were either in the audience or no audience condition and so only did the maths test once. If they had done it twice they would have gained practice for the second condition making it easier to complete in the second condition.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The strength is explained very clearly in the context of the practical, in this case using the context of both the IV and DV.

#### How the answer could be improved

Although this candidate had done enough to achieve maximum. Other candidates could be advised to give a fuller explanation of the impact of order effects in terms of impairing the outcome of a study.

#### General performance on the question

Most candidates did well on this question. However, some answers identified a strength but did not explain it fully. A few candidates confused independent measures design with repeated measures and therefore did not receive credit. While other candidates gave a muddled explanation by identifying order effects and then explaining demand characteristics.



## SECTION A, QUESTION 4(b)

### Question 4 (b)

Explain one weakness of using the independent measures design in your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

A weakness of an independent measures design is individual differences. For example in my project some people may have been naturally better at maths and so the maths scores will not be affected by the audience but just be the result of being better at maths.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

This answer fits the descriptors in the mark scheme for maximum marks - "Weakness explained clearly in the context of the practical".

#### How the answer could be improved

Although not necessary in this example to achieve full marks. Students could be advised to give a fuller explanation of the impact of individual differences to impair the outcome of a study.

#### General performance on the question

Generally good but some candidates gave a muddled explanation of the effect of individual differences, suggesting they did not fully understand what this means and why it is a weakness of independent measures design.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 5

### Question 5.

State an appropriate inferential statistical test to analyse the data that would be collected in your practical project. Give reasons for your choice. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

I would use a Mann Whitney U test as the maths scores are at least ordinal level data and the design is independent measures.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The candidate correctly identified an appropriate statistical test and gave reasons for their choice. The choice of stats test in the answer was appropriate, as maths scores were used in the practical project. The reasons given and justifications were also correct, which therefore led to full marks being awarded. No further elaboration or detail was needed.

#### General performance on the question

Performance was only satisfactory. Common mistakes included candidates giving the wrong test for the level of the data they used in their practical project, or only giving one reason for the choice of a correctly identified test. Such answers led to zero and two marks respectively.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 6

### Question 6.

Briefly discuss one practical issue in relation to your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One practical issue is finding enough free classrooms for all the participants in the 'no audience' condition to be in separate classrooms.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The candidate identified a practical problem i.e. finding free classrooms that might be encountered in this project. This was fully contextualised and elaborated on with reference to the 'no audience' condition. This answer fits in with the mark scheme requirements for full marks - "A practical issue is clearly identified and discussed in relation to the investigation". There is also enough detail here for the award of 3 marks.

#### General performance on the question

Candidates did reasonably well on this question, however the biggest issue concerning the loss of marks was that some candidates confused practical issues with ethical issues and therefore received no credit.

## SECTION A, QUESTION 7

### Question 7.

Suggest an alternative way of manipulating the independent variable in your practical project. (3)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One other way of manipulating the independent variable would be to have the participants in the audience condition supervised by a group of maths teachers instead of other students.

**Mark – 3/3 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The answer is described in sufficient detail for a 3 mark question. "An appropriate suggestion is clearly made in relation to the investigation". The candidate has changed the nature of the audience which seems appropriate for this context.

#### General performance on the question

Another generally good question for candidates, although some did not seem to understand the requirements of the question, or confused the IV with DV. Such candidates changed the DV instead of the IV, e.g. measuring performance in a different way.

Answer either question 8 or question 9.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 8(a)

Question 8 (a).

Briefly outline the psychodynamic perspective in psychology. (4)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One assumption of the psychodynamic perspective in psychology is that there are three parts to the mind: the ID, the EGO and the SUPEREGO and they are in constant conflict. This helps us understand behaviour. The psychodynamic perspective in psychology uses case studies which are good as they collect rich and in depth data. However, because no scientific methods are used, there is no empirical evidence for it.

**Mark – 4/4 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

The candidate has succinctly identified some of the features of the psychodynamic perspective. In order to achieve four marks, the mark scheme states “The main components of the approach are clearly and accurately described. Detail is appropriate to level and time allowed.” This answer just covers this description in the mark scheme.

#### How the answer could be improved?

The answer achieved four marks just. Therefore, there could be more emphasis on unconscious processes as an explanation for behaviour using the psychodynamic perspective.

#### General performance on the question

There were many examples of good answers for this question. Unfortunately, some candidates confused the psychodynamic perspective with other approaches and outlined those instead, therefore achieving no marks. Lower marks were awarded to a number of responses that were too brief.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 8(b)

### Question 8 (b).

Describe two pieces of research that use the psychodynamic perspective in psychology. (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One piece of research that uses the psychodynamic perspective in psychology is Freud's study of Little Hans. He carried out a case study of Little Hans as he was suffering from a phobia of horses. According to Freud the cause of Little Hans' phobia was related to his Oedipus complex. Little Hans was afraid of horses because the horse was a symbol for his father. For example the black bits around the horses face reminded the boy of his father's moustache and the blinkers reminded him of his father's glasses. Freud believed that Little Hans had sexual fantasies about his mother and he feared his father who he saw as his rival. Little Hans therefore displaced his fear of his father onto horses who reminded him of his father. The psychodynamic perspective explains the phobia as an unconscious fear which is resolved with the resolution of the Oedipus Complex.

A second piece of research which uses the psychodynamic perspective is the case study of Eve who went to Thigpen and Cleckley suffering from MPD. Her problems arose in the subconscious as her other personalities split off to protect her from anxiety. This is a psychodynamic explanation.

**Mark band - A high mid band answer.**

### COMMENTARY

"The range (two or more) of theories/studies described is taken from at least two different sources (Freud and Thigpen and Cleckley). For the Little Hans study, "the description of knowledge (theories/studies) is mainly accurate, coherent and reasonably detailed. Elaboration, use of example, quality of description is good." The first piece of research was therefore in line with the top mark band. However, the second piece of research was not described fully enough, as a result the whole answer was placed in the mid band.

#### What the candidate did well

The Little Hans study provides particularly good links to the psychodynamic perspective and the description of the research is accurate.

#### How the answer could be improved

The second piece of research was not detailed enough to get the response into the top band. Knowledge of this study seems limited; it is also possible that the candidate also ran out of time.

#### General performance on the question

Candidates generally demonstrated good knowledge of research within the psychodynamic perspective. However, there were instances where candidates choose inappropriate research, which do not use the psychodynamic perspective. There were also cases where the research described was not detailed and/or accurate enough.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 8(c)

### Question 8(c).

Discuss the strengths and limitations of research that provides an individual explanation of behaviour. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer. (12)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One weakness of research that provides an individual explanation of behaviour is that the data collected cannot be seen as generalisable. This is because the results are collected on an individual and may be different from those collected from someone with a similar situation/problem but who responds differently to it. If we cannot make generalisations, it is difficult to draw conclusions about people's behaviour. For example Eve White had three different personalities but other cases of MPD may have many more.

Another weakness of research that provides an individual explanation of behaviour is the breach of ethics within research. Non-adherence to protection of participants or right to withdraw makes research controversial and unethical. The pseudopatients in Rosenhan's study witnessed and experienced verbal abuse by hospital staff distressing them whilst they were unable to withdraw from the study.

A strength of research providing an individual explanation of behaviour is the real-world practical applications it offers. For example, although Freud's theories were highly subjective and non-falsifiable, they are used extensively by psychotherapists for therapeutic purposes, particularly anxiety disorders.

Another strength of research that provides an individual explanation of behaviour is for research to conduct both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Quantitative data is important to provide statistical support for a theory that can be easily compared. The addition of qualitative data extends the depth of research, and in coalition both techniques enhance validity. For example, in Thigpen and Cleckley's rich detail was obtained from 100 hours of interviews with Eve, along with IQ test scores and EEG readings.

**Mark/band - 8/9 marks out of 12.**

### COMMENTARY

The answer fits into the mark scheme descriptor for 8-9 marks. "Evaluation (positive and negative points) is very good. Range of points is good and is balanced. Points are well organised into issues/debates, methods or approaches. Selection of points is related to the assessment request and demonstrates competent psychological knowledge. Good use of supporting examples from unit content. Quality of argument arising from points is often clear and well developed. Analysis (key points and valid generalisations) is often evident. Evaluation is quite detailed and understanding is good." Although this is not quite a top band answer, there are some well developed discussion points with some reasonable use of examples.

**What the candidate did well**

The answer was well balanced, with the inclusion of two strengths and two weaknesses, which are discussed with supporting evidence. The inclusion of two strengths and two limitations is a requirement to access the top band, although the detail is not quite there to achieve this.

**How the answer could be improved**

Some of the discussion points could have been more specific, while a wider range of research could have been used and further elaboration of points.

**General performance on the question**

This question was not answered as well as some others and performance was generally satisfactory. This has proven to be a difficult area of the specification and as a result some answers did not have enough discussion points. Other answers included psychological research to support their answers which were not appropriate for an individual explanation of behaviour.



## SECTION B, QUESTION 8(d)

### Question 8 (d).

Compare the psychodynamic perspective with the physiological approach. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer. (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

The physiological approach is highly scientific whereas the psychodynamic perspective does not use scientific methods. The physiological approach uses technical equipment which is high in reliability and the variables in the research are usually highly controlled. For example Dement and Kleitman wired up their participants to an EEG machine to measure brain wave patterns during sleep whereas Freud conducted his research from the conversations Little Hans had with his father. His interpretation of these conversations may have been subjective and biased.

One similarity between the psychodynamic perspective and the physiological approach is the use of observation. In Dement and Kleitman's study into sleep (physiological) the participants were observed by the observers while they slept and were woken up by the bell. In the psychodynamic perspective research, observation was also used, for example in Freud's case study of Hans, Hans' father observed Hans on multiple occasions.

**Mark band – 5/6 marks out of 8.**

### COMMENTARY

One similarity and one difference were discussed with the use of examples from the two approaches. The answer is an example that fits nicely into the high mid band for 5-6 marks. "Explanation of terms is mainly accurate and use of psychological terminology is competent. The supporting examples (two or more) of theories/studies described is taken from at least two different sources. Explanation of knowledge (theories/studies) is mainly accurate, coherent and reasonably detailed. Elaboration, use of example, quality of description is good. The answer has some structure and organisation. Quality of written communication is good".

#### What the candidate did well

The first point within the response highlights the difference in the use of scientific method between the two approaches, this is discussed effectively. The answer is also well structured with one similarity and one difference discussed, with the use of examples from the two approaches.

#### How the answer could be improved

The second point of similarity in the use of observation is not a very relevant aspect of this research and a stronger similarity could be found. The candidate could have used a wider range of research in order to access the top band.

#### General performance on the question

Most candidates did reasonable well on this question, but answers sometimes lacked supporting evidence, while others used inappropriate evidence which were not part of either perspective/approach. There were also occurrences where candidates demonstrated knowledge of the approach and perspective, but points were simply described, without any direct comparison of them.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 8(e)

Question 8 (e).

Can individual explanations of behaviour be considered useful? (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

Individual explanations of behaviour can be considered useful as although they may lack in generalisability, they are still useful in helping understand disorders such as MPD which are relatively rare. It leads to a better understanding of disorders and the human body itself, for example, in Sperry's split-brain study, the results are seen as very useful because they enable us to understand more.

However, it can be argued that research into individual differences is not useful. For example, the case study into Eve White carried out by Thigpen and Cleckley. It can be argued that this research is not useful because it can't be applied or generalised to the target population. This is because Thigpen and Cleckley's research within the individual differences approach was not representative because the sample only consisted of one individual.

**Mark band – 3/4 marks out of 8.**

### COMMENTARY

Discussion is reasonable, the range of supporting arguments is limited and has some organisation. Selection of arguments from a limited range of sources is vaguely related to the question and demonstrates some psychological knowledge. Quality of argument (or comment) is inconsistent. Discussion has some detail and some understanding is evident. Two discussion points are included, but there is little evidence of supporting arguments.

#### What the candidate did well

There is a good balance of points between positive and negative, with the use of relevant examples.

#### How the answer could be improved

The answer lacks detail and discussion is limited and could be elaborated on further. There should be more emphasis on discussion and less on simply including research evidence.

#### General performance on the question

Performance on this question was generally weak. Many answers included too much description and were lacking in a coherent discussion on usefulness.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 9(a)

Question 9 (a).

Briefly outline two ethical issues relating to psychological research. (4)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

Confidentiality is where the data of participants in research is private and does not show their names and so is confidential. The data from the research may be shared but the identity of the participant is not revealed.

Right to withdraw is where the participant in the research is made aware that they can stop taking part at any point in the study. They can stop taking part and can ask for their data to be discarded and not used.

**Mark – 4/4 marks.**

### COMMENTARY

This is a very good response in which two ethical guidelines are identified and outlined in sufficient detail. All of the points within the top band of the mark scheme are relevant to this answer. "The main components of ethical guidelines are clearly and accurately described. Detail is appropriate to level and time allowed. The debate is clearly related to ethical guidelines. The candidate clearly understands the issue in question. Confident use of psychological terminology and concepts."

#### How the answer could be improved

There is more than sufficient detail in order to achieve full marks. Examples of the ethical issues in research were included by some candidates, but are not needed.

#### General performance on the question

Most candidates demonstrated good knowledge of psychological research. For those candidates who performed less well on this question, it was often due to them simply rewording the guideline in their description, or only giving examples from research studies.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 9(b)

Question 9 (b).

Describe two pieces of research in psychology that can be considered unethical. (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

One piece of research that can be considered unethical in psychology was performed by social psychologist Stanley Milgram. In his study into obedience he allowed 40 males aged 20-50 years to believe that they had given an electric shock to another participant when they gave incorrect answers in a memory test of word pairs. The experimenter wearing a lab coat encouraged the teacher (by giving prods such as 'the experiment requires you to continue') to give electric shock increasing by 15 volt intervals to a learner in the next room. The voltage machine was in fact fake and there were no electric shocks given but the teacher participant was convinced by the tape recordings of screams from the next room and suffered great distress. They were seen to be shaking, showed nervous laughter and anxiety. This is contravening the ethical concern of protection. The participants were also deceived into thinking they were giving electric shocks and that it was a study of memory. This is also very unethical.

Asch's study of conformity was also unethical. Each naive participant was put in a group with 7 confederates and tested on what they thought was a visual perception test. Participants had to choose a line out of 3 lines of different length to match a target line. Each person in the group gave their choice out loud and the naive participant followed on from the confederates in making his judgement. On many of the trials the confederates gave the same wrong answer and in 32% of the choices made the participant conformed to the wrong judgement of the confederates. They were deceived by the researcher and may have felt distressed by making wrong choices. This study breaks the ethical guidelines of deception and protection.

**Mark band – 7 marks out of 8.**

### COMMENTARY

This answer provides a very good description of with links to how it is considered unethical.

Use of psychological terminology is comprehensive. The range of theories/studies described is appropriate. Description is accurate, coherent and detailed. Elaboration, use of example, quality of description is very good. The answer is competently structured and organised. Quality of written communication is comprehensive.

#### **What the candidate did well**

An accurate description of two appropriate research studies, with links to how they are both considered to be unethical.

#### **How the answer could be improved**

The candidate has given a detailed description given the time constraints. However, there is the odd example where links to how it is unethical could be made clearer.

#### **General performance on the question**

Generally well answered, although some candidates focused too heavily on how the research was unethical without giving any details from the research studies. While others simply described the research study without any clear reference to ethical issues.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 9(c)

### Question 9 (c).

Discuss strengths and limitations of using observation to investigate behaviour. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer. (12)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

Observation to investigate behaviour can be commented as being ethical as long as the observation is taking place in a public place where people can expect to be observed. For example in Piliavin's study participants were on a train and were therefore in a place where they could be observed.

Observation can also be unreliable as it is possible for observers to miss behaviours. For example in Bandura's study it is possible that the researcher missed certain behaviours of the children.

Observations can also be subject to researcher bias. For example in Rumpagh and Savage's experiment on chimps, observations were made by the researchers on the lexigrams. However, this meant it was particularly easy for there to be researcher bias and the researchers making something out to have been spontaneous when it was actually prodded.

Another strength of observation is that there is less chance of demand characteristics as in some research participants don't know they are being watched. For example, in Piliavin's subway study none of the participants were aware of the study therefore there was no demand characteristics.

**Mark band – 4/5 marks out of 12.**

### COMMENTARY

This answer falls in within the bottom mid band range. Evaluation (positive and negative points) is limited. Range of points is limited (may be positive or negative only). Points are occasionally organised into issues/debates, methods or approaches. Selection of points is sometimes related to the assessment request and demonstrates limited psychological knowledge. Poor use of supporting examples from unit content. Argument arising from points is sparse. Analysis (key points and valid generalisations) is sparse. Evaluation is lacking in detail and understanding is sparse."

#### What the candidate did well

There are two strengths and two weaknesses identified, which provides balance. There are also some examples of relevant research used to support the points.

#### How the answer could be improved

It should be made clearer by the candidate which are strengths and which are weaknesses, as this is not always obvious. A wider range of supporting evidence could also be included; these could also be made more apposite. Overall, the discussion is weak and points are mainly identified rather than discussed which is the requirement of the question.

#### General performance on the question

Overall, candidates did not answer this question well. The majority of answers made the same mistakes as in the exemplar answer. In such questions, students need to put more discussion into their answers with support for their arguments from research studies.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 9(d)

### Question 9 (d).

Compare the observational method with any other research method. Use examples of psychological research to support your answer. (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

The observational method may be higher in ecological validity than the experimental method which often takes place in a highly controlled laboratory setting. On the other hand, an observation may be conducted in a natural environment where people display natural behaviour, particularly if they do not know they are being observed. For example in Rosenhan's study of 'Being Sane in Insane Places', the pseudo patients observed the behaviour of the doctors, nurses and patients and this was a true representation of the behaviour in a psychiatric hospital. This was in contrast to the lab set up in Loftus and Palmer's study where the students knew they were in an experiment and may have responded to the questions about the speed of cars in a way they thought the experimenter was looking for. In other words they may have demonstrated demand characteristics which is not their natural behaviour.

Another difference is that the observational method has less control over extraneous variables than the laboratory method. In Piliavin's study, researchers could not control the ages of the participants and this could have affected the results on helping behaviour. This would reduce the validity of the findings as it does not reflect helping behaviour across the whole age range. On the other hand the laboratory method has a high degree of control. In Maguire's study, researchers used the same MRI scanner and they selected participants who were all right-handed, male taxi drivers. This therefore improves reliability and a cause effect relationship can be inferred.

**Mark – 7/8 marks out of 8.**

### COMMENTARY

There is no requirement of the question to include both similarities and differences, therefore the fact that the two comparison points are differences does not compromise the mark awarded. Both points are very good and therefore the answer was awarded marks in the top band. The response meets the following criteria:

"Explanation of terms is accurate and use of psychological terminology is comprehensive. The supporting examples (two or more) of theories/studies described is appropriate and taken from at least two different sources. Explanation of knowledge (theories/studies) is accurate, coherent and detailed. Elaboration, use of example, quality of description is very good. The answer is competently structured and organised (global structure introduced at start and followed throughout) Quality of written communication is very good."

#### How the answer could be improved

This is an excellent response; there is a clear comparison of the 2 methods, with an appropriate range of relevant supporting evidence and detail for the time allowed.

#### General performance on the question

This was generally satisfactory, but some candidates gave muddled answers with inconsistencies between the methods compared. Other responses included studies which did not use the observational method; therefore this was irrelevant supporting evidence.

## SECTION B, QUESTION 9(e)

Question 9 (e).

Discuss the ethics of the case study method in psychology. (8)

### SAMPLE ANSWER(S)

The case study is a longitudinal study where researchers study an individual or a group in great detail. The case study method could be considered one of the more ethical methods of conducting psychological research as participants would normally give fully informed consent. This means that they not only agree to take part in a piece of research but they understand how it will be carried out and what will happen to them. Over several years of research, Thigpen and Cleckley were in a supportive and therapeutic relationship with Eve and were helping her overcome her MPD. She initiated the relationship by going to them to seek help and so was fully consenting to her therapy.

However, the case study method is not always ethical. Protection from harm may be an issue as researchers may subject participants to psychological stress. For example in Thigpen and Cleckley's study, they tried to draw out Eve White and Eve Black simultaneously and this caused Eve a lot of stress.

**Mark band – 5/6 marks out of 8.**

### COMMENTARY

The first point here is well discussed in relation to the requirements of the question, while the second point more limited and lacks the detail of the first point. As a result, this balances out to be a high mid band answer and closes matches the mark scheme:

"Discussion is very good. Range of supporting arguments is well balanced and is organised. Selection of arguments from a variety of sources is logically related to the question and demonstrates very good psychological knowledge. Quality of argument (or comment) is generally well developed. Discussion is detailed and understanding is good."

#### What the candidate did well

This is an excellent response; there is a clear comparison of the 2 methods, with an appropriate range of relevant supporting evidence and detail for the time allowed.

#### How the answer could be improved

In contrast to the first point, the second point about protection from harm should be discussed more fully, with the use of alternative evidence used to support the point.

#### General performance on the question

Answers were generally weak, as many candidates tended to list examples rather than give informed discussion on a number of points. However, this may have been due to them running out of time.

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