

Principal Examiner's Report Summer 2010

GCE

GCE Health & Social Care (6949) Unit 12 - Understanding Human Behaviour

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General Comments

As in previous series, the scenarios enabled the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge well across the full breadth of the specification. The examiners felt that the paper discriminated well, with a wide range of marks being seen in each question. It was pleasing to see so many good answers, with again a distinct improvement compared to the previous series. Centres are to be congratulated in preparing many candidates well for this paper. They seem to be using past papers to help prepare candidates.

Question 1

This question was based on a child whose parents have just had a new baby. The father is often away from home and the mother is finding it difficult to cope. It allowed the candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the cognitive (cognitive behavioural) approach and also their understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of family therapy.

In part (a) most candidates gained both marks, although some tended to identify two reasons why Imran may have started to behave badly, instead of describing one reason. Most explain how his behaviour at nursery demonstrated that he is missing his father, but some did not describe the behaviour or say when it happened, meaning that they were not specific enough in their explanations.

In the first part of question (b), most candidates were able to explain one feature of a cognitive approach, in that it was to do with examining the way someone thinks. Some candidates mixed this up with the behavioural approach which is to do with the observation of behaviour. In the second part, not many candidates referred specifically to the fact that this was an initial assessment, despite this type of question having been asked before. Not often was the idea of a baseline against which changes could be measured mentioned.

Part (c) discriminated well. Many candidates provided relevant answers and gained marks for clear advantages and disadvantages of using a cognitive (cognitive behavioural) approach. Not all related their answer to young children.

Part (d) also discriminated well. Some candidates did not answer it particularly well, despite previous papers having similar questions relating to the evaluation of the family theory. Some barely related their answer to a family that had young children. Other candidates gave good advantages and disadvantages and provided a conclusion - the latter is vital for gaining marks in mark band 3.

Question 2

This question was centred on a residential home for older people. It tests candidates understanding of dysfunctional beliefs, the suitability of the behaviour and humanistic (person centred) approaches.

In part (a) the vast majority of candidates could identify two reasons why Percy might be feeling depressed, the most common answers being he is hard of hearing and has arthritis in both his hands. Many were also able to explain why Percy may have dysfunctional beliefs, although in their explanation some did not make it clear how their examples linked to dysfunctional beliefs. This type of question has been asked

before and centres are encouraged to use the past papers and mark schemes here to prepare the candidates. In the third part, most candidates could explain simply why effective communication is important, e.g. to aid understanding on both sides, but only a few gained the full four marks.

In part (b), the vast majority of candidates showed that they understand the concept of positive reinforcement well. Some lost marks as they did not refer to the behaviour was likely to be repeated and others lost a mark because they did not clearly refer to an example, as asked in the questions. Many candidates gave some good reasons why time out should not be used with older people, such as they might be humiliated. However, only the better candidates gave both advantages and disadvantages - this is required for a discuss question where there are two sides to the argument.

Part (c) discriminated well, with the better candidates giving advantages and disadvantages. Some candidates, however, give only one side of the argument, thus restricting themselves to mark band 1. It was pleasing to see more candidates finishing off their answer with a conclusion, thus giving them a good chance of gaining mark band 3, provided that they had some appropriate advantages and disadvantages. Some candidates are still not relating their question to a particular group of service users, in this case an older person who cannot hear well.

Question 3

This question is based on young people who are drug users. It explores the candidates understanding of social learning theory, confidentiality in drug rehabilitation units and the use of a psychoanalytical approach to help drug users give up their addiction. It also tested the candidates' data handling skills.

In part (a) most candidates compared the different patterns of drug misuse well. However, some did not quantify their answers with data given in the graph, thus losing marks.

In part (b) numerous candidates linked a negative self-concept to taking drugs, often scoring 3 or 4 marks. If marks were lost it was because there was more description rather than explanation.

Most candidates scored well in part (c), demonstrating a good knowledge of social learning theory and linking this well to the case study. If marks were lost it was because there was not effective use of specialist language such as peer pressure or role model.

Part (d), a discussion question about confidentiality was answered fairly well on the whole. However, a significant number of candidates only gave one side of the argument, e.g. reasons why it was important. The better candidates gave some explanation relating to times when confidentiality should be breached.

Part (d) discriminated well. It is clear that many candidates understand the psychodynamic approach well. However, some are less skilled at giving the key advantages or disadvantages. In addition, some do not relate their answer to the focus of the question, in this case drug users. It is still only a few candidates that finish off their answers with a conclusion, but the number is increasing, which is pleasing. It should be noted that a conclusion in itself does not constitute a level three answer, but that it should follow a good discussion of both sides of the argument. For level 3, the quality of communication should be good in addition.

Grade Boundaries

Externally assessed units

6949: Understanding Human Behaviour

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	90	66	58	50	43	36
Uniform boundary mark	100	80	70	60	50	40

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark: the minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

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