RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

GCE

Psychology

Advanced GCE **A2 H568**

Advanced Subsidiary GCE **AS H168**

OCR Report to Centres

June 2013

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This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

Overview

There were few rubric errors, and most candidates answered all parts of all questions. Candidates were generally very well prepared for these examinations in terms of knowledge, and in general, were well practised in terms of exam technique. The main areas of differentiation occurred in level of detail and development of points made in answers given.

It is pleasing to note that centres are referring to previous mark schemes to inform candidates. Good candidate responses precisely answered the question asked. Where candidates adopted a 'one answer fits all' approach they often fell short of top band answers. In G541 it is particularly important for candidates to respond to the ‘in this study’ demand and in G543 a response to the injunction should ensure better marks. The context and approach of the question needs full consideration as generic answers cost candidates marks. All questions are worded directly from the specification. Therefore, good knowledge of the specification will help provide focus for an appropriate answer.

G541 Psychological Investigations

General Comments

Candidates seemed generally well prepared for the paper and were able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of research methods. Centres should be commended for how they have prepared their students. It was also noticeable that a large proportion of students gained higher band marks because of the inclusion of context in their answers. Sometimes this was only achieved by the mere use of some key words provided in the scenario being included in the candidate's response, eg the mention of 'bench' in response to Q8 (b) rather than a more sophisticated use of context. Candidates adopting a more sophisticated approach had more detailed responses that elaborated on the theme of the research such as referring to the possible encouragement of people to gamble (and perhaps become addicted) as an ethical issue in response to Q2.

There were a number of key psychology terms in this paper (alternate hypothesis, structured observation, time sampling etc) which were not always understood. Such terms frequently provide the basis for AO1 questions and it would be beneficial for candidates to compile a glossary of important terms and concepts in preparation for such questions.

It was notable that many higher scoring candidates spontaneously used examples to illustrate their answers, even on questions that did not require context (eg in response to Q8 (a) and Q9 (a) when explaining what a 'structured observation' was and 'time sampling'. This often helped clarify their response and provide greater detail and understanding that other candidates did not demonstrate and should be encouraged as good practice.

It may be helpful for candidates to have time to engage in some practical work to reinforce their learning and understanding of the concepts covered. This would consolidate knowledge as well as hopefully affording some enjoyable experiences in planning and conducting research in psychology, and acknowledging that psychology is a data gathering subject that requires practical work.

There were two 10-mark questions on this paper. Overall this did not seem to cause candidates a problem and reflects well on how centres have prepared their students for these more extended responses. The higher scoring candidates' responses were characterised by good structure and taking each part of the question in turn when responding. For example, in Q3 making it clear which part of their response referred to reliability and which to validity with two completely separate paragraphs.

The majority of candidates finished this paper in the time allowed and very few omitted any questions. A number of candidates found it necessary to write additional information on extra pages at the back of the answer booklet (or in some cases, on extra, additional sheets as well). It is important where this is done that candidates acknowledge that there is a continuation of their answer at the back of the booklet.

Comments on Individual Questions

Section A

1 Most candidates were able to identify which was the closed question and explain why. Others needed to strengthen their justification or provide a clearer explanation, rather than stating *because it limits how participants can respond*. A small minority did not make it clear which question they were referring to when providing their explanation of why it was a closed question.

2 This question was answered very well by most candidates with some interesting and novel ideas advanced for additional closed questions. Some candidates phrased their questions in a way that could be interpreted as 'open', rather than 'closed', or did not provide the fixed choice responses (assuming that 'yes' or 'no' would be used in most cases). For example, *do you like gambling?* This is not a good, or clear example of an exclusively (unambiguous) closed question as respondents are not provided with any predetermined response options to choose from, and could elaborate and talk at length if they so wished about what they thought here.

3 The best responses were characterised by good structure. A clear paragraph relating to reliability, (often with a positive and then a negative comment about it in the study, or reasons it was high or low), followed by a similar paragraph about validity. It was also noticeable that some candidates commenced by providing a definition of each term prior to going in to more detail. This often helped focus the response and ensure subsequent comments were appropriate to the assessment request (providing the definition advanced was correct in the first place).

A few candidates demonstrated a very thorough and sophisticated understanding of the concepts of reliability and validity, referring to test-retest reliability, split-half testing, face and content validity etc. Although this was not necessary it was impressive nevertheless.

Some candidates did provide some very good, and very detailed responses. To gain higher marks candidates needed to contextualize their answer in relation to gambling. The higher scoring candidates were able to use examples from information provided in the scenario presented and use this to illustrate the points they were making. For example, commenting on the fact that both open and closed questions were used and saying how closed questions would increase reliability because they provide standardized options for respondents to select from. This allows details of their gambling behaviour and experiences to be easily compared to other people to assess consistency, and make it possible for the same questions about gambling to be used again with the same or different people in the future.

Section B

4 Most candidates were able to name an appropriate alternative sampling method in response to this question. Sometimes candidates needed to provide a more detailed description as to how it would be implemented. Some candidates made sophisticated links to gambling, such as the suggestion to acquire participants from registers of casinos or poker clubs while other candidates needed to contextualise their response to gain additional marks. Quite a few candidates suggested using random sampling, but needed to make clear what the target population would be, or how the selection of participants from it would be achieved. Some candidates did not know what a random sample was, suggesting they would simply obtain participants from those freely available. A small minority advanced alternative research methods, as opposed to a sampling method in response to the question (eg use the observational method instead to conduct the study).

5 The majority of candidates scored well on this question, with most achieving full marks. Occasionally though candidates cited a null instead of an alternate hypothesis. Some candidates lost marks by stating that there would be a difference, instead of correlation or relationship, or made more implicit reference to experimental (as opposed to correlational) research by suggesting a comparison between two discreet age groups (eg 16-20 year-olds and 60-75 year-olds). Some candidates incorrectly referred to dependent variables. Candidates need to be careful how they phrase their responses to such questions so that there is no confusion between the two different types of research here (experimental and correlational).

6(a) For full marks, responses to this question needed to be fully replicable with at least two appropriate evaluation issues in context. It was also important that the suggested way to measure 'internet ability' yielded a quantitative piece of data that could be used for a correlation. The most successful responses here outlined clear details of tasks to be set for people to

complete in order to assess internet ability providing specific examples (eg set up a hotmail email account and send one message to a given address saying 'Hello').This was followed by details explaining how this would be assessed and scored, such as total time taken, or points given and the criteria for awarding how many points. Some candidates who suggested observing people whilst using a computer needed to make it clear how this was to be structured and how the ability to use the internet would be derived from this. Information about the sampling method, sample and time the study would be conducted was not relevant for this particular question.

With regards to evaluation of the suggested method, candidates needed to present their points in context in order to gain marks. The most successful responses were those that clearly linked their comments to aspects of the assessment of internet ability advanced previously (some candidates evaluated irrelevant details for this particular question, such as the sampling method to be used). Some candidates were able to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of reliability and validity in response to this question, although these were not the only evaluation issues that could be referred to here. For example, some commented on the benefits of quantitative data that their suggested measure would produce, or noted how the quantitative data would not provide insight in to how or why internet ability was good or bad.

7 Many candidates were able to demonstrate a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of a correlation in response to this question. Some responses were very brief, and not in context (eg simply stating that a strength was *the ability to show a relationship between two variables*, and that *a weakness was the lack of ability to establish cause-and-effect*). Some candidates lost marks by using terminology and phrases that were inappropriate to correlational research, such as talking about *dependent variables*, or claiming something had an *effect* on something else or was *'linked'* etc.

8(a) The best responses to this question were those that made it clear that pre-determined categories of behaviour were established with a coding frame for the recording of behaviour. Some candidates clarified their response with the use of examples, often from the details presented in the scenario itself, which was fine (eg pre-determined categories of *reading*, *sitting quietly doing nothing*). A few candidates described time sampling in responses to this question. Some candidates referred to the word 'structured' in a more general way to mean 'organised'.

8(b) The best responses to this question were those that focused of the positives and negatives of conducting an observation study as *structured observation*, and in context of the research presented in the scenario. For example, how it would make the recording of data relating to the use of a park bench in summer easier and more organised as only certain behaviours (eg 'reading') would need to be looked out for. However, overall validity could be affected because other (relevant) behaviours, such as 'singing' on the bench would not be recorded. Some responses referred to strengths and weaknesses of the observational method in general, and not specifically the use of a structured observation. It is acknowledged that there is some overlap here of course and some credit was given for this.

9(a) The best responses here were those that used examples (often from the scenario presented) to clarify what time sampling referred to. Some candidate responses were too brief and ambiguous (eg stating time sampling was '*observing behaviour during certain time periods'*).

9(b) Many candidates were able to identify a strength and weakness of time sampling. To gain full marks this needed to be discussed in context. A minority simply referred to strengths and weaknesses of the observational method in general. Some candidates suggested good strengths and weaknesses, but did not provide enough information to convey their point in sufficient detail (eg just stating that time sampling enables a variety of data to be collected).

10(a) Most candidates drew a clear bar chart in response to this question. Candidates needed to remember to label axes and refer to the location that the data was collected from (*park* or *bench*). A minority produced a scattergraph which was inappropriate for the data in this study.

Some candidates incorrectly labelled the y axis as ‘number of people’ instead of number of occurrences of behaviour.

10(b) Candidates needed to refer to number of occurrences of behaviour to gain marks. Some candidates referred to ‘people’, for example, saying that '12 people were reading'. This is incorrect as the occurrences of people reading may not have been 12 different individuals, but 12 occasions where people were reading when the observations were taking place (the same individual could have been observed to be reading on three or four different occasions).

G542 Core Studies

Overall there was a good range of marks across both candidates and the paper. The paper seemed fair and accessible with all three studies in Section B and both approaches in Section C being attempted.

To achieve higher marks in both Section A and Section B it was necessary for responses to be thoroughly and clearly contextualised. Q17 (b) and Q18 (b) in Section C required candidates to demonstrate their understanding of psychology; in Q17 (b) how the physiological approach could explain spatial memory or in Q18 (b) the individual differences approach explain multiple personality disorder. Q17 (c) and Q18 (c) required candidates to identify an appropriate similarity and difference between any core studies that take the chosen approach and support these appropriately with evidence from two core studies that take the selected approach. Q17 (d) and Q18 (d) in Section C required candidates to both identify and justify appropriate strengths and weaknesses, which then needed to be supported by appropriate evidence from any of the core studies that take the selected approach.

Some candidates did not show a good understanding of general injunctions such as identify, outline, describe and key definitions such as sample, qualitative data, control. There were some examples of handwriting which were difficult to decipher. Such candidates may be eligible for access arrangements.

Comments on Individual Questions:

Section A

1(a) This was a well answered question.

1(b) This question differentiated well. Many responses did not go beyond stating that either the Tourettes/'normal' participants were used as a control/comparison group or the autistic group was used to demonstrate they lacked a theory of mind.

2 This was a good differentiator. Good responses referred in detail to aspects of the study. Weaker responses referred to such things as the formal tests being repeated, the indoor lexigram being computerised, and/or there being more than one observer. Some responses referred to the study being longitudinal and looking at the behaviour of four chimps so results were reliable.

3 This was a well answered question with many responses referring to the fact that seven film clips of car accidents were used in the first experiment, that participants were given a questionnaire to complete after watching each clip, included the correct critical question and all of the five verbs used in this question. There were few instances where this question was answered in relation to Experiment 2.

4 Many responses were clear, accurate and fully contextualised outlines of two ways in which Bandura's study lacked ecological validity. Some responses referred to validity in general and/or population validity rather than 'ecological validity'. Some candidates showed confusion between the terms 'ecological validity' and 'ethical issues'.

5 This question was a good differentiator. Many responses included accurate and detailed descriptions of the Oedipus complex and supported the description with appropriate evidence from the study. Few responses included a reference to the role of the subconscious/unconscious.

6 This was a well answered question. Good responses included a clear and accurate description of two of the conservation tasks by clearly describing two tasks and including both the fact that the quantities were the same/identical to start with and that the participants were asked, post-transformation, whether the quantities were still the same. Some responses referred to the conditions and not the tasks as required by the question.

7(a) This showed itself to be a good differentiating question. Good responses were able to give a strength of a correlation and contextualise their answer through reference to the appropriate co-variables. Weak responses referred to both taxi and non-taxi drivers and/or failed to identify the variables correctly.

7(b) Many responses identified an appropriate weakness of a correlation but few were linked to Maguire's study/referenced the variables correctly.

8(a) This was a well answered question with many candidates giving a clear and accurate outline of how information was presented to the LVF.

8(b) This was also a well answered question with good responses giving a clear explanation of why patients could not identify in words material presented to their LVF.

9(a) Good responses to this question identified two straightforward results, eg there were 45 correct estimates of dream length when participants were woken after 5 minutes of REM, participant KC gave 12 correct estimates of dream length when woken 15 minutes into REM. Many responses referred to 'more participants' rather than 'more estimates'.

9(b) There were many clear and appropriate conclusions with good responses supported by appropriate evidence from the given chart.

10 This was a well answered question. Weaker responses showed a lack of knowledge in relation to the 'cane' victim – who carried a black cane and appeared sober.

11(a) This question was answered well. Good responses gave clear, accurate descriptions of how permeability was manipulated. Weaker answers stated that 'prisoners were told they could become guards'. Some responses suggested that both groups had the opportunity to change roles.

11(b) A well answered question. Weaker responses only referred to the fact that 'the prisoners behaved well/worked as individuals'.

12 Good responses gave good descriptions of the stress caused to participants by the demands of the 'learner' to stop hurting them and the stress caused by the demands of the authority figure to continue giving electric shocks. Candidates gained higher marks by showing an understanding that these two competing demands caused the participant stress and emotional strain.

13 This was a well answered question. Good responses gave the results of two of the psychological tests in relation to both Eve White and Eve Black. Weak responses referred to findings from the EEG test, gave the wrong IQ scores and/or identified or described the tests.

14 This was a well answered question with many responses giving very accurate and detailed descriptions of both the RG and NRG groups.

15(a) This was a well answered question with many clear, contextualised responses.

15(b) This question was also well answered with many clear, contextualised responses.

Section B

All three studies were selected, though Loftus and Palmer appeared to be the most popular.

16(a) This was a well answered question. Good responses were clear and fully contextualised. Weaker responses were not fully contextualised eg Baron-Cohen: to show autistics lack theory of mind ie failing to include 'adults'.

16(b) This question was a good differentiator. There were some good responses but many identified an appropriate control and needed to either fully describe and/or fully contextualise the response eg Loftus & Palmer: all participants watched the same film clips. There were many references to control groups.

16(c) This question was a good differentiator. Weaker responses referred to how the data was gathered/the procedure rather than how apparatus/materials were used to gather data. Candidates needed to provide depth and details in their responses eg Baron-Cohen: only referred to the Eyes Task, with no mention of the Gender Recognition task, the Basic Emotions Recognition Task or Happé's Strange Stories; Loftus & Palmer: Only referred to Experiment 1 with no mention that participants watched clips of car accidents or reference to the use of a questionnaire; Sperry: did not identify the use of a screen or refer to the way the tachiscope was used to present information for the tactile tasks.

16(d) There were many good answers in relation to the findings of the chosen study. To be placed in the top band candidates had to do the following: Baron-Cohen: refer to the results from at least two of the tests given to participants; Loftus & Palmer: refer to results from both Experiment 1 and Experiment 2; Sperry: refer to results from both visual and tactile tests.

In relation to: Baron-Cohen - weaker responses gave quantitative data in relation to the performance of males and females in the Eyes task but did not appreciate that the data they provided applied to the group of 'normal participants'; Loftus & Palmer – weaker responses gave an incorrect estimate for the 'contacted' group in Experiment 1, made no reference to the speed estimates for the 'smashed' and 'hit' verbs in Experiment 2 and/or did not state that results for each group in Experiment 2 were out of 50; Sperry: weaker responses showed confusion over which hand could draw/write things depending on which visual field the material was presented to, forgot to refer to the tactile tasks.

16(e) This question was a good differentiator. Many responses gave a well-balanced discussion in relation to the ecological validity of their chosen study, providing both supporting and challenging evidence. Weaker responses showed little real understanding of the term 'ecological validity'. Some responses referred to overall validity and/or population validity.

16(f) This question was a good differentiator. The question was generally well answered with some good changes and how these could be implemented suggested and appropriate evaluation points made. Weaker responses contained few links to the chosen study with many suggestions being generic and therefore applicable to any study. Weaker answers also showed a notable imbalance between description and evaluation with evaluation points not showing understanding of the implications of suggested changes eg do it in a natural environment to improve ecological validity, do it in different countries around the world so findings are more generalisable. There were some instances where candidates demonstrated a lack of true knowledge and understanding of the chosen study eg Baron-Cohen: it was a laboratory experiment so not done in the participants' normal surroundings when in fact many of the tests were conducted in the participants' own homes.

Section C

Both approaches were selected though the physiological approach appeared to be the most popular.

17(a) Most responses were phrased as assumptions. Some candidates needed to provide more detail and link the assumption to 'behaviour'.

17(b) This question was an excellent differentiator. It required candidates to not only show understanding of psychology but also apply this understanding to a given situation. Good responses described and supported the description with appropriate evidence from Maguire showing how the physiological approach could explain spatial memory.

17(c) This question part was generally well-answered. Good responses identified an appropriate similarity and an appropriate difference. Weaker responses did not support these by appropriate evidence from the named studies. For example, some candidates correctly identified a similarity between Sperry's study and Maguire's study to be that they were both quasi experiments but needed to demonstrate how this was so / correctly identified a difference between Dement & Kleitman's study and Maguire's study to be that Dement & Kleitman's was a laboratory experiment whilst Maguire's was a quasi experiment but did not demonstrate how this was so. Some responses supported the identification of a lab experiment with how the study was controlled rather than showing how it was an experiment (in a controlled environment).

17(d) This question was a good differentiator. To gain more marks, candidates needed to support/illustrate the identified strength/weakness.

18(a) Most responses were phrased as assumptions. Some responses required extra detail and needed to link the assumption to 'behaviour' eg the individual differences approach assumes we are all unique and therefore have different qualities and characteristics to other people.

18(b) This question was an excellent differentiator. It required candidates to not only show understanding of psychology but also apply this understanding to a given situation. Good responses described and supported the description with appropriate evidence from Thigpen and Cleckley's study showing how the individual difference approach could explain multiple personality disorder. Weaker responses gave either a generic answer with inappropriate/no evidence from the named study or cited results from Thigpen and Cleckley's study or gave reason for Eve White's condition eg Eve White was found to have three different personalities, Eve White, Eve Black and Jane.

18(c) This question part was generally well-answered. Good responses identified an appropriate similarity and an appropriate difference. Weaker responses did not support these by appropriate evidence from the named studies. For example, some candidates correctly identified a similarity between Rosenhan and Griffiths as being the fact that they were both conducted in natural surroundings and then stated that Griffiths conducted his study in a casino. Some responses cited Freud/Baron-Cohen/Savage-Rumbaugh as individual differences studies. These were not creditworthy as the question stated '... any core studies that take the individual differences approach'.

18(d) This question was a good differentiator. Some of the strengths/weaknesses were identified, not identified and justified eg a strength of the approach is that it has high ecological validity. In weaker responses examples did not support/illustrate the identified strength/weakness. There was the occasional instance of wrong studies being cited eg Freud/Baron-Cohen/Savage-Rumbaugh.

G543 Options in Applied Psychology

General Comments

Whilst the forensic and health options proved the most popular, questions performed reliably throughout the paper with no noticeable inconsistencies in marks achieved from any one question to another. The full range of marks was accessed. The majority of candidates seemed able to make a good attempt at four questions and there were very few rubric errors.

Better candidates were able to achieve top band marks for part (a) questions, although fewer managed to achieve this for part (b) questions; to score higher, candidates need to focus on extending evaluative observations. Candidates appear able to manage their time effectively and the vast majority were able to answer all the questions.

Candidates with a good knowledge of the material which was applied well to specifically address the question performed best, whereas those who took the question as a trigger to write anything in that area, or with gaps in knowledge, found it harder to access the higher marks available. Most candidates produced consistent responses, few performed better on one option than another.

The general quality of candidate responses was very varied, with higher marks being awarded to those who could extend their answers and develop lines of argument. Knowledge was generally good; it was the skill in using this knowledge which produced most of the variation, as well as level of detail. Significant in differentiating award of marks is the extent to which candidates responded to the precise demand of the question. This has been referred to previously.

Better candidates answered the question asked. Q4 (a) for example, saw weaker students describe Sherman and Strang with most comment reserved for effectiveness of RJ, whereas better candidates used this study and their knowledge of RJ to respond to how it is used, ie how to apply it or what it does. Some candidates outlined research, for example in answer to Q6 (a) some candidates outlined Watts 'funhaler' study when it should have been the evidence for an answer about improving adherence. Conversely, when a question requests 'Describe research into....' as in Q2, then this is what will be required, not general (psychological) knowledge of that area of study.

In part (b) responses, the skill required is 'application of knowledge and understanding' which has a different emphasis to simply 'evaluate'. The best candidates would develop the answer a stage further, such as with a challenge, an extension or a legitimate comparison. Q1 (b) for example would see an approach suggesting free will or determinism but then challenge whether this assertion is as clear cut as first appears. Absolute statements overlook the degree of judgement which would suggest better appreciation of the issues. Many candidates suggested that excellent research was ethnocentric or invalidated simply by the fact that it was conducted within one group/area which is not true. Research benefits from replication within another group or culture but most research starts off with one group/region and is not invalidated by this. On this same point, some candidates made invalid criticisms such as probation research was not useful because it was conducted with only one group - convicted prisoners - and therefore could not be generalised to the wider population. Effectively addressing the injunction was a key differentiating aspect and was broadly interpreted by examiners. As ever, an extended demonstration within an answer would be sufficient to award a higher band mark even where the whole answer may not have maintained this level. It was further agreed that a consistently strong band 2 response would access the top band.

To achieve higher band marks, candidates needed to apply/contextualise their answers. Part (b) responses improved when candidates went beyond being overly descriptive and points were well expressed in the context of the question. Some evaluation issues still remain elusive for many candidates, most notably when asked to discuss reliability or validity. These terms may be being over-complicated and a simpler understanding may be acceptable for this level.

Finally, candidates from some centres have clearly been taught to add a 'however' (on the other hand) between paragraphs even though the information does not follow on or connect to the paragraph above it. Legitimate links are readily credited.

Comments on specific questions

Forensic

1(a) Most candidates described Kohlberg's stages of moral development with varying degrees of detail. This was then applied to criminal behaviour with varying degrees of specificity and precision. Some candidates benefitted from wider research knowledge, most commonly referring to Palmer and Hollin, and so the link to crime was more consistently achieved.

1(b) Some candidates did particularly well on this question for a number of reasons. Some relished the opportunity for real debate. Others understood the distinction between free will and determinism. Some could effectively address how different areas of the 'Turning to crime' topic were deterministic or free will and most students had a good level of balance in their answers. Others addressed degrees of determinism (even if they didn't refer to it as 'soft' or 'hard' determinism). Better answers tended to draw on evidence from across the approaches (biological, cognitive and upbringing). There were a few candidates who confused determinism with reductionism. Weaker responses were marked out by poor level of skill in analysing and presenting two sides of an argument. These often took the form of "It's free will because..." followed by "...it's not free will because", sometimes for the same point.

2(a) This question was generally addressed well, with many candidates displaying enough knowledge and detail to achieve top band or very close to it. Whereas most candidates managed to refer to the results with some degree of accuracy, some of the methodological details, such as IV or sample, were not as clear. In some cases, candidates failed to address the question by referring to incorrect studies such as weapon focus, or wrote about unreliability of witness statements ie before getting to court.

2(b) This question was generally answered well. Better candidates explained how the research was useful in the context of the courtroom combined with discussion of the methodology used and how this impacts on usefulness. Candidates could generally link evidence on attractiveness of the defendant and witness confidence to courtroom practice and were able to consider either ecological validity (mock trial issues) or population validity issues (student samples) as possible challenges to usefulness. Some candidates talked about the effect of attractiveness in the courtroom rather than referencing any research, as the question specifies. Some candidates referred to limited methodology or other relevant issues but these were not explicitly linked to usefulness.

3(a) Good responses picked apart the Stanford Prison Experiment well enough to show how it demonstrated both role behaviour and the prison situation. Candidates referred mainly to Haney, Banks and Zimbardo, or Reicher and Haslam. These allowed for roles and the prison situation to be dealt with.

3(b) Candidates were generally able to evaluate strengths and limitations of methodological approaches into imprisonment (eg experimental studies versus case studies, volunteer samples and simulated prison environments, the limitations of secondary data etc). The more able candidates were able to extend these methodological comments and adopt a line of argument in relation to existing studies and their merits. Weaker responses failed to set their response in the context of the question or use appropriate examples.

4(a) Many candidates seemed to have a reasonable awareness of Restorative Justice. Better responses either detailed how it is used in terms of its types (victim-offender mediation, group conferencing, restorative conferencing, and, indirect mediation/reparation) or the process (questioning, chance to gain closure, seek understanding). Weaker answers often did not address the 'How' in the question, but outlined Sherman and Strang's research into effectiveness with a brief (or no) description of what restorative justice is or how it is used.

4(b) Often soundly answered. Better answers went beyond mere statements of effectiveness and gave it elaboration and consideration. The 'to what extent' injunction was only addressed by a few candidates, allowing their responses to readily access the top band. Evaluation of effectiveness was often reduced to evaluating studies and did not appropriately link them back to effectiveness. Some answers were far more descriptive and simply stated if it worked or not. Some candidates struggled to comment on Eberhart appropriately.

Health and Clinical

5(a) This question was generally well answered with most candidates managing to link locus of control to health. Candidates were able to describe what locus of control is and the better candidates convincingly linked it to actual health behaviours.

5(b) Better candidates defined reductionism and could make effective distinction between the narrow locus of control model offered by Rotter's research and the more holistic health belief model. Candidates who addressed the "To what extent..." injunction stood out and readily accessed the top band. Lower scoring answers appeared confused regarding the concept of reductionism. Some responses did not address theories as the question requests.

6(a) Many students answered this question well, effectively using Watt's research. The best answers were those that explicitly linked the techniques used to psychological explanations such as operant conditioning. Many students also answered this question with a breadth of different ideas for improvement, drawing on health belief theories. Other candidates used more than one piece of evidence/gave more than one suggestion on how adherence could be improved, and these responses were likely to gain better marks than those who simply described Watt's study without addressing the set question.

6(b) Most candidates were able to suggest real life applications for the evidence on adherence. Better candidates also discussed the relative merits of methods of investigating adherence and discussed the value of different research methods and measures to psychology as a discipline. Some candidates put too great a focus on outlining the evidence. Again, some candidates failed to fully explain 'usefulness'. A minority of responses contained non-creditworthy material such as evidence on health promotion methods that did not address adherence to medical regimes (cycle helmet studies, chip pan fire studies etc).

7(a) Most candidates were able to describe a behaviourist treatment with lots of reference to McGrath's study of Lucy. Better candidates incorporated the association between relaxation and loud noises or that systematic desensitisation is based on classical conditioning. Weaker responses either described the study without extracting the treatment with much clarity, or described the treatment anecdotally with little psychological reference.

7(b) Better responses were able to compare effectively two or three treatments, mostly along the lines of treating the cause, reductionism and ethics. There were also some nice comparisons with candidates considering cost/effectiveness/ethics of approaches. Marks were forfeited by candidates who described treatments and gave evaluative points of each treatment individually rather than comparing the treatments. A significant number also evaluated studies into the treatments rather than the treatments themselves.

8(a) Better candidates knew the clinical symptoms of their chosen anxiety disorder and could describe them using appropriate terminology, often recognisable from ICD/DSM manuals. Some candidates knew in a more general sense, while the weakest responses identified disorders other than anxiety disorders (most notably schizophrenia and depression).

8(b) There were some very good answers looking at cultural differences, temporal changes in classifications and overlapping of symptoms. Generally, candidates were aware of validity issues (eg individual differences, similarities in symptoms across disorders, problems with doctors sometimes having to rely solely on self report by clients of their symptoms) relating to identifying a disorder from a list of characteristics, most often referring to DSM and ICD. Candidates that scored higher marks discussed validity more thoroughly and addressed the 'to what extent'" element of the set question, perhaps by suggesting that since diagnosis is necessary for treatment, and is widely used by the psychiatric profession, then it is perhaps the most valid way to identify a disorder available despite its limitations.

Sport and Exercise

9(a) Better answers showed an understanding of social psychology and aggression and related this well to sport. Candidates mostly used either Berkowitz or Bandura with varying degrees of success. In order to gain higher marks, weaker candidates needed to respond to the 'how' in this question; and some candidates referred to Freud rather than social psychological explanations.

9(b) In general this question was answered reasonably well, with a focus on evidence for evaluative comment mostly coming from general psychology and then applied to the sporting context. Mostly methodological difficulties were reported and the better candidates developed links to application. Candidates often relied on ecological validity, considering whether research was from the sporting arena or how readily it could be applied. In some cases this led to limited responses, not always related to sport specifically.

10(a) Answers which focused on internal and external motivators and/or with a reference to Gill & Deeter were generally offered by the better candidates. As ever, a description of the model of sports specific achievement motivation itself, as the question asked, was credited above responses which merely reported the research or the measure developed.

10(b) Better responses needed to define 'science', show awareness of what makes psychology a science and the reasons why sport psychology research does (and if so, to what extent) or does not lend itself to scientific enquiry.

11(a) Candidates generally offered good descriptions of Tuckman's theory of group cohesion. Better responses had more detail, more clarification of the stages and good examples or exemplification from sport of each stage of the model. Weaker responses suffered from poor application to sport or little more than identification of each stage of Tuckman's model.

11(b) The same points as the 'usefulness' question in the previous sections.

12(a) Better candidates were able to make an explicit link between mood and exercise, usually with reference to Morgan's Profile of Mood States. If Morgan's POMS was not used the answer was potentially anecdotal.

12(b) The better candidates showed understanding of ecological validity. This was generally answered well by candidates who could assess the ecological validity of the research competently and apply it specifically to the question.

Education

13(a) Good answers were those where Vygotsky was addressed well. Better candidates were able to describe how the ZPD actually helps a child acquire knowledge. A further indication of a stronger candidate is that they were linking the theory to actual situations for children, often giving examples. Some candidates struggled with the context element of this question. Description of Vygotsky's theory sometimes lacked an explanation of *how* knowledge is acquired according to the theory. Candidates gave good descriptions of social construction theory although the 'how' focus of the question was not always clearly addressed.

13(b) Candidates competently referred to reductionism, ecological validity and individual differences. Candidates tended to address the limitation component well, however there was not always enough extension or counter-argument. Some candidates lost credit when they discussed limitations to studies rather than theories.

14(a) Many candidates answered well, referring largely to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Some candidates provided greater detail/clarity than others; and some applied it better to student participation than others.

14(b) Better responses were able to compare effectively. Marks were forfeited by candidates who were too descriptive or gave evaluative points of each approach rather than comparing them.

15(a) Better candidates who answered this question described research into friendship/bullying. Weaker candidates either provided anecdotal responses or struggled to establish the link between friendship/bullying and academic success.

15(b) Better answers considered application, extending it to a discussion beyond the "It is useful because...." type statement. A discussion about how limitations to research affect its usefulness also typified the better responses. Weaker responses were anecdotal or failed to refer evaluative comments back to a discussion about usefulness.

16(a) Intergroup tasks were described (mainly Aronson's jigsaw technique) and better responses used this explicitly with enabling ethnic groups. Weaker responses provided poorer descriptions of the research and struggled to establish the link in the question.

16(b) Better responses addressed the application of research and extended it beyond simple identification and statement, and responded to the 'To what extent....' injunction. Weaker candidates did not make this judgement, maybe considered the technique without considering the research, as the question demands, or did not address the context of enabling minority ethnic groups.

G544 Approaches and Research Methods in Psychology

General

The overall standard of performance of the candidates was good and candidates were well prepared for the style of questions and the format of the paper. In section A candidates described a feasible investigation in detail which was both practical and ethical. Other candidates needed to provide clearer or more detailed descriptions. Some candidates were confused about how to collect a self-selected sample. Many candidates gave imaginative and carefully thought out descriptions of a practical project based on the options. Popular choices were the attitudes to drink driving or the attitudes to the death penalty. Candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately to respond to the short questions on research methods. Some candidates did not answer these questions in the context of their own practical project. 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. There were few rubric errors: in Section A candidates usually chose one of the research questions on which to base their practical project, 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

1 Most candidates framed an appropriate aim; clarifying the option choice and broadening the focus. A few candidates restated the option as an aim with no further elaboration.

2 This question was marked out of 13 and 6, and the full range of marks was awarded. Many good responses contained a clear description of their practical and how it could be carried out; details of the sampling method and sample, the questions on the questionnaire and the testing conditions including timing. Others needed to describe their sampling more clearly and make sure they use the required sampling method as well as giving details from the questionnaire itself. Many candidates were in the top band for design as they had described a questionnaire which was feasible and ethical and had used a self-selected sample.

3 This question was answered well by candidates and they commonly used social desirability bias as a disadvantage of the questionnaire method. To gain full marks candidates needed to link their answer to the topic.

4 To gain marks for this question, candidates needed to show understanding of reliability in relation to their own questionnaire: commenting on the consistency of measurement, their standardised procedure or their questions producing quantitative data. Some candidates confused reliability with validity.

5 Candidates were able to gain 3 marks for suggesting how their data could be put into categories to provide nominal level data.

6 Many good responses described the way to make a practical project more ethical. Candidates can gain full marks by making their suggestion specific to their own practical.

7 There were some good responses to this question allowing candidates to be creative in developing new lines of research. For full marks, candidates need to do more than repeat the same procedure a few years later or with a different sample to provide alternative research.

Section B

8(a) Most candidates gave good answers and showed they clearly understood the nature–nurture debate. In some instances, there was a lack of clarity of which side of the debate was being described.

8(b) Candidates could describe two 'nurture studies' commonly using Bandura or Watson and Rayner. To achieve top marks, answers needed to describe the studies and explain why they supported nurture.

8(c) There was some clear evidence of structure to these answers with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Better answers evaluated the perspective and used evidence effectively to support the points made. Weaker answers gave evaluation of the studies cited rather than directing the points towards the behaviourist perspective.

8(d) Many candidates were able to make some distinctions between the physiological approach and the behaviourist perspective and support this with appropriate evidence, commonly Bandura for the behaviourist perspective or Watson and Rayner. Some candidates had little understanding of the behaviourist perspective. Weaker responses focused on a comparison between the two areas with little or inappropriate evidence.

8(e) Most candidates had a good understanding of the nurture side of the debate and knew how it supported the behaviourist perspective. Some candidates needed to develop their answers into a coherent discussion rather than being overly descriptive and giving a series of examples.

9(a) This question produced good answers with reference to different aspects of the case study method.

9(b) Most candidates chose an appropriate study to describe. Thigpen and Cleckley and Freud were popular choices for answering this question. When candidates did not achieve higher marks it was usually because the description was too brief or inaccurate with no reference to the research as a case study.

9(c) Many candidates discussed a range of at least two strengths and weaknesses of research using the case study method and supported their points with appropriate evidence. Candidates need to ensure that their points are discussed fully and their evidence is made relevant to the point under discussion.

9(d) The majority of candidates made one point of comparison, focusing on how the case study method is different from the observational method. The best answers gave a similarity and a difference between the two methods and supported the comparison with appropriate evidence.

9(e) Most candidates have a good understanding of the case study method and can cite a variety of examples of how it is carried out. Some candidates did not have a good grasp of the concept of holism and their discussion was limited to one or two basic points. The best responses gave a balanced discussion of the holistic nature of the case study method without describing different examples in detail.

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