

Question

Will Paper 3 (G543) on the new specification, require candidates to answer in essay style, as in the old specification options paper (2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, and 2549)?

Answer

In answering the questions on Paper 3 of the new specification, it is not necessary to write essays. The new specification requires testing of students' ability to respond to questions.

Enquiries about Paper 3 on the new specification. (G543)

The part (a) is similar to the Section A part (a) on the legacy specification. The only difference is there are more injunctions possible, beyond; 'describe' and 'outline'. There are also broader requests, beyond; 'a study', 'a theory' or 'research', such as; 'a way', 'a strategy', 'a measure'. Candidates should be able to answer this section in about 7+ minutes.

For part (b), the idea of what constitutes 'analysis' is broadened. Firstly, an issue/comment/debate is called for. This needs to be supported by/located in psychological evidence. To score well, the candidate needs to demonstrate that they understand the debate, appreciate the intricacy, or can 'go further' or 'do something more' beyond merely identifying or raising the issue. Traditionally this has been by drawing contrasts and comparisons. This will remain legitimate, but any other form of elaboration/extension/development may also be encouraged. The idea is to escape from the pre-prepared formulaic answer, and instead to test the candidate's ability of appreciation and application.

In the current (legacy) specification the guidance for a strong section b, part b answer suggests that three issues should be raised; two should be adequate on the new paper.

In the new specification a number of points may be made within any one issue, and this will be recognised (e.g. reliability may contain a discussion about demand characteristics and social desirability, ethnocentrism about sampling and generalising). It is the skill that is being sought and confirmation of this ability in a second commentary. Of course, precision of response to the question and effective use of examples come into the equation of what makes a good answer. (Please refer to mark scheme). Candidates should be able to answer this in about 15 minutes – similar to the time requirement for the current (legacy specification) section B part (b) but there is less of an 'essay' requirement.