Principal examiner reports for teachers

Principal examiner reports for teachers summarise what candidates did well and what candidates needed to improve for this examination series only.

This report is to be used in conjunction with the question paper and mark scheme.

For guidance on teaching and learning we provide resources for many of our syllabuses.

Resource	Where to find it
Grade descriptions – Grade descriptions describe the level of performance typically demonstrated by candidates achieving the different grades awarded for a qualification.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Syllabus and specimen materials
Schemes of work – Schemes of work are designed to support you in your teaching and lesson planning.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Lesson planning – Guidance on how to plan a lesson.	Lesson planning
Resource plus – There may be additional resources such as teaching packs containing lesson plans, resources and worksheets and videos for aspects of your syllabus.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Teaching tools	Teaching Tools
Exemplar candidate responses	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Learner guide – A guide for students to help them understand what the course involves.	School support hub Select: Subject > Resource finder > Teaching and learning
Community forums – Do you have a question or something to share? Our online forums are great way to keep up to date with your subject and the global Cambridge community.	Community forum on the school support hub
Access to scripts for this series.	Access to scripts service
Results analysis is available for some syllabuses.	Results analysis
Test maker is available for some subjects.	Test maker

Other services from Cambridge International Education

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- **Insight assessments**
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  - Focus on assessment
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PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9990/12
Approaches, Issues and Debates

Key messages

What candidates did well

- Comprehensive responses met the requirements of each question by using precise psychological terminology and presenting logical, well-structured answers, including appropriate examples from relevant studies, and successfully applying psychological knowledge to novel scenarios.
- Comprehensive responses to the extended writing questions (**Question 9(b)** and **Question (10)**) were thorough, could focus on the named issue, chose psychological principles to compare studies on and could use evidence and examples from the Core Studies effectively.

What candidates needed to improve

- Candidates need to know all components of every core study as listed in the syllabus. Questions can be asked about any part of a core study.
- Candidates need to read the whole question carefully to ensure that their responses are fulfilling the demands of each one and should not repeat what has already been given to them in the stem and/or question.
- When a question refers to a study, candidates need to engage with the study and provide a contextualised answer that includes explicit examples from that study.
- Candidates should present results of studies accurately. For example, it is important to distinguish whether the data refers to the number of participants who completed a task correctly or the number of trials on which a participant was correct, as this affects how the results are understood. Results must be stated as factual data only, without any interpretation and value judgements. Comparative or evaluative terms such as ‘better’ or ‘worse’ should not be used when reporting results.
- Candidates should be able to give full definitions of terms listed in the syllabus and provide full assumptions for all four approaches.
- Candidates should take time to plan their answers before writing. Planning helps ensure that responses are focused on the specific demands of each question. Without this step, even candidates with good knowledge of a study may not to apply it effectively to the question(s) set.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates could identify the correct sample size.

Limited responses

- Common issues included stating the total sample size form the study by Baron-Cohen *et al.* or from a different Group within the study.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses could clearly outline the two components of the definition, namely empathy and it is happening in a social situation.

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Limited responses

- Some candidates provided responses based on a lay definition of sensitivity (for example, being socially awkward or being sensitive as a personality trait).

(c) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates compared male and female participants on a named test (for example, the Eyes Test or the AQ Test) clearly showing the direction of difference.

Limited responses

- Limited responses included not stating what Test the males and females had been compared on, or providing a different result not based around sex differences.
- Candidates need to provide a full comparison when presenting results.
- Candidates need to name a test or a measure where appropriate especially when the two groups being compared performed differently across these tests or measures in that core study.

Question 2

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses could clearly identify three features of the sample used in the study by Saavedra and Silverman. Common choices included his age, his ethnicity and how/when the phobia developed.

Limited responses

- A common issue was to provide a feature that was already in the question (in this case: boy).
- It is important for candidates to read the question carefully to see if there are any exclusions to the features they can present in a response.
- There were some inaccuracies, mainly focused on his age and when the phobia developed.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates could clearly identify a specific weakness of the sample and then provide an explanation as to why it was a weakness.
- The most common weakness was to focus on the uniqueness of the sample from this study.

Limited responses

- Limited responses tended to be simply stating a weakness. These responses did not provide an example directly from the study.
- It is important for candidates to contextualise their responses with an appropriate example from the study, for example, that a button phobia is rare.

Question 3

Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses provided clear advice to the local business.
- Common pieces of advice were to provide the workers with pre-printed ‘doodle sheets’ and allow them to shade them in whilst listening.

Limited responses

- Limited responses focused on explaining why doodling aids concentration. These responses did not answer the question. It is important for candidates to read the command word to ensure their response is answering the question.
- Common inaccuracies included letting the workers draw their own shapes, free hand doodling or simply stating ‘let the workers doodle’.

Question 4

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Both main assumptions in the syllabus were equally likely to be presented as a response.
- Comprehensive responses clearly chose an appropriate example from the study by Bandura *et al.* to support the chosen assumption.

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Limited responses

- Some candidates provided assumptions from a different approach or presented findings from the study by Bandura *et al*.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates could clearly identify a methodological strength. Popular choices included standardisation/reliability, the use of a one-way mirror and levels of control.

Limited responses

- Some candidates attempted to present an ethical strength.
- Limited responses presented standardisation or controls as the strength without any context or explanation. These are descriptive terms, whereas the question required evaluation. Stating these alone does not address the evaluative aspect of the question.

Question 5

Comprehensive responses

- Some responses clearly presented two different applications to everyday life.
- Popular choices included introducing mindfulness into the workplace or school or using the techniques with people experiencing some level of cognitive decline. These responses could clearly present what the application was and how it would be achieved.

Limited responses

- Some responses did not answer the question as they simply outlined what mindfulness is without applying it to a situation that could help someone.
- Some responses presented generic ideas, for example, use it with stressed people. It is important for candidates to be explicit with what the application is and who it will benefit. Be specific.

Question 6

(a) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses clearly outlined the ethical guideline with an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*.

Limited responses

- Some responses only provided an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*. without explaining the guideline. Responses to this type of question need to explicitly show knowledge of the stated ethical guideline.
- Some responses presented tautological definitions of the guideline.

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses clearly outlined the ethical guideline with an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*.

Limited responses

- Some responses only provided an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*. without explaining the guideline. Responses to this type of question need to explicitly show knowledge of the stated ethical guideline.
- Some responses presented tautological definitions of the guideline.
- Some candidates needed to recognise that the children did not witness a real crime or have to identify a real criminal.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses clearly outlined the ethical guideline with an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*.

Limited responses

- Some responses only provided an example from the study by Pozzulo *et al*. without explaining the guideline. Responses to this type of question need to explicitly show knowledge of the stated ethical guideline.
- Some responses presented tautological definitions of the guideline.

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- Some candidates needed to recognise that the initials of the participants should not be used when presenting the results.

Question 7

Comprehensive responses
- Comprehensive responses clearly defined both explanations with clear examples from the study by Fagen *et al*.
- For individual, a popular example was the different amounts of time it took the 4 juvenile elephants to be successful/that the older elephant never passed the trunk wash
- For situational, a popular example was the calf interfering with the teaching of the older elephant.

Limited responses
- Limited responses tended to provide tautological definitions from both explanations.
- Some candidates mixed individual and situational with the examples they chose to present.

Question 8

Comprehensive responses
- Comprehensive responses clearly described the background to the study by focusing on previous research and/or the case of Kitty Genovese.
- Some responses focused on the psychology being investigated, which addressed the requirements of the question.

Limited responses
- Limited responses tended to focus just on the case of Kitty Genovese.
- Some candidates wrote about the study by Piliavin *et al*. rather than focusing on the background to the study, as required by the question.
- The background to a study includes any information presented in the introduction section of the original paper.

Section B

Question 9

(a) **Comprehensive responses**
- Comprehensive responses could clearly describe the housing conditions. Popular choices included the size of the outdoor compound and what the monkeys were fed.

Limited responses
- Some candidates mixed up the features of the indoor and outdoor areas.
- Some candidates stated that the study took place in the jungle itself; candidates needed to recognise the correct setting of the study.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- Comprehensive responses presented one similarity and one difference based on psychological principles/methodology.
- For the similarity a popular choice was the collection of quantitative data.
- For the difference a popular choice was the main research method used.

Limited responses
- Similarity/difference questions need to be based around psychological principles instead of basic analysis or elements of the study that are not showing any psychological knowledge. For example, a different aim can never get above Level 1.
- Candidates need to choose comparison points that can be developed and explained, using examples from both studies to explain the similarity and/or difference. For example, explaining the quantitative data would involve explaining why it is a similarity and presenting a clear example from both studies.
- Some candidates referred to the sample of participants or an ‘approaches’ difference. It is important for candidates to read the requirements of the question as it stated that a response cannot refer to either of these.

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Question 10

Comprehensive responses

- Comprehensive responses evaluated the study by Milgram in depth and in terms of two strengths and two weaknesses with at least one of these points covering the named issue of the reliability. Common choices included ethics, generalisability, reliability, mundane realism, and quantitative data.
- Candidates explained each strength and difference using examples from the study by Milgram to explicitly support their argument. This allowed access to Level 5.

Limited responses

- Candidates needed to follow the requirements of the question, covering two strengths and two weaknesses, all in equal depth. Some responses only briefly covered the four evaluation points [Level 3] or did not use the study by Milgram as examples [Level 1].
- A common misconception was to refer to the study by Milgram as a laboratory experiment. There is no IV or DV. It is important for candidates to understand which research methods are used for all 12 core studies.
- Another common misconception was that the stooge was called Mr. Wallace and that he screamed and shouted throughout the procedure.
- Some responses are following a GRAVE approach to this question (Generalisability, Reliability, Application, Validity, Ethics) when the 'A' part is not applicable for an AO3 question.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9990/22
Research Methods

Key messages

What candidates did well

- Accurate use of Psychological terminology throughout the paper.
- Accurate knowledge of the majority of the studies which were included in the paper which was applied to the set questions well.
- Candidate answers for the 10-mark extended response showed good knowledge of correlational studies with accurate and often thorough use of appropriate terminology.

What candidates needed to improve

- Explanations of research method terminology often just repeated the term rather than actually explain what it means. For example, when talking about participant variables some candidates would say it is something to do with the participant.
- Candidates would benefit from focusing more closely on the specific requirements of each question, as some responses were too general and did not address the question directly.
- Understanding of specific command words needs improvement. This is especially true for command words such as 'suggest' which needs an element of assessment or evaluation. For example, suggest why you should recruit pupils for more than one school.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates achieved the correct answer for the mode which was 6.

Limited responses

- Some candidates calculated the median or mean instead of the mode.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Some candidates were able to state that the mode calculated the most typical or most frequent score.

Limited responses

- Some candidates needed to go beyond describing how to calculate the mode and should have explained how the mode relates to the concept of central tendency.
- Some candidates needed to demonstrate a clearer understanding of the question's requirements, as their responses were not always directly relevant to what was being asked.

Question 2

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates were able to accurately explain that independent measures are when different participants do each level of the independent variable or that participants only experienced on level of the independent variable.

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Limited responses

- Some candidates incorrectly suggested that participants completed different experiments, rather than recognizing that all participants took part in the same procedure.
- Some responses did show good knowledge of independent measures although their answers were vague. For example, suggesting that each participant took part in the procedure only once.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates were able to provide an accurate reason why Piliavin et al. may not have been independent measures.
- Sound knowledge of the study was shown by most candidates.

Limited responses

- Some candidates did not use the correct terms in part **(a)**, which made their answers in part **(b)** less accurate.
- Some responses did not address the demands of the question and instead focused on the operationalisation of the independent variable.

Question 3

Comprehensive responses

- A number of candidates were able to suggest at least one reason why the size of the elephants may cause problems.
- The most common responses were the idea of having to provide a large enclosure, and the idea that the elephants may cause harm to the researcher.

Limited responses

- Some responses suggested that the elephants' size would prevent them from completing the task, but this was not the case.
- Response which discussed the amount an elephant has to eat were not accurate, as this was not related to the study specifically, rather a fact of an elephants daily living.

Question 4

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- A significant number of candidates correctly identified opportunity/snowball sampling as the technique used in Dement and Kleitman.

Limited responses

- Some responses identified the sampling technique as volunteer sampling, which was not the method used.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates were able to suggest at least one weakness of the sample of the study.
- The most common response was that the sample was small, so the findings may not be generalisable.

Limited responses

- Some responses did not provide two distinct weaknesses for the sample. Many focused on generalisability for both points, so only one aspect was addressed.
- Many candidates identified a weakness, but some responses did not include enough detail to fully explain their point.

Question 5

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates showed good knowledge of research terminology and were usually able to accurately describe what is meant by a participant variable as something within the individual that could affect the results.
- Almost all candidates were able to provide an appropriate example from Jurgen's study.

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Limited responses

- Some responses repeated terminology, such as defining a participant variable as "a characteristic different in the participant," without further explanation. These responses needed to show a clearer understanding of the concept.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates showed excellent knowledge of research terminology and were able to accurately describe a situational variable as something in the environment that could affect the results.
- Most candidates were able to give an appropriate example from Jurgen's study.

Limited responses

- Some responses repeated terminology, such as defining a situation variable as "a characteristic different in the situation," without further explanation. These responses would have been improved by providing a clearer description or example to show understanding of the concept.
- Some candidates did not provide as specific enough sample suggesting that the building work was the situational variable rather than noise from the building work.

Question 6

Comprehensive responses

- Some candidates were able to describe at least one way that independent variables (IVs) are operationalised.
- The most common correct response was the idea that operationalisation of independent variables could be naturally occuring; such as gender and age.
- Many candidates provided relevant examples that showed operationalised independent variables from key studies, such as Dement and Kleitman and Piliavin et al.

Limited responses

- Most candidate responses provided vague or incorrect responses related to independent variables being operationalised.
- Some candidate responses described the standardisation/operationalisation of dependent rather than independent variables.
- Some candidates described controls or counterbalancing as ways to operationalise variables. These responses would be improved by focusing on how operationalisation involves defining variables in measurable terms.
- Some candidates repeated the definition of independent measures. Responses would be improved by applying the term to the context of the question.
- In terms of examples, most incorrect responses either just stated an IV without operationalising it or only operationalised one level.

Question 7

(a) (i) **Comprehensive responses**

- Almost all candidates were able to suggest an appropriate non-verbal behaviour such as smiling or shaking hands.

Limited responses

- Some candidates used broad categories such as 'body movement'; responses would be improved by specifying explicit, observable behaviours.
- A small number of candidates repeated the category of nodding which was excluded as a response for the question.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**

- Some candidates were able to show their knowledge of validity as a concept by applying it to the observation of one of the categories suggested in part **(a)(i)**.
- The most common correct response was the idea of it being easily observed as a category (meaning that it would not be missed or misinterpreted).

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Limited responses

- Some candidates repeated the wording of the question, for example by stating that the category was valid because it is a non-verbal behaviour. Responses would be improved by explaining why observing this specific category is valid, rather than restating the question.

(iii) Comprehensive responses

- Most candidates were able to provide an appropriate reason for why the observation of a category may not be valid.
- Many correct responses explained that categories could be misinterpreted. For example, smiling may not always be a non-verbal behaviour used to interact with others, as it can also indicate that someone is simply thinking about something pleasant.

Limited responses

- Some candidates gave vague answers, for example by stating that the category was not valid because "you can smile for many reasons." Responses would be improved by being more specific, such as explaining that smiling can occur for reasons unrelated to the context being observed, so it may not always indicate the intended behaviour.

(b) Comprehensive responses

- Most candidates presented their data by drawing an appropriate table for the data that would be achieved in the observation.
- Headings such as 'behaviour' and 'frequency' were used appropriately, supporting clear data organization.

Limited responses

- Some candidates did not include quantities or units in their table headings, which limited the clarity of their data presentation.
- A few candidates used a graph instead of a table or omitted key headings such as 'behaviours' or 'behavioural categories', which did not meet the requirements for this task.

(c) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates gave excellent responses to this question and were able to identify two appropriate ethical issues.
- Some candidates were able to apply their chosen ethical issues back to the context using phrases such as 'no informed consent as they were being observed in the street and did not know they were in a study of non-verbal behaviour'. Both the words street, and the phrase non-verbal behaviour, would provide relevant context to a candidate's response.

Limited responses

- Some candidates gave generic answers that were not specific to Chun's study, which limited the relevance and accuracy of their response.
- Some candidates used the ethical issue of deception, which was not appropriate for Chun's study as the participants were not aware of being in a study, or interacted with the researcher.
- A few candidates incorrectly identified privacy as an issue, even though the observation took place in a public street. Privacy would only be relevant if private conversations or behaviours were recorded without consent.

Question 8

(a) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Most candidates correctly identified two relevant facial features, such as eyes and mouth, demonstrating clear understanding of the requirements.

Limited responses

- Some candidates described aspects of the image itself (such as size, crop, or whether it was black and white or colour) rather than focusing on specific facial features, which did not address the requirements of the question.

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates were able to suggest a reason why a feature is important in terms of Helen's study.

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- Most candidates were able to suggest a generic reason for the feature being similar, such as standardisation/control and were able to link these generic reasons.

Limited responses
- Many responses were generic, lacking specific detail, which meant the requirements of the question were not fully addressed.
- Some candidates would use psychological terminology such as validity or reliability without explaining what this term means in terms of the scenario.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- The vast majority of candidates were able to draw an appropriate conclusion using the data in the bar chart supplied.
- Most candidates were able to show good knowledge of the difference between a result and a conclusion and were able to apply that to the scenario given.

Limited responses
- Some candidates wrote a result rather than a conclusion, for example, by quoting actual figures from the bar graph (e.g., "5-year-old children were able to identify 20 aggressive faces compared to 15 non-aggressive faces") instead of drawing a conclusion.

Question 9

(a) (i) **Comprehensive responses**
- Some candidates were able to identify the correct sampling method, such as random sampling, and then apply this to the Sundar's study and attention, to provide a comprehensive response.

Limited responses
- Many candidates selected an unsuitable sampling method, often choosing opportunity or volunteer sampling.
- Some responses explained random sampling well. However, these explanations were not always connected to the specific scenario.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**
- Most candidates were able to give an accurate reason, using appropriate psychological terminology, why you should recruit a sample from different schools.
- The most common response seen was the idea of generalisability.
- Many candidates were able to apply the concept of generalisability, for example, to the scenario and the issue of attention.

Limited responses
- Many candidates needed to provide a clear reason in their response, such as explaining how their answer relates to generalisability in the context of the scenario.
- Some candidates used the term generalisability in a generic way without linking it to the scenario.

(b) (i) **Comprehensive responses**
- Most candidates were able to provide a relevant and appropriate time interval to retest the participants. For example, between two weekly and 5 yearly.
- Many candidates were able to justify the time interval suggested. For example, saying that a shorter interval would mean that no changes to attention would be observable/that not enough data would be gained if it is a longer interval.

Limited responses
- Candidates should explain why the chosen time interval is appropriate for the context of the question.
- Some candidates suggested time intervals that were not appropriate such as weekly, or every 10 years.

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(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates were able to suggest two appropriate reasons why Sundar may not be able to recontact his participants.
- The most common appropriate responses including a change of phone number and not wanting to be part of the study anymore.

Limited responses

- A minority of candidates produced vague responses which does not relate back to the question given and were more related to the issues of using children or being actually present in the study (rather than just being contacted again).
- Responses would be strengthened by concentrating on the nature and quality of the contact between the researcher and participant.

Section B

Question 10

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates were able to show knowledge of all four major features for a correlational study.
- Many candidates produced procedure that, in the main, were replicable both in terms of practicality, and level of detail.

Limited responses

- Candidates should accurately distinguish between numerical rating scales (which typically involve assigning a number to represent a quantity or frequency) and Likert scales (which measure attitudes or opinions across a range of agreement or disagreement).
- Many candidates identified their variables as an IV and a DV or suggested an experimental design.
- Some of these candidates then described a correlational study with various degrees of success, though a minority simply made groups of either different levels of readers or different levels of sociability and described an experiment.
- Some candidates are not totally familiar with the required features for each research method limiting the efficacy of their response.
- Some candidates used qualitative data methods such as unstructured observational methods and open questions, which are not appropriate for a correlational study which needs quantitative data.

(b) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidate responses were able to provide an appropriate strength of one part of the procedure and provide some detail about that strength linked to their study.
- The most common appropriate responses included the idea of standardisation, with all participants getting the same questionnaire/questions which improved the reliability or replicability of the study.
- Other appropriate responses included the operationalisation of the co-variables to increase reliability.

Limited responses

- Many candidate responses did not follow the instruction which indicated that the answers for parts **10(b)(i)** and **10(b)(i)** needed to be about the same part of the procedure.
- Some candidates focused on the idea of their methods producing quantitative data which was reliable. As this is a correlational study then quantitative data was essential therefore this strength was not relevant in terms of this type of study.

(b) (ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidate responses were able to provide an appropriate weakness of one part of the procedure (which needed to be the same as part **(b)(i)** and provide some detail about that strength linked to their study.
- The most common appropriate responses included the idea of the use of self-reports leading to socially desirable responses especially as sociability may be seen as a quite a personal aspect of an individual's personality.

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- Other appropriate responses included the use of fixed choice rating scale not reflecting the true level of an individual's sociability levels.

Limited responses

- Many candidates did not follow the instruction which indicated that the answers for parts **10(b)(i)** and **10(b)(i)** needed to be about the same part of the procedure.
- Some candidates focused on their methods not producing qualitative data. As this is a correlational study then quantitative data was essential therefore the use of qualitative data methods is not appropriate for this type of study.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9990/32

Specialist Options: Approaches, Issues and Debates

Key messages

What candidates did well

- Many candidates successfully contextualized their responses to the applied (A02) questions, demonstrating a clear understanding of how to apply their knowledge to specific scenarios.
- Some candidates had a very good understanding of the issues and debates and could provide clear, concise definitions of these for **Questions 2(a)**, **6(a)** plus an example from the effects of crowding on shopper pleasure-arousal-dominance, **10(a)** and **14(a)**.
- Many gave detailed descriptions of the relevant studies, theories, diagnostic criteria and Beck Depression Inventory in **Questions 4(a)**, **8(a)**, **12(a)** and **16(a)**.
- The vast majority of candidates could provide evaluation points that were correct. For **Questions 4(b)**, **8(b)**, **12(b)** and **16(b)** this was sometimes in depth with details given to back up the evaluation points from part (a) of the question. Some were also able to provide analysis in these questions.

What candidates needed to improve

- Some candidates need to contextualise their responses for the applied (A02).
- Some candidates did not know the definition of the issue or debate asked for in the question.
- Some showed limited knowledge of the relevant studies, theories, diagnostic criteria and Beck Depression Inventory in **Questions 4(a)**, **8(a)**, **12(a)** and **16(a)**.
- For **Questions 4(b)**, **8(b)**, **12(b)** and **16(b)** the candidate must also provide some form of analysis to access level 3 and above. This could be done by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the issue being considered, presenting a counterargument to the issue under discussion or comparing the issue between two studies and/or theories. The response needs to explain the comparison/strength/weakness or counterargument with examples from part **(a)** of the question.
- It was common for responses to state that two theories for example, were 'similar' or 'in contrast' for an issue without any explanation as to why they could be compared in this way. This is assessed as little analysis. It could be limited analysis if the response gives several contextualised examples to support the evaluation points. A conclusion at the end of each issue would be helpful to show excellent understanding of the issue under discussion. To achieve the requirements of the level 4 and 5 descriptors, it would be best to structure the response by issue rather than by study and/or theory. It would also be ideal for the response to start with the named issue to make sure the answer covers this requirement of the question.
- A small minority of candidates did not evaluate using the named issue. Quite a few of the answers were structured by study/theory/treatment rather than by the issue which often led the response to be quite superficial and repetitive.

Comments on specific questions

Section A – Clinical Psychology

Question 1

Comprehensive responses

- Responses that demonstrated excellent understanding of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), with clear links to the context of Muhammad's agoraphobia, symptoms, or behaviour, showed a comprehensive grasp of the requirements.
- Candidates referred directly to the scenario/context in the question in their response.

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Limited responses
- These outlined treatments other than CBT with imaginal desensitisation being common.
- Some responses needed to include more contextual reference to Muhammad's agoraphobia or symptoms.
- A few responses outlined systematic desensitisation only.

Question 2

(a) **Comprehensive responses**
- Most responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the nature versus nurture debate.
- These candidates outlined both nature and nurture clearly referring to the extent to which human behaviour is a result of our innate traits or environment.

Limited responses
- Some responses needed to provide a clearer outline of the nature versus nurture debate, with more precise expression of key ideas.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- Responses demonstrating a clear understanding of a weakness of the debate, including an example from the genetic explanation of fear-related disorders.
- These candidates could explain a weakness, most commonly reductionism, and how this approach does not take into account other possible causes, with an example.

Limited responses
- Some responses gave a basic explanation of a weakness without an example from fear-related disorders.
- Some responses included an example, such as a phobia, but needed to explain how the example illustrated the identified weakness.
- Some responses identified a weakness, such as reductionism or determinism, but needed to include further explanation or an example to fully address the question.

Question 3

(a) **Comprehensive responses**
- Comprehensive responses could explain in detail ICD-11, MOCI and/or Y-BOCS.
- Many showed good knowledge of the symptoms of OCD from the ICD-11. Others that identified and outlined the MOCI and/or Y-BOCs also had good knowledge of these self-reports.
- Details being correct with good to excellent understanding of how Kiara's doctor will decide if she has OCD.

Limited responses
- Candidates who explained how Kiara's doctor will decide whether Kiara has OCD without good understanding of ICD-11 or MOCI/Y-BOCS.
- Candidates had limited or incorrect knowledge of ICD-11 diagnostic criteria for OCD or MOCI/Y-BOCs.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- These responses were able to give a reason (most commonly Kiara feels embarrassed or social desirability bias) **and** why this could happen (Type 1/Type 2 error) in reference to why the diagnosis is incorrect or they gave a clear example of a symptom of OCD and why this might be embarrassing to disclose.

Limited responses
- Some candidates were able to explain one reason why the diagnosis may not be correct, not why this could happen or a clear example of a symptom of OCD.

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Question 4

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- These types of responses were able to describe both the diagnostic criteria (ICD-11) and the Beck depression inventory (BDI) in detail.
- The use of psychological terminology was accurate and appropriate and excellent understanding of the material was demonstrated.
- These responses outlined both unipolar and bipolar disorder with symptoms and a description of the difference between type 1 and type 2.
- A good outline of the Beck depression inventory was given often with number of questions, example question, how it is scored and scoring categories linked to different levels of depression.

Limited responses

- Candidates tended to provide inaccurate details regarding the BDI. Scoring and scales were often confused with other measures of depression.
- Some responses focused on one aspect of the diagnostic criteria (ICD-11), such as unipolar depression, and would have been strengthened by including further detail or additional examples.
- Some responses outlined explanations for unipolar depression which did not address the question.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- The named issue of quantitative and qualitative data was addressed in some detail and comprehensive responses gave details of strengths and weaknesses of this data with clear examples from the BDI as well as diagnostic criteria with a brief outline of how doctors/therapists would be likely to interview patients and collect qualitative data.
- Cultural differences and nomothetic versus idiographic were most often used by candidates and comprehensive responses also gave clear examples from part **(a)**.
- These responses included effective analysis and usually structured their response by issue/debate which aided the comparisons and/or strengths and weaknesses discussed about each issue.

Limited responses

- Some responses included superficial evaluation of the diagnostic criteria (ICD-11) and the Beck depression inventory (BDI) with limited analysis. This often meant that general strengths and weaknesses were given with no context was provided from part **(a)**.
- Some responses were structured by one paragraph on the BDI and the other on diagnostic criteria from ICD-11. This type of structure did not on its own create a limited response, and it was frequently seen that this type of structure led to very brief evaluation points per topic.
- Most responses did include the named issue of qualitative and quantitative data and often gave very brief, non-centralised points.
- Some did numerous issues and some were inappropriate such as nature versus nurture.

***Section B* – Consumer Psychology**

Question 5

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- You are here map, signage and numbering or colour coding of types of stores on the map were often identified with good understanding of wayfinding in the shopping mall.

Limited responses

- Some candidates confused the meaning of wayfinding in the shopping mall with general features not related to maps, such as building a landmark in the shopping mall.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses used one of the features suggested in part **(a)** and could explain why this would improve customers' wayfinding in the shopping mall. For example, how this makes it easier for the shoppers with some explanation or detail of why this would improve wayfinding (would aid shoppers in planning their route by using the map).

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Limited responses

- Some candidates identified the feature did not give adequate detail or explanation of how it would improve wayfinding in a shopping mall.
- Some responses stated it would help with wayfinding and no indication of why.

Question 6

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Responses demonstrated a clear understanding of determinism and could apply it to the effects of crowding on shoppers PAD.
- These candidates outlined a clear definition (behaviour is caused/determined by external or unconscious forces) and give an example (level of crowding in a shop is an external force which the shopper has no control over, and this causes a reduction in pleasure/increased desire to leave the shop).

Limited responses

- These responses often gave an accurate definition of determinism and did not provide the example from the effects of crowding on PAD.
- Some gave an example from effects of odour which did not address the question.
- Some gave a definition of reductionism rather than determinism which did not address the question.
- Limited responses came from an attempt to define determinism and provide an example from crowding on shopper behaviour.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses demonstrated an outline of the problem and explained in relation to shopper behaviour being due to external factors or free-will.
- Common problems included difficulties in observing what is causing behaviour, challenges for consumers in accurately reporting the causes of their behaviour through self-report methods, and the complexity of determining whether consumer behaviour is influenced by external or unconscious forces or by free will.

Limited responses

- Candidates gave a brief outline of a problem without explaining it further. For example, that shoppers can be influenced by both free will and external forces without further elaboration.
- An incorrect problem was identified such as ethical issues which did not answer the question.

Question 7

(a) (i) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates demonstrated understanding of customer responses in the context of a date. Some responses included brief suggestions, such as noting that the experience felt less private or that it was associated with higher levels of stress or discomfort.
- Other response gave one suggestion in some detail.

Limited responses

- One suggestion given briefly such as lack of privacy.
- Suggesting that they were comfortable and some suggesting the distance was 12” or 24” rather than the 6” distance outlined in the question.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates demonstrated understanding of customer responses for business purposes. Some responses included brief suggestions, such as noting that customers were not overly aroused or experienced low-level discomfort.
- Other responses gave one suggestion in some detail.

Limited responses

- One suggestion given briefly such as feeling comfortable.
- Some candidates stated that those dining for business purposes would feel exactly the same as those on a date. Responses that explained business meetings could involve confidential conversations, so diners might worry about being overheard, demonstrated a clear

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understanding of the context. Stating worry about being overheard without this brief explanation did not fully address the question.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses clearly outlined the problem and explained it in relation to investigating personal space. For example, some noted that it can be challenging to determine the real reason for customer behaviour, as leaving a crowded store could be due to personal space invasion or other factors.

Limited responses

- Most common responses were individual differences with a brief outline of this given.
- Candidates often identified the problem that psychologists have when investigating personal space.

Question 8

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses were able to describe the Engel Kollat Blackwell model and a study that investigates post-purchase cognitive dissonance in some detail and included a result in the outline of the study.
- The use of psychological terminology was accurate and appropriate and excellent understanding of the material was demonstrated.

Limited responses

- Candidates tended to provide inaccurate details regarding the Engel Kollat Blackwell model and/or the study on post-purchase cognitive dissonance with many inaccurate or very brief descriptions.
- Some gave an outline of how a consumer might go about purchasing a product without outlining the Engel Kollat Blackwell model which did not address the question.
- Some gave an outline of a study that did not investigate post-purchase cognitive dissonance, such as the study by Hall et al. Investigating choice-blindness which did not address the question.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- The named issue was cultural differences. This issue was addressed in some detail with good use of context from part **(a)**.
- Reductionism versus holism and nomothetic versus idiographic were most often used and clear examples given from part **(a)**.
- A few responses did effective analysis explaining how and why the model/study in part **(a)** could be seen to have cultural differences and also how it might not. The same type of analysis was then done for the other issues covered.

Limited responses

- Some responses included superficial evaluation of the Engel Kollat Blackwell model and a study that investigates post-purchase cognitive dissonance with limited or no analysis.
- Some stated how the model supported an issue e.g 'it is holistic' without further explanation.
- Many were able to state that the Nordvall study (which was frequently used in part **(a)** was done in Sweden so its generalisability to other cultures was limited However, many responses needed to explain why cultural context matters or to consider whether post-purchase cognitive dissonance could be a universal feeling after buying a product.

***Section C* – Health Psychology**

Question 9

Comprehensive responses

- Candidates were able to describe how relaxation and imagery could be achieved.
- Some went on to explain how this linked to physiological responses so explaining how stress was reduced.
- Good links provided to help reduce Rajeesh's stress during medical treatment.

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Limited responses
- Some gave a very brief outline of what is meant by relaxation and/or imagery.
- Some candidates stated that relaxation or imagery could be used. No outline was given for these terms meant or how they could be achieved.
- Few to no link to help reduce Rajeesh's stress during medical treatment.

Question 10

(a) **Comprehensive responses**
- Were able to give clear definitions of both reductionism and holism.

Limited responses
- Some candidates confused the debate with another, such as determinism versus free will.
- Other candidates stated that reductionism is looking at only one type of explanation, such as biological approach.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- Could explain that a measuring heart rate represents a single element of how stress manifests itself.
- Candidates often supported their points with one or two examples, such as noting that heart rate can be elevated for reasons other than stress, or that stress can cause other physiological changes like increased cortisol levels or psychological responses that a heart rate monitor does not measure.

Limited responses
- Some gave a very brief explanation without fully explaining how or why this makes a heart rate monitor a reductionist measure of stress.
- Confused the measure with the source of stress which did not answer the question.

Question 11

(a) (i) **Comprehensive responses**
- Gave good suggestions often using results from the McKinstry and Wang study.

Limited responses
- There were some inaccuracies about the study, and the majority of candidates did provide a brief outline of why Dr Smith was correct.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**
- Gave good suggestions often using results from the McKinstry and Wang study or a study on practitioner consulting style explaining why this is more important to patients than clothing.

Limited responses
- There were some inaccuracies about the study, and most candidates did provide a brief outline of why Dr Reynolds was correct.
- Some gave an anecdotal response attempting to explain why Dr Reynolds was correct with no reference to either a study on clothing or a study on practitioner consulting style.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**
- Could provide a comprehensive response, usually by noting that participants tended to give brief answers and placing this in the context of practitioner clothing.

Limited responses
- Some responses gave a brief outline, stating that the results did not provide sufficient depth, and made no reference to practitioner clothing.
- Candidates stated that participants would not give their opinions, which is a misunderstanding that the quantitative data obtained is representing opinions just not in their own words and without detail.

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Question 12

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Showed a good understanding of the study and outlined details of the sample, measured used, procedure, and results.

Limited responses

- Fewer correct details given of the study often without any measures used or procedural details not given.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- The named issue was questionnaires and those who knew the study well and how the various aspect of mental health was assessed, were able to provide some good analysis with use of context from the study. This was usually done by discussing strengths and weaknesses of one or more of the questionnaires used.
- Other common issues in more comprehensive responses were experiments and generalisability of the sample.

Limited responses

- Attempts to discuss ethics often focused on consent or potential harm to the control group. These points do not apply to this study, as consent was obtained and the control group received the positive psychology lessons at a later stage.
- Those who gave brief strengths and weaknesses of the study often did not provide context from the study and/or no to limited analysis.

***Section D* – Organisational Psychology**

Question 13

Comprehensive responses

- Candidates frequently provided two different examples of how Collette could show good practice that other could imitate.
- Examples of this included showing how to operate machinery which the workers could copy, arrive at work on time to encourage employees to do the same and participate in meetings showing colleagues respect so employees have respectful meetings and know how to act appropriately.

Limited responses

- One way of how Collette could show good practice that others could imitate.
- Examples given from the other four leadership practices, such as ‘get on the balcony’, which did not answer the question.

Question 14

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Good definitions given for both individual and situational explanations.
- Frequently stating that individual is the disposition of the person such as their personality and situational is how environmental factors influence behaviour.

Limited responses

- Defining one explanation and not the other. Most frequently could define situational, not individual.
- A small number stated situational is the effect of the situation or individual is the effect of the individual which did not answer the question.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- These outlined how either or both organisational commitment and/or absenteeism occur due to individual reasons.
- Examples were often given to back up the point.

Limited responses

- A brief explanation given such as reasons for being absent are individual to the person and occur for different reasons.

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- Stating the model was individual without an explanation as to why.

Question 15

(a) (i) Comprehensive responses
- A clear outline of how a behavioural model of leadership could be taught to Sally such as teaching her how to be more relationship focused.

Limited responses
- A brief outline with no reference made to Sally training to be a better leader.

(ii) Comprehensive responses
- Candidates recognised that universalist theories of leadership state that leadership is innate and not learned so that Sally would not be able to learn these even if she attended a course.
- Often referred to a trait that Sally could not learn such as charisma.

Limited responses
- Gave a brief outline that often stated that leaders are born not made with no clear reference to Sally or her training.

(b) Comprehensive responses
- Provided a clear weakness of the behavioural theory of leadership, such as its focus on learned behaviours rather than innate traits, and included a brief explanation of why this is a weakness.

Limited responses
- Some responses identified that the behavioural theory of leadership focuses on learned behaviours and did not explain why overlooking innate traits could be a weakness.

Question 16

(a) Comprehensive responses
- Candidates gave clear and accurate details of both Latham and Locke's goal-setting theory and Vroom's VIE (expectancy) theory.
- Good outline of the 4 C's and 1 F for Latham and Locke.
- Outline of what each aspect of the VIE theory is (valence, instrumentality and expectancy) as well as the formula for motivation.

Limited responses
- A few stated that Latham and Locke included the 4 C's and 1 F without an outline of this or outlined SMART targets only.
- An outline of some of the VIE theory with some inaccurate descriptions of valence, instrumentality and/or expectancy.
- The formula for motivation for the VIE theory was not given.

(b) Comprehensive responses
- The named issue was idiographic versus nomothetic, and some candidates understood how both theories were nomothetic and could give examples from both theories in part (a). Some responses provided clear analysis, including explanations and examples of how the 4C's and 1F could be considered idiographic, as they are specific to each individual.
- Other commonly used issues were cultural differences, individual and situational, and determinism versus free will with good context and analysis for each issue given.

Limited responses
- Limited responses often did not include context from part (a) to back up points made.
- No or very limited analysis given in limited responses often stating the theories were either similar or in contrast with no explanation given as to why this might be the case.
- Limited responses sometimes attempted to use an inappropriate issues like nature versus nurture which did not address the question.
- For some candidates there was a misunderstanding of how VIE is meant to work, suggesting that all rewards have to be financial and valence is within the control of an organisation.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Paper 9990/42

Specialist Options: Application and Research Methods

Key messages

What candidates did well

Section A

- Candidates provided the correct number of features, such as giving four when four were required rather than three or fewer.
- Candidates' responses to 'identify', 'outline', and 'describe' questions generally included the correct amount of detail.
- Where questions required more explanation, candidates provided fuller, more developed answers
- When giving strengths and/or weaknesses, candidates included examples or links to the study in the question to demonstrate application of knowledge.

Section B

- **(a)** Candidates used the method named in the question rather than a different method.
- **(a)** Candidates applied four or five specific features of that named method.
- **(a)** Candidates applied ethical guidelines to plans.
- **(a)** Candidates answered the question set rather than a pre-prepared answer.
- **(b)(i)** Candidates described apposite psychological knowledge rather than methodological knowledge.
- **(b)(ii)** Candidates explained how two features of that psychological knowledge were explicitly used in the plan.
- **(c)(i)(ii)(iii)** Candidates explicitly linked an example from the plan to the reason and strength/weakness.

What candidates needed to improve

Section A

- Candidates should relate their answer to the study in question or include an example from the study/topic area. Questions frequently end with 'in this study' and so the answer should always be related to that specific topic area/study.
- Terms such as reliability and validity should be clearly explained when used in responses. Simply stating that something is "not reliable or valid" does not demonstrate understanding of these concepts.

Section B

- Only one ***Section B*** question should be answered, not two.
- The named method in the question must be used with four or five features of that method included.
- Interview format is often misunderstood. A structured interview can consist of either closed questions, open questions or a combination of both. Structured means that the same questions are asked to all participants in the same order. An unstructured interview can also consist of closed questions, open questions or a combination of both. A semi structured interview does not automatically result in quantitative and qualitative data.
- Candidates often used both closed and open questions and often confused the two when writing actual questions to ask participants. Opting for one type only creates less confusion and helps when answering part **(c)** questions.
- Including aims, results, or conclusions in part **(a)** responses is not necessary and does not address the requirements of this section.
- Every answer should include a consideration of ethical guidelines.
- In part **(b)(i)** candidates should describe some relevant psychological (not methodological) knowledge that the plan is based on.

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- In part **(b)(ii)** candidates needed to explain how the psychological knowledge in **(b)(i)** was used in the part **(a)** plan.
- In part **(c)(i)**, **(ii)** and **(iii)** candidates need to apply what is written in the plan to the reason for its choice. This applies to all options, **Questions 9**, **10**, **11** and **12**.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates correctly identified four features of the sample of participants used in the study by Freeman et al. Popular choices included the number of participants, the male/female balance, a non-clinical diagnosis, and age range.

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not identify four features, some included incorrect features and some focused on sampling technique. Candidates should read the question carefully.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses correctly suggested that including participants with schizophrenia would be unethical and explained why. Others suggested that using people with schizophrenia contradicted the aim of the study.

Limited responses

- Some responses did not understand why non-clinical participants were used; often giving generic responses when using participants in any study rather than focusing on the specific requirements of this question.

(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates included two weaknesses, made a point about participants who are paid and related their answer specifically to the Freeman et al. study.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided only one weakness, some provided weaknesses which were not related to the Freeman et al. study, and some gave generic responses such as 'social desirability' with no attempt to relate this to either participants who are paid or this specific key study.

Question 2

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses identified two features of imaginal desensitisation: progressive muscle relaxation and visualising exposure to the situation that triggers the drive. Some responses also described additional aspects, such as the construction of a script.

Limited responses

- Some candidates incorrectly wrote about covert sensitisation, a very different procedure. Others believed that patients were shown images and some only included one of the two required features.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most responses correctly suggested that covert sensitisation could be used and gave details of this treatment such as the pairing of an aversive stimulus with the trigger stimulus. Also correct was the use of biochemicals where the study by Grant et al. was often mentioned.

Limited responses

- Some candidates suggested cognitive restructuring which is incorrect because it is used to treat depression not impulse control disorders.

(c) **Comprehensive responses**

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- Many candidates included two weaknesses and related the weaknesses to examples from imaginal desensitisation and treating pyromania.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided only one weakness, some provided weaknesses which were related to covert sensitisation rather than imaginal desensitisation and some gave generic responses such as the treatment is 'time consuming' with no attempt to explain why this might be.

Question 3

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates correctly identified two of the four variables the 10-point scales measured in the Hall et al. key study, such as 'similarity', and 'liking'. Some candidates went on to outline the scales used to measure these variables, such as the 'liking' scale ranging from 'not at all good' to 'very good.

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not identify any of the variables, whilst others could only identify one variable or did not explain the scale used to measure that variable. Stating 'a 10-point scale was used' was insufficient because this was the wording of the question.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses correctly suggested an open question that started with the words 'Describe' or 'Explain' followed by a question which addressed one of the variables outlined in part **(a)**.

Limited responses

- Some candidates used words other than 'Describe' or 'Explain' which were not indicative of an open question; others asked questions which could be answered with a single word and so could not be classed as an open question. Some candidates asked questions which were not related to one of the variables outlined in **(a)**.

(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates correctly included a strength and a weakness and related each to 10-point scales used in the Hall et al. study.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided two weaknesses or two strengths, rather than one of each.
- Many answers did not give a strength (or weakness) such as stating 'a 10-point scale gives quantitative data' which is not a strength.
- Many answers were generic and not related to the 10-point scales used in this study (as the question required).

Question 4

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates correctly identified two functions of slogans, such as linking to a brand and making a product more memorable.

Limited responses

- A few candidates could not identify any functions, and a few gave two types (rather than functions).

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Some responses included an example of a question that participants could be asked. Others explained how this method could be used to measure the effectiveness of the slogan.

Limited responses

- Some candidates did not identify any measurement/method or did not give detail of it such as questionnaire format or technique (for those choosing this form of measurement).
- Some answers had no way in which effectiveness could be assessed (such as a question to be asked).

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(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates included a strength and a weakness of their chosen method and explained how this could have affected the measuring of the effectiveness of a slogan.

Limited responses

- Candidates unable to identify a measurement or method in **(b)** could not give a specific strength or weakness, often reverting to generic comments.
- Candidates not stating how effectiveness could be measured did not link it to the strength or weakness.
- Answers should always have a strength (or weakness) plus a linked example showing the strength (or weakness has been applied).

Question 5

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Most candidates were able to correctly identify all four experimental groups, many providing a detailed outline of each.

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not identify four experimental groups; a small number of candidates misunderstood what the increased access group involved.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Nearly all candidates correctly suggested that a control group was used to establish a baseline to which the experimental groups could be compared. Some candidates went on to explain how the control groups differed from the experimental groups in this specific study.

Limited responses

- Some answers did not extend beyond the baseline suggestion meaning that without relating the answer to this study, the generic answer could be applied to any question.

(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates included two weaknesses of using postal questionnaires and related their weaknesses to this specific study, for example stating that 'people may forget to return the questionnaire' and 'so data about improving adherence to immunising children would be lost'.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided two weaknesses without relating their answer to this specific study.
- Answers should always include a strength or weakness each of which is related to the specific study in the question.

Question 6

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates outlined the use of acupuncture as a treatment in detail such as inserting needles, leaving in place for a short time and manipulated by hand or by mild electrical pulse.

Limited responses

- Some candidates stated that acupuncture "involved needles" which was not sufficient to explain its use as a treatment.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses correctly suggested a psychological strategy, such as 'attention diversion', 'non-pain imagery' or 'cognitive redefinition' and explained how this strategy could help reduce toothache.

Limited responses

- Some suggestions were not psychological (as the question required) instead biochemical treatments such as 'take pain relief medication' were proposed.
- Some correct suggestions did not relate it to 'managing the acute pain of a toothache'.
- Candidates should always address all the components of a question in their answers.

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(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates included two weaknesses, often making points about its lack of effectiveness in treating acute versus chronic pain; that it is not a 'self-treatment (therapist required) or that some people have a fear of needles.

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not provide two weaknesses or gave generic statements such as 'there are cultural differences' without elaboration or reference to acupuncture.

Question 7

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates correctly identified two conclusions from the three listed in the Swat study and often provided additional detail to clarify the conclusion. For example, 'poor housekeeping' is a correct conclusion which includes accidents like 'falls and slips'.

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not identify any conclusion, instead giving findings.
- Other candidates could identify 'poor housekeeping' although not explain what this was, and some answers had an example without being able to identify the actual conclusion.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses suggested that accident reporting may be inaccurate because it could involve a lengthy shut-down of machinery, the accident might be considered too minor to report, or a worker may be concerned about losing their job if they have been negligent.

Limited responses

- Some candidates suggested that researchers might bias data to support their aims rather than focusing specifically on the nature of accidents in organisations.

(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates gave two weaknesses of longitudinal studies such as changes in technology over time, worker turnover, and changes in company policy and related this to potential change in the number of accidents.

Limited responses

- Many candidates gave two weaknesses of the study, rather than specifically of longitudinal studies which the question required.
- Some candidates gave answers which assumed this was a case study about individuals (a participant drops out) when it is a case study about organisations (who would employ another worker if one left the company).

Question 8

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- All candidates correctly identified one stage of group development whether it be forming, norming, performing or adjourning. Nearly all candidates could outline what the term meant.

Limited responses

- Some candidates correctly identified one stage of group development although there was some confusion about what that stage involved.

(b) **Comprehensive responses**

- Responses correctly suggested two behaviours that could be included in a structured observation, such as 'withdraws from the group', 'shakes head in disagreement' and 'smiles and nods when a point is being made'.

Limited responses

- Some candidates suggested responses other than behavioural such as 'presents an idea'.

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(c) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates included one strength and one weakness of structured observations and related each to the storming stage (as the question required).

Limited responses

- Some candidates could not provide any strength or weaknesses. Those that did often could not relate it to the storming stage of group development.

Section B

Question 9

(a) **Comprehensive responses**

- Comprehensive responses included the interview method and gave four/five features such as technique, format, location, interview questions.
- Candidates explicitly addressed the question of the long-term effectiveness of antipsychotic drugs.

Limited responses

- Candidates did not use the named method and used questionnaires and experiments instead.
- Candidates did not gather data which would assess effectiveness of antipsychotic drugs.
- Candidates showed no awareness of ethical guidelines.

(b) (i) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many responses correctly explained, often in detail, the characteristics of typical antipsychotics, atypical antipsychotics and the 'third generation' which differ in how they work and the side effects they cause.

Limited responses

- Some candidates focused on symptoms of schizophrenia and others on the case study by Aneja about a boy with schizophrenia rather than focus on the antipsychotic drugs and their effectiveness.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates stated clearly how they used the characteristics of various drugs (outlined in **(b)(i)** in their part **(a)** plans, for example in **(b)(i)** outlining the side-effects of typical antipsychotics and then using atypical antipsychotics with less side-effects in their part **(a)** plan.

Limited responses

- Some answers focused on methodology which is not psychological knowledge.
- Some candidates wrote about things not mentioned in **(b)(i)** when the question asked, 'how you used two features this psychological knowledge'.

(c) (i) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates stated a reason for their choice of sampling technique, most commonly a volunteer sample.

Limited responses

- Some candidates stated that they chose an opportunity sample "because it is quick and easy" with no elaboration.
- Some candidates believed that a volunteer sampling makes a study automatically ethical, when it does not.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**

- Many candidates suggested that a weakness of a volunteer sample is that the participants might all have the same 'volunteering personality' which might bias the sample.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided an appropriate weakness forgetting to relate the weakness to their study about antipsychotic drugs.

(iii) **Comprehensive responses**

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- Many candidates correctly explained that their choice of structured interview meant that all participants were asked the same questions in the same order.
- Many candidates explained that they chose a semi-structured interview so they could ask standardised questions with additional questions should they be needed to clarify any aspect such as side effects caused by the drugs.

Limited responses
- Some candidates provided an answer on interview technique rather than on interview format which the question required.
- Some candidates believed that interview format relates to the type of question that participants are asked; whether it is open or closed. Interview format is whether the interview is structured, unstructured or semi-structured.

Question 10

(a) **Comprehensive responses**
- Answers used an online questionnaire and associated features.
- Candidates explicitly addressed the question of consumer decision-making.
- Candidates included an appropriate range of ethical guidelines.

Limited responses
- Candidates did not use the named method, assuming that an online questionnaire was one presented to candidates face-to-face on a tablet.
- Candidates did not address the question of consumer decision-making.
- Candidates showed no awareness of ethical guidelines.

(b) (i) **Comprehensive responses**
- Many responses correctly outlined compensatory, partial and non-compensatory strategies, some going on to outline the specifics of lexicographic, satisficing and elimination by aspects.
- Some candidates focused on the study by Jedetski (2002).

Limited responses
- Some candidates focused on choice heuristics, a different syllabus section. Others provided more general answers about internet shopping.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**
- Candidates applied the knowledge they outlined in **(b)(i)**, such as explaining that they used satisficing to inform the questions they asked their participants. Asking for example, 'Did you select the first option that met your needs?'

Limited responses
- Some candidates did not explain how what they had written in part **(b)(i)** informed their plan, and so did not answer the question set.
- Candidates are advised to write explicitly how their plans in part **(a)** were informed by the psychological knowledge in **(b)(i)** with examples from each.

(c) (i) **Comprehensive responses**
- Many candidates chose one question format only, open or closed, allowing them to focus on gathering one type of data.
- Questions that were asked were clearly closed (with answer response provided) or open (beginning with 'describe' or 'explain') and the question not requiring a one-word answer.

Limited responses
- Some candidates chose both types, open and closed, and often confused the wording of each, for example stating they used an open question when the question was closed.
- Some candidates confused question format with questionnaire technique.

(ii) **Comprehensive responses**
- Many candidates included two weaknesses such as participants dropping out because they are not face-to-face, and only participants with access to a computer and internet can take part. Both weaknesses were linked to various decision-making strategies.

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Limited responses

- Some candidates provided weaknesses that applied to any questionnaire rather than specifically to a questionnaire that is completed online.
- Many candidates did not apply the weaknesses to the question when it is essential to do so.

(iii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates wrote specifically about features of their sample, giving reasons why they had chosen a specific age range, where the participants were located, or characteristics such as being students. Many candidates gave the reason for choosing younger people was that they were more likely to do 'internet shopping' than older people.

Limited responses

- Some candidates wrote about their choice of sampling technique. Candidates should be mindful of the difference between 'sampling technique' (opportunity/volunteer/random) and 'sample of participants' (number of, sex/gender, age, etc.) as this question required.

Question 11

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates used a controlled observation and associated range of specific features such as structured/unstructured, covert/overt and participant/non-participant, behavioural categories and number of observers.
- Candidates explicitly addressed the question of how mirror treatment is used when treating phantom limb pain.
- Candidates included an appropriate range of ethical guidelines.

Limited responses

- Candidates did not use the named method and used questionnaires to assess pain instead.
- Candidates did not address the question and used alternative techniques such as TENS rather than mirror treatment.
- Some candidates did not know what phantom limb pain is.
- Some candidates showed no awareness of ethical guidelines.

(b) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates outlined mirror box treatment and how it could be used to help with phantom limb pain.
- Many candidates also referred to the case study by MacLachlan et al. (2004) who used mirror treatment with 'Alan'.

Limited responses

- Some candidates described treatments other than mirror box treatment, and some could identify mirror treatment although not explain how it was used.
- Some candidates described the case study by MacLachlan et al. (2004) in detail with very little reference to the essential component of mirror treatment.

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates explained how the treatment process used by MacLachlan et al. had informed the treatment process outlined in their part **(a)** plan.

Limited responses

- Some candidates focused on aspects of procedure, treatments such as TENS and behavioural categories rather than relating what they had done in their plan to the specifics of mirror box treatment.

(c) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates explained why they had chosen a hospital as the location which matched with what they had planned in part **(a)**. Others chose the participants' homes as the location to make the participant more comfortable in a familiar environment.

Limited responses

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- Some candidates provided brief answers such as "I chose to do my study in a hospital" without giving a reason why a hospital was chosen.

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates mentioned that a weakness of using a hospital was not a natural/normal location for the participant which might have restricted the treatment. Others referred to the home not being a controlled environment.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided brief answers such as "a hospital lacks ecological validity" without elaboration.
- Some candidates gave a generic weakness which was not related to mirror treatment or phantom limb pain.

(iii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates explained that using behavioural categories standardised their observation and gave examples from their part **(a)** plan of what was included in their categories.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided an appropriate reason for their use of categories without any link to their study or the categories they had used in their part **(a)** plan.
- It should be noted that all part **(c)** questions require a link to the specific study that has been planned, often including the words 'in your study' in the question and so this aspect should always be included in answers.

Question 12

(a) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates used a semi-structured interview which included some fixed, common-to-all questions and some additional questions.
- Candidates explicitly addressed the question about types of bullying and included interview questions to find which type is most common.
- Candidates included an appropriate range of ethical guidelines.

Limited responses

- Candidates did not use the named method, instead using questionnaires or an experiment.
- Some candidates assumed a semi-structured interview automatically gathers both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Candidates did not address the question focusing on causes or not asking questions about types in interviews.
- Candidates showed no awareness of ethical guidelines.

(b) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Many responses correctly outlined types of bullying (verbal, physical, social isolation, etc) as outlined by Einarsen (1999).

Limited responses

- Some candidates focused on the causes of bullying and some answers identified one or two types (physical and verbal) rather than identify and provide a brief description of what each involved.

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates correctly explained that they had used the different types of bullying (outlined in **(b)(i)** to help construct the questions they asked participants in their plan, explicitly showing that 'this is the knowledge from part **(b)(i)** and this is how it formed this question in part **(a)**'.

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Limited responses

- Some candidates focused on methodology which is not psychological knowledge.
- Some candidates included things not mentioned in **(b)(i)** when the question asked, 'how you used two features this psychological knowledge'.
- Some candidates had no types in part **(b)(i)** and so could not link these to questions asked in **(a)**.

(c) (i) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates chose one question format only, open or closed, allowing them to focus on gathering one type of data.

Limited responses

- Some candidates chose both types, open and closed, and often confused the format (stating 'an open question' and then giving an example of a closed question).

(ii) Comprehensive responses

- Many candidates who had one question format, usually closed, gave an appropriate weakness, usually that qualitative data could not be gathered.

Limited responses

- Some candidates provided a weakness for both open and closed questions, rather than identifying a single relevant weakness as required by the question.
- Candidates are advised to choose one question format.

(iii) Comprehensive responses

- Candidates often stated why they had used a specific measure of central tendency or dispersion which was linked with an example to what they had written in their part **(a)** plan.

Limited responses

- Some candidates did not provide any analysis, sometimes stating 'I analysed the data using questions'.
- Some candidates used a bar chart to 'analyse' data, when a bar chart is a visual display of data.

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