

Psychology

Advanced GCE A2 H568

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H168

Report on the Units

June 2010

HX68/R/10

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G541 Psychological Investigations

General Comments

The majority of candidates demonstrated a good level of understanding of research Methods and had clearly been prepared well by staff in their centres. It was pleasing to see, at times, a sophisticated understanding of the research process that went beyond the mundane rote learning of facts and revealed an understanding of the application of such knowledge to applied practical research scenarios. There was evidence that candidates are now more aware than in previous sessions of the importance of contextualising their response to the theme of the research provided in the stimulus response material related to each section. Some were able to achieve this simply by the inclusion of key words/phrases from the actual material provided (eg using the words 'stress' and/or 'driving' in section C responses). This was evident on scripts where candidates had circled or underlined such key words/phrases in the actual question on the paper (a good tip). However, there still remains a sizeable number of candidates who fail to maximise their full potential by not including contextual information in their response. The advice would be to always include contextual details at some stage in an answer (eg to illustrate a point being made), even if the question does not explicitly require it. More generally, it was sometimes noticeable that candidates struggled to express themselves clearly and articulate their points fully.

Although the majority of candidates demonstrated a good understanding of basic research concepts (such as what is involved in an independent measures design), clearly others did not, which reveals the importance of covering all of the terms and concepts outlined in the specification so that candidates have available definitions to use in the examination. Some candidates also need to pay more attention to the differing number of marks available on questions and respond accordingly (ie by making sure all aspects of the question are covered and that enough detail is included).

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

Most candidates performed well on this question and were able to identify a strength and weakness of the correlational Method. Some included examples related to the context of the investigation presented in the stimulus material, which was fine, although not a requisite of this question.

Question 2

It would appear that a small minority of candidates do not know the difference between an alternate and null hypothesis (some cited a null in response to this question). Some also confused experimental research with correlational, by hypothesising that there would be a *difference*.

Question 3

It should have been expected that all/most candidates would be able to attempt to identify two findings from the data table provided in response to this question. However, some cited the same finding in reverse (eg *the more sleep had the night before the better concentration was, and the less sleep the night before the worse concentration was*). Weaker candidates only attempted one finding. Also, some candidates presented descriptive statistics (eg mean number of letter Fs identified), which was fine, but not always correct. Conclusions expressed as findings were acceptable here (maximising the opportunities for the candidates to do well).

Question 4

Higher achieving candidates were able to discuss a strength and weakness of the way concentration had been measured in the study in context, referring to specific operational details, rather than in general terms. However, others just discussed a strength and weakness generally.

Question 5

Most candidates were able to achieve maximum marks on this question, citing an almost textbook response to what a positive correlation refers to. However, it was surprising that some could not attempt an answer here, and others clearly did not understand the relationship evident in co-variables in a positive correlation. For example, answers included suggestions that a positive correlation is ... *when the research turns out as you predicted* or ... *when good things happen in a study*.

Question 6

Higher marks were secured if the weakness of the sampling technique was discussed in context of the theme of the investigation (perceptions of friendliness after receiving physical contact or not). Once again, this illustrates the importance of noting what the purpose of the research was and referring to this in your response.

Question 7

The concept of experimental design was generally well understood, with candidates acknowledging that it is concerned with the manipulation/use of participants in research. However, others clearly did not understand this and produced a variety of incorrect responses, including the belief that an independent measures design is ... *where there is only one participant and one experimenter testing them*.

Question 8

Weaker candidates did not understand that control relates to the study of how the IV affects the DV and the regulation/elimination of possible extraneous influences. Many talked generally, about things such as ethical issues.

To achieve high marks here candidates also had to provide a rationale for the controls cited (which some omitted) and, once again, to discuss in context of the theme of the investigation

Question 9a

Most candidates could successfully identify the DV in the study, but sometimes expressed this in an ambiguous way that prevented full marks being awarded (eg just stating that the DV was *friendliness*). A minority confused the IV with the DV, claiming the DV was whether customers in the coffee shop were touched on the arm or not.

Question 9b

Only the top achieving candidates discussed a strength and weakness of the way that the DV had been measured in context, referring to some aspect of the theme of the study (coffee shop customers' perceptions of *friendliness* of the cashier/staff following physical contact or not).

Question 10

In order to achieve full marks on this question the strength and weakness of the use of the self report Method cited by the candidates needed to relate to the use of this Method to assess stress associated with driving.

Question 11

This was a big discriminator amongst candidates. In order to do well it was necessary to provide a fully replicable description of an appropriate sampling technique and then evaluate it with reference to two or more appropriate issues in context. Many candidates failed to outline their nominated sampling technique in enough detail to replicate, and often confused one technique (eg random sampling) with another (eg opportunity sampling). Some also named a sampling technique (eg stratified) that they described poorly or did not go on to describe at all.

Question 12a

Most candidates were able to cite an appropriate question using a rating scale. However, some were not able to do this clearly (e.g. generally poorly articulated, or scale not outlined), or in context of the theme of the investigation (stress and driving) to gain the full 2 marks.

Question 12b

This question required candidates to have a full understanding of the concept of validity and be able to apply this to a question that could have been used in a study of stress associated with driving. It was clear that the better prepared candidates did understand what validity refers to, whereas weaker (and/or less well prepared) candidates talked generally about 'problems' with the question (eg such as how the rating scale might be interpreted differently by people), without discussing how/why this might compromise the validity of the research.

G542 Core Studies

The majority of candidates completed all the required sections of the paper and there were few incomplete/unfinished scripts and few rubric errors where both Question 17 and Question 18 were attempted.

Overall, candidates generally understood the requirements, content, time and mark allocations of the paper.

Many candidates failed to identify when they used additional pages. This made it difficult for examiners, especially when a candidate had ended a sentence before moving to the additional pages. Candidates should therefore be encouraged to make some annotation to indicate that an answer is continued elsewhere on the script.

Many candidates knew the Core Studies well though there were numerous instances where fine details were omitted and/or answers were not adequately contextualised. Often candidates seemed not to know key aspects of studies, eg that there were two different experiments included in the Loftus and Palmer study.

Candidates still need to be more aware of the common injunctions used in this paper, eg identify, outline, describe. This may avoid a common problem found in this paper: candidates not writing answers proportional to the marks available. In a similar vein, many candidates demonstrated a lack of psychological knowledge and understanding by failing to use psychological terminology appropriately: eg confusing findings with conclusions, reliability with validity; not knowing that a correlation does not involve an IV and a DV; not knowing the difference between a longitudinal study and a case study. Furthermore, candidates continue to use psychological terms without showing any real understanding, eg ecological validity, demand characteristics, social desirability – it sometimes appeared they were thrown into answers randomly in the hope they were appropriate to the answer, which luckily, on most occasions allowed them to gain at least partial marks.

Examiners therefore felt this paper exposed candidates who had not revised adequately, challenged those who had worked hard and allowed those who had prepared thoroughly to score well.

Overall, examiners felt the paper was appropriate for the ability range of the intended candidates. Some candidates scored exceptionally highly, few did extremely poorly and there was a good spread of results overall.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

- 1 (a) Although many candidates were able to identify one word of a word pair, it was disappointing that more could not identify a correct pair.
- (b) Generally well answered.
- 2 (a) Poorly answered. Few candidates scored more than 1 mark for this question, many giving examples of quantitative data rather than ways in which quantitative data was gathered.

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- (b) Poorly answered. Few candidates seemed to understand that examples of quantitative data needed to refer to 'numbers of ...'.
- 3 (a) Surprisingly, this question was poorly answered. Many candidates muddled experiment 2 with experiment 1 and many linked the verbs 'smashed' and 'hit' with the wrong question: ie One experimental group were asked, 'Did you see any broken glass when the cars smashed into each other?'; the other experimental group were asked, 'Did you see any broken glass when the cars hit each other?'
- (b) Candidates who scored poorly in part (a): tended to score poorly in this part as well, even though question parts are not inter-dependent.
- 4 Many candidates were able to correctly identify two of the experimental conditions though, in general, explanations of the conditions were vague and frequently muddled.
- 5 (a) Generally well answered though many failed to state that Hans' father collected the data through observations/conversations with Little Hans.
- (b) Although most candidates were able to identify an appropriate reason as to why the data may not be considered valid, many failed to fully explain their answer; eg 'Hans' father used leading questions because he was a supporter of Freud' does not explain why the data may have been invalid - the candidate needed to add, 'and wanted to get answers from Little Hans that would support Freud's theories'.
- 6 (a) Some good answers but too many candidates confused Bandura's sample with Samuel and Bryant's: eg the sample was drawn from schools in Devon.
- (b) Many candidates were able to identify an appropriate problem but few were able to fully explain the implications of the problem, particularly in relation to children.
- 7 (a) Surprisingly, this question was frequently answered wrongly or incompletely. All the candidate had to do was copy out the labels pertaining to the two axes.
- (b) Again, surprisingly, many candidates were unable to even identify that the graph indicated a positive correlation and many were unable to explain the positive correlation shown by the graph. Many references were made to the 'size' of the hippocampus rather than the 'volume', even though this issue had been a focus of the January 2010 exam.
- 8 (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) Generally well answered though some candidates failed to adequately contextualise their answer.
- 9 (a) Generally well answered.
- (b) Generally well answered.
- 10 (a) Surprisingly, very poorly answered, as the study's title is, 'Rethinking the psychology of tyranny' and one could expect candidates to know the definition of the term as used by Reicher and Haslam.
- (b) Many candidates were able to score partial marks by identifying one of the variables. However very few were able to actually describe the variable. Frequently the permeability of roles and the legitimacy of roles were rolled into one variable.

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- 11 (a) Generally, poorly answered with many responses referring to bystander apathy/abdication of responsibility rather than diffusion of responsibility.
- (b) Again, generally poorly answered even though several suggestions for why diffusion of responsibility was not found are cited in the study itself. Many candidates gave findings rather than a reason why diffusion of responsibility did not occur.
- 12 (a) Surprisingly, in general, poorly answered, with many candidates giving conclusions rather than findings.
- (b) Few candidates were able to provide an appropriate answer for this question even though Milgram's explanations are not only in the original study but are cited in all recommended textbooks.
- 13 Generally well answered though candidates persist in confusing the participants with the pseudopatients.
- 14 (a) Generally well answered though many candidates failed to contextualise their answer. The question does say 'From Thigpen and Cleckley's study...'.
- 15 (b) Again, many candidates gained partial marks here as they were able to identify a way in which the sample may be considered unrepresentative but failed to fully explain their answer

Section B

There seemed to be a pretty even split between all three studies.

- 16 (a) Many candidates scored at least partial answers though many were very vague.
- (b) Many candidates were able to accurately identify and describe the sample used in their chosen study but few were able to actually state *why* the sample was chosen. Many were able to identify and explain an appropriate disadvantage of their sample but few fully contextualised their answer, eg linking Eve with MPD.
- (c) Candidates who appreciated the demands of the question scored well here. The question asked them to identify and explain advantages of the case study Method (not advantages of their chosen study) and many were able to do this though, again, answers were frequently not fully/appropriately contextualised.
- (d) Again, candidates who appreciated the demands of the question scored well here. The question asked them to identify and explain disadvantages of the case study Method (not disadvantages of their chosen study) and many were able to do this though, again, answers were frequently not fully/appropriately contextualised.
- (e) There were many good responses to this question in relation to all three studies. However many candidates failed to score more than half marks because their answers were vague, inaccurate, lacked fine details and, in many cases, were too anecdotal/story-like.

- (f) Most candidates were able to suggest changes to their chosen study. However many of the suggestions would not necessarily have been practical or feasible, eg get a sample of 100 people with MPD, find more boys with the same fears as Little Hans. Candidates therefore failed to appreciate the implications of their suggestions, eg Freud should interview Little Hans himself as this would reduce researcher bias – would it?

Section C

There seemed to be a fairly even split between Question 17 and Question 18.

- 17 (a) Many candidates gave a vague assumption that was actually more appropriate for the social approach than the behaviourist approach. Many failed to appreciate that the approach assumes we *learn* our behaviour.
- 18 (a) Although many candidates gave an assumption rather than an implication of the physiological approach some candidates gave excellent answers here.
- 17 (b) Although some candidates were able to explain that we learn obedience, we are not born obedient, many were unable to give a really good explanation as to how we learn to be obedient and/or how Milgram's study supported this concept.
- 18 (b) Was, in general, better answered than 17(b) though responses did not always show how the approach can explain dreaming.
- 17/18(c) Although several candidates cited inappropriate studies in both questions, many scored well here. Candidates lost marks by not doing the obvious, ie identify the similarity/weakness eg a similarity between ... and ... is that they both used a laboratory experiment; and then demonstrate this through reference to each of the cited studies in turn.
- 17/18(d) This question part was answered well by many candidates and there were fewer study-specific answers than in previous sessions. The main weakness was that candidates did not explain why their strength/weakness was a strength/weakness eg a strength of the physiological approach is that many of the studies are conducted in a laboratory so are high in control – so why is that a strength? In addition many of the supporting examples did not actually support/illustrate the identified strength/weakness.

G543 Options in Applied Psychology

General Comments

The paper appears to have performed fairly and reliably, with no obvious flaws or inconsistencies. The full range of grades was readily achieved. Candidates with a good knowledge of the material and well-practised skills performed best. Most candidates produced consistently good responses, but a minority seemed to perform notably better on one option than the other (often 'forensic' being better and the one attempted first). Where this was the case they had apparently been taught one option much more thoroughly and were using scant knowledge and anecdote for the other. This may be a function of time and/or different teachers and is for centres to consider. Otherwise, there was little evidence that many candidates ran out of time. Forensic and Health were the more popular options, candidates performing noticeably better on the former. Sport and Education were generally well attempted with different examiners reporting variously about which was most answered and which was better answered.

The quality of candidate responses was very varied, ranging from impressive insight and eloquence to quite poor construction, development and presentation. Candidates seemed generally well prepared, significantly more so than in the January session. Whilst teachers fear there are many studies to learn, marking is mindful of the expectations of standard of a typical 17/18 year old with the size of specification and demand of the exam, hence the level of detail required for a good mark is not as exacting as may have been feared. More significant in differentiating award of marks is the extent to which candidates responded to the precise demand of the question. This was particularly noticeable in part (a) of questions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13 and 15.

Teachers continue to 'overteach'. Regurgitation of stock phrases without really understanding what is meant is still a feature. Purely formulaic and PEC-style responses were still in evidence but less so than in January. Whereas these may be applicable, they must indicate student engagement with the material, and there are more expedient approaches. This said, time was not as much of a problem as might have been feared. A majority of candidates did seem able to make a good attempt at four questions and there were few rubric errors. I am not aware of any examples where candidates answered questions from the wrong sections.

As stated, better candidates answered the question asked, whereas others did not (eg Q2, about 'suspects', being answered with interviewing 'witnesses' and the cognitive interview). Some candidates 'churned out' research where none was called for (eg 4a, 5a, 11a), where it should only have been used as support or evidence and made relevant. Other occasions when studies were requested they were again 'churned out' rather than answering the question (eg 5a - systematic desensitisation of fear of snakes but not referring this to self-efficacy). Section B answers showed great variation. Whereas bottom band was lacking in all/most departments or erroneous (eg confused about reliability or validity in qns 2, 6, 11), many candidates offered more description than evaluation or made good general points without much application/contextualisation, which was needed to take answers to higher bands. Examples include Q11 where clapping to demonstrate social loafing was not related to sport or in Q13 Behaviourist learning was not applied to knowledge acquisition. This was typified in pre-learned answers that lacked any real understanding and candidates who had the conceptual understanding but lacked knowledge of research in which to locate their answers. In part (b) responses improved to second band where candidates went beyond being overly descriptive and points were well expressed and contextualised - a full answer at this level was not necessary, merely a demonstration would suffice. The top band would develop the answer a stage further, such as with a challenge, an extension or a legitimate comparison. This would be guided by the injunction being directly addressed (assess the extent, discuss etc). Again, a full

answer would not be required to be at this level, but an extended demonstration would be required. It was further agreed that a consistent band 2 response could access the top band.

Comments on Individual Questions

- 1 (a) Very popular and generally well answered, commonly using Yochelson and Samenow. Better responses, of which there were many, referred to criminal thinking patterns; others merely reported research. The most common error was to use inappropriate research such as Kohlberg and refer to morality instead.
- 1 (b) Broad range of quality of responses. Many candidates were able to use relevant research from cognitive psychology and consider 'to what extent' it provided an explanation of criminal behaviour. Weaker answers merely churned out pre-learnt evaluation issues which did not address the injunction. 'To what extent' was a good discriminator.
- 2 (a) Again, popular and generally well answered. Candidates tended to have a good grasp of the detail of their chosen research. Some anecdotal responses, which received little credit.
- (b) Very good answers were well organised and addressed examples of reliability, either about the research itself or maybe ecological validity. However many responses confused reliability with validity. This maybe because they took reliability to mean how true or how much the evidence could be relied on so were often writing about validity. Others appeared not to know the difference or simply evaluated the studies from this section and were awarded little credit. This too was a good discriminator.
- 3 (a) Again well answered, better candidates using research rather than merely reporting it, sometimes managing to link it to the halo effect. Common error was to talk about the attractiveness of a 'witness' when the question clearly asks for 'defendant'.
- (b) Mostly well answered in terms of mock trials, population validity etc.. Sometimes pre-learnt evaluations were presented rather than evaluations of methodology used.
- 4 (a) The least popular and least well answered of the forensic questions. Whereas the question requires a description of anger management too many candidates slavishly reproduced their learnt study about effectiveness and so failed to describe anger management itself. Better candidates described the process of anger management or a recognised programme such as CALM. A good discriminator.
- (b) Some very good answers, in particular where candidates used research well in the context of the effectiveness debate. Another good discriminator because the 'assess' injunction was responded to by the best candidates. At the other end of the scale, weaker candidates did not go much beyond description.
- 5 (a) Possibly the worst question in terms of candidate response. Too much reliance on and description of the snake study, often without referring it to health. Too often self-efficacy was not addressed. Very few candidates were able to provide convincing accounts of self-efficacy as a theory of health belief.
- (b) A seemingly straightforward question proved problematic for many. Too often theories were described with little or no evaluation. Many, however, did well by simply discussing theoretical approaches as the question requires.

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- 6 (a) Those who answered well described a physiological measure, most commonly GSR monitors or urine samples. These were often located in studies and so contextualised the answers. Others focused too much on telling the story of a study rather than describing the measure. Some candidates wrote about non physiological measures such as self report.
- (b) Better than the reliability questions but still much confusion.
- 7 (a) Many good answers receiving considerable credit. This question was answered effectively either with reference to classification systems such as DSM-IVR the, features of which they could describe well or with reference to defining, and thus classifying, dysfunctional behaviour. Some candidates missed the 'one' instruction.
- (b) For some candidates this was a gift as they had clearly considered a range of limitations thoroughly. Some answers either list-like or brief as distinct from the better answers which had a clear discussion.
- 8 (a) Generally well answered, often referring to phobias or depression or sometimes schizophrenia. Those doing phobias talked mainly about biological preparedness, often quite effectively. Genetics and body chemistry were also regular contributions.
- (b) Surprisingly poor responses to a seemingly straight forward question. Whereas many evaluated well, others told the story of poor Little Albert but did not use this in relation to 'explanations'; even when they did offer evaluations they were limited to ethics or use of case study so did not answer the question well.
- 9 (a) Candidates who 'knew their stuff' tended to choose studies relevant to this area, in particular Kroll and Crenshaw. Some were better with the detail than others. Weaker candidates merely talked about personality or even measures with little reference to sport performance.
- (b) Some good understanding and therefore evaluation of how personality research can be useful in sport.
- 10 (a) A rarely answered question. Whereas a potentially difficult question, few candidates were caught out. Better answers referred to specific research such as Vealey or included self-efficacy; the less impressive responses talked vaguely of confidence.
- (b) Less well answered. Many students struggled to go beyond anecdotal responses or reference to their own experience.
- 11 (a) Generally well answered in the main. Candidates seemed comfortable with a number of research possibilities. The main problem was insuring their research related to sport (one study in particular refers to social loafing in groups of clappers - this is relevant but should be linked to sport).
- (b) The usual issues with what constitutes validity. Candidates seemed less comfortable with what research was available in answering this question.
- 12 (a) Generally well answered. Main flaw was students using knowledge or even anecdote without relating to sport.
- (b) A range of quality of response. Some were very impressive in truly appreciating ethical issues involved in this area. Others tried to use general knowledge of ethical considerations and contrived attempts to link to sport.

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- 13 (a) A good discriminator. Some very good, precise responses to the question by the better candidates. Weaker candidates regurgitated behaviourist principles without relating them to knowledge acquisition. Others relied on studies rather than emphasising explanations.
- (b) In general a well answered question with good comparisons between behaviourist, cognitive and humanistic approaches. A few candidates referred to non behaviourist explanations of knowledge acquisition.
- 14 (a) Not a particularly popular question but when answered there were descriptions of emotional intelligence in particular.
- (b) See 'effectiveness' comments on previous questions - often well answered but sometimes described rather than assessed.
- 15 (a) Too often candidates referred to Maslow in a general sense or talked of the unlikely event of pupils self-actualising rather than referring to 'personal and social development in education' as the question requests.
- (b) Candidates also struggled with this part of the question. Again they seemed unable to address the personal and social development aspect referred to in the question and on the specification.
- 16 (a) Candidates were impressive in their range of responses to this question, seeming able to marry up their own experience with research available.
- (b) Generally the evaluations were well done. Some candidates addressed 'evaluate', 'effectiveness' or simply described rather than discuss ethical considerations.

G544 Approaches and Research Methods in Psychology

General

This is the first Summer paper for G544 and the entry for this synoptic unit was 8,381. The overall standard of performance of the candidates varied considerably but candidates appeared to have been taught appropriate material and to be well prepared for the style of questions. Most candidates were familiar with correlational research but had difficulty describing a practical project to carry this out. This suggests that candidates need more practice in writing up practical reports to cover the range of content in the specification. Candidates could describe a feasible investigation in detail which was both practical and ethical but was often not correlational in design. However, many candidates gave imaginative and carefully thought out descriptions of a practical project based on the research question. Popular choices of research question were levels of exposure to sunlight and happiness, and noise and performance on cognitive tasks. In section B, most candidates showed understanding of the questions under discussion but sometimes their points were not fully elaborated or their examples described in much detail. Question 8 attracted more responses than question 9 and these tended to be slightly stronger. There were few rubric errors: in Section A candidates usually chose one of the research questions on which to base their practical project and in Section B they selected one out of the two questions. Most candidates were able to complete the paper in the allocated time but some appeared to be short of time as the parts d and e on section B could be very brief. Although there is not a requirement to include research from the A2 options unit many candidates were over-reliant on AS studies which limited the scope of their answers. However, the AS studies were used to good effect in the candidates' responses.

Section A

Most candidates framed a hypothesis but many did not fully operationalise both variables. Some candidates described an experimental hypothesis (due to stating an effect/difference) rather than a correlational hypothesis.

This question was marked out of 13 and 6. 13 marks were given for the description of the practical project and its replicability and appropriateness; 6 marks were given for the design and its feasibility. The full range of marks (13) and (6) was awarded.

The Method was clearly described although it was not always fully replicable. Many candidates missed out details of scoring and did not give sufficient details of how the sample was obtained. The simplest appropriate proposals in Section A scored much higher than overly complex experimental designs. For example some candidates got high marks for simply correlating police records and weather data for option f. More complex experimental designs got much lower marks overall.

Option (a) attracted the strongest answers, though most of the described projects were not of correlational design. In the main candidates struggled to operationalise the variables of temperature, social density, pollution levels on an ordinal scale and the majority of candidates described repeated measures experimental research as if it were correlational. The full range of marks out of 13 for 'replicability' was awarded but few candidates were awarded top band marks out of 6 for 'design'.

Most candidates knew which test was appropriate for a correlational design, and most gave appropriate reasons for the test. The full range of marks was awarded.

Most commonly scattergrams were drawn and were fully labelled. Some candidates need to remember to put data in the graph to ensure that the type of graph is clear. Some candidates who drew bar charts or line graphs lost marks, as this type of graph was not appropriate to correlational design. Part b was well answered although some candidates failed to refer to the details from the graph they had drawn. The full range of marks was awarded.

Most answers referred to cause & effect as a weakness of correlational design and gave a general explanation for this. A number of candidates failed to refer to the context of their own practical investigation.

Candidates have a good knowledge of appropriate ethical issues and how to deal with them but do not always discuss them in the context of their own practical project.

This question gave candidates the opportunity to suggest alternative ways of investigating the same research question and so suggestions for different research questions were not credited. However, many responses gained full marks by suggesting alternative ways of measuring one of the two variables and these were often clear and innovative.

Section B

- 8
- a) Most candidates wrote effective answers and the full range of marks was awarded. A minority of candidates confused the social approach with the behavioural approach.
 - b) This question was generally well answered. Most candidates described the AS studies Milgram, Zimbardo, or Piliavin, Reicher and Haslam. Stronger candidates explained why the study was 'social'. A minority described research from the A2 specification such as Farrington and Asch. Marks were awarded from all bands.
 - c) There was clear evidence of structure to these answers with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Better answers evaluated the approach and used evidence effectively to support the points made. The better candidates had 2 strengths and 2 weaknesses and made best use of the structure point example and elaboration. Weaker answers gave evaluation of the studies cited rather than directing the points towards the social approach and examples could have been more detailed. Marks in all bands were awarded although the majority of marks fell between 6 - 10.
 - d) Most comparisons focussed on 'nature Vs nurture' and then gave two examples, usually Raine Vs Farrington. Stronger candidates, a minority, focussed on the differences between the assumptions of the two approaches and described apposite evidence to support their arguments. Marks were awarded in all bands.
 - e) Weaker answers tended to be 'list like' outlining two or three examples of AS research, usually Milgram and Piliavin, to support one argument. Stronger answers wrote a coherent discussion illustrated by examples, focusing on both social and situational explanations of behaviour. The full range of marks was awarded in all bands.
- 9
- a) Most candidates answered in terms of difficulty of 'gaining informed consent' ... stronger candidates related this issue to the difference between overt or covert observations. Few candidates who chose this question were awarded fewer than 2 marks.
 - b) This question was generally well answered. A minority of candidates did not read the question carefully and as a result lost marks by describing ethical issues arising from non-experimental research – eg Thigpen & Cleckley, Freud (Little Hans). Most

candidates described Milgram, Zimbardo, Asch, Watson & Rayner, or Reicher & Haslam. A minority of candidates gave descriptions of research but did not identify the ethical issues clearly. Marks were awarded from all bands.

- c) Few candidates were awarded top band answers for this question, perhaps because they could not rely on what they had learned in the AS year. Weaker candidates evaluated the studies they had described in 9b rather than the strengths/limitations of research raising ethical issues. A minority of stronger candidates argued a range of points effectively, related to the question, and most marks awarded were between 6 and 9.
- d) This question generally produced mid band answers although marks were awarded across all bands. This may have been because candidates were starting to run out of time. The majority of candidates made one point of comparison, focusing on how experiments differ from observations in terms of control or ecological validity, citing Milgram and Piliavin as supporting evidence. Stronger candidates argued a range of points arising from the differences between the eg control, validity, reliability, demand characteristics, ethics, samples, etc. and supported their arguments with detailed examples.
- e) Few candidates were awarded top band marks. Weaker candidates wrote 'personal opinion based' answers and were awarded few marks. Again as with Q8e, candidates often chose to focus on one argument (it is not possible due to demand characteristics with an example) but very few managed to produce an effective alternative argument (you can conduct ethical research with an example). Often the alternative argument was weak as candidates simply listed what you have to do to be ethical

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